

USGS/USFS Cost Sharing Opportunity to Acquire Lidar

USGS Broad Agency Announcement Overview

The USGS issued a [Broad Agency Announcement \(BAA\)](#) on September 9, 2019 calling for interested and eligible parties (federal agencies, state and local governments, tribes, academic institutions, and the private sector) to submit proposals by November 1, 2019 for the first round of funding for acquiring 3D Elevation Data—lidar—via the USGS 3D Elevation Program (3DEP). This is an opportunity for the Forest Service (USFS) to foster cost sharing partnerships that can result in significant savings for lidar data acquisitions. This document is intended to consolidate information regarding the BAA, the proposal process, options to consider when submitting an application, and examples of successful proposals within the USFS.

The primary goal of 3DEP is to systematically collect nationwide lidar coverage (IfSAR in Alaska) over an 8-year period, which could provide more than \$690 million annually in new benefits to government entities, the private sector, and citizens.¹

USFS Success Stories

In many cases, the USFS has acquired lidar over national forests by negotiating specific acquisition areas with other agencies interested in adjacent or overlapping lidar collections. The USFS has also acquired QL1 data where only QL2 data had been planned by contributing to, or covering, the difference in price between the two quality levels. The USGS occasionally receives supplemental funding to support lidar acquisitions after natural disasters, and the USFS has also partnered with the USGS in these situations. The BAA process provides the forum for the USFS to leverage these partnership opportunities. The most recent list of BAA awards is located here: <https://www.usgs.gov/core-science-systems/ngp/3dep/3d-elevation-program-3dep-broad-agency-announcement-baa-2019-awards>

How Does 3DEP Funding Work?

- Over the past five fiscal years (FY15 – FY19), the federal budget to support 3DEP has been approximately \$10-12 million each year. In FY19, the average BAA award covered 35% of the

¹ http://www.dewberry.com/docs/default-source/documents/needa_final-report_revised-3-29-12.pdf?sfvrsn=a46dba28_0



total project cost, with project awards ranging from \$1,000 - \$1.25 million, and an average award of \$350,000.

- The USGS' evaluation criteria include a cost share component: applicants who display the ability to cover a large percentage of the overall cost of a project receive a high score for the cost share component.
- Projects may be contracted through the USGS Geospatial Products and Services Contract (GPSC) or a cooperative agreement in which a partner is the acquiring authority that directly oversees the acquisition.
- While applicants are required to put together a cost estimate and anticipated funding sources, the final commitment of funds takes place after the proposal is accepted.

How to Form Successful Partnerships

- GTAC recommends that applicants connect with a [USGS liaison](#) who can help guide partnering groups through the BAA process.
- Lidar data is beneficial to a wide range of organizations and stakeholders. Interested applicants should reach out to a variety of local, state, and federal groups, including the state geological survey, state department of natural resources, relevant counties, conservation groups, tribes, and other federal agencies to gauge interest in partnering for a data acquisition. The [SeaSketch website](#) shows where other agencies have interest in collecting data.
- Letters of support from counties, private organizations, conservation organizations, academic institutions, etc. can be helpful for the proposal. It establishes the need for these products across multiple organizations.

Selecting Acquisition Areas

- The USGS's goal is to acquire nationwide lidar coverage; to accomplish that, they prefer acquisitions for large areas (1,500 square miles or more). However, they accept applications for smaller areas. New for FY2020 is the requirement to align project areas to the 3DEP National Indexing Scheme. Instructions are located in [Attachment B](#).
- The Priority Areas are very important to note when planning your application. If you and your partners are interested in acquisitions in these areas (or adjacent areas), you have a better chance of being funded. Maps posted on <https://www.usgs.gov/core-science-systems/ngp/3dep/fy1920-usgs-broad-agency-announcement-baa-3d-elevation-program-3dep> show priority acquisition areas for federal agencies and include shapefiles for download.

Current BAA Proposal Submission Information

- To apply to the BAA, go to <https://www.fbo.gov/spg/DOI/USGS/USGS/140G0119R0029/listing.html>. Click the link to see



more information on FedConnect. The 3DEP Proposal Submission Tool (Attachment A) is a Word document that you will need to fill out. You may also find the [FAQs](#) helpful.

- **Initial Deadline: 5 PM ET on November 1, 2019.** The solicitation does remain open through the rest of FY2020, but projects for next spring or early summer should be submitted by November 1st.
 - o Submissions will not be reviewed by USGS until after November 1st
 - o The proposal submission document includes sections for:
 - Project Title
 - Project Summary
 - Project Synopsis
 - Geographic Extent of Project (GIS shapefile)
 - Proposed Timeline
 - Data Specification
 - Data Deliverables
 - Approach to Data Acquisition
 - Project Finances
 - Proposed Funding
 - Past Performance
- Schedule:
 - o USGS will begin making decisions in December 2019 for projects submitted by the initial deadline (November 1st). At that point, if your application has been approved, you will have a couple months to submit a final proposal that outlines the final monetary or in-kind contributions of partnering organizations.



Need Help?

The Geospatial Management Office (GMO) and the Geospatial Technology and Applications Center (GTAC) are committed to providing USFS personnel with assistance in acquiring, processing, and applying lidar to meet natural resource management objectives. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any specific questions in regards to 3DEP, the BAA and/or other questions regarding lidar. Contact information is provided below.

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