

2021 Sentinel Landscapes Designation Cycle
Sentinel Landscapes Application Help Session: Questions and Answers
February 2021

Question: Can you describe key differences between the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program and the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership?

Answer: The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is a federal agency partnership, whereas the REPI program is a Department of Defense Program that provides funding for encroachment management projects. The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is not a funding entity. It is a coalition of federal and state agencies that all have their own individual funding programs.

Question: Are there word limits for responses on the proposal?

Answer: The suggested word count for each response is 400 words, but the portal will not cut you off at that point. Instead, the Federal Coordinating Committee (FCC) asks that you keep that limit in mind to ensure that your answers are concise. You may use your best judgement when deciding whether to exceed that limit. Applicants will not be penalized for going over.

Question: How does the FCC recommend applicants with multiple installations and partners remain concise in their proposal responses?

Answer: In the event that there are multiple installations included in a proposed sentinel landscape, the FCC is looking for applicants to identify the climate change, natural resource, and encroachment concerns of the group of installations, as a whole. Responses should explain why these installations are all included in one sentinel landscape by identifying commonalities, as opposed to providing separate responses for each installation.

Similarly, for partnering organizations applicants should outline how partner organizations are contributing to the sentinel landscape's goals and objectives. There will be another opportunity to provide a detailed explanation of partner roles in the full proposal.

The FCC does not require applicants to repeat information throughout the proposal. If one section explains partner roles, for instance, there is no need to rearticulate the same information in another section. If you have additional information you would like to provide outside of the proposal in a different format, please reach out to the FCC to coordinate.

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Question: Does a Sentinel Landscape Designation provide priority, flexibility, or exceptions in federal partner programs?

Answer: REPI project proposals within federally designated sentinel landscapes receive additional consideration during the review process.

For the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service programs, the program criteria remain the same whether a property is inside or outside a sentinel landscape. Sentinel Landscape Coordinators are, however, encouraged to work with their state conservationist and participate on the state technical advisory committee where they can discuss potentially allowing extra funding ranking points for properties within sentinel landscapes.

Question: How are goals and objectives different in terms of how they relate to the mission priorities outlined in the application guidance document?

Answer: There are seven mission priorities that capture goals of the partnership's federal partners. The FCC asks that applicants align their goals and objectives with these priorities to ensure that landscapes advance the goals of the federal partners. Therefore, goals may look similar to partnership mission priorities. However, objectives are where applicants should be identifying more specific, short-term goals relevant to the landscape's challenges and concerns.

Question: Should landscape goals and objective be more quantitative or qualitative in nature? Should metrics of success be included with the goals and objectives?

Answer: The FCC is looking for a qualitative and quantitative discussion of goals and objectives, to the extent possible. The FCC does not expect strong, detailed quantitative metrics of success at this phase in the process, but more competitive proposals will demonstrate an understanding of possible quantitative metrics to measure goals and objectives. Above all, this section should provide an explanation of how these goals and objectives are addressing the challenges and concerns identified earlier in the proposal.

Example: During their project development, the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape focused on the measures, metrics, and spatial priorities of their local and agency partners as a means for all to buy in, and then assessed where each partner fit into the execution of the partnership goals and objectives.

Question: What is the funding range to be awarded to hire a partnership coordinator? Is the coordinator position full-time? Are Sentinel Landscape Coordinators expected to raise funds for projects or operating support? Can partnership coordinator be a firm or must it be an individual?

Answer: The FCC will make up to \$300,000 in total funding available over a three-year period to support the coordinator position. Thereafter, local partnerships are expected to

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identify cash or in-kind contributions to cover up to 50 percent of the cost of the position. Additionally, coordinators are expected to apply for funding from programs to advance the goals and objectives of the landscape. The FCC expects that the coordinator role will be a full-time position but understands that this may vary depending on the needs of the sentinel landscape.

The partnership coordinator can take on many forms based on the needs of the landscape. There is flexibility for landscapes to determine what is right for their partnership. To date, all landscapes have had individuals serve as coordinator. Some of those coordinators are from partner organizations meaning the FCC helps support the salary of an individual. In other cases, the FCC has supported a coordinator in an individual, contractor-like role. It is the FCC's intent to hire an individual, as opposed to a firm, to serve in the coordinator capacity, but the mechanisms to do so are flexible.

Question: How can a prospective sentinel landscape acquire state and local agency support and prioritization to include in their proposal without yet having a federal designation? Is state-level legislative support of the sentinel landscape required?

Answer: The FCC is looking for a demonstration of state and local engagement. This engagement can be in the form of legislative recognition but does not have to be. Applicants should discuss any way in which state and local agencies are coordinating on sentinel landscape goals and objectives. Any sort of work towards state and local engagement will be viewed favorably—there is no expectation of a certain type of state action.

Question: Is this program suitable only for rural areas with large parcels or could it be used in a suburban area where development is encroaching? As an example, would a suburban park use meet the goals?

Answer: Any landscape can be a Sentinel Landscape, if anchored by an installation and there is an opportunity to address shared resource concerns and partnership goals.

Question: Is there a minimum or maximum size requirement for the geographic area of a sentinel landscape?

Answer: There are no size requirements or limitations for sentinel landscapes. The FCC will, however, look for justification on the size and boundary of the proposed landscape in the discussion of the identified climate change, natural resource, and encroachment challenges and partner engagement. A landscape's size should be determined by the set of shared concerns identified and the coordination and engagement of available state and local partners.

Question: Can applicants submit a proposal for a sentinel landscape that is adjacent to or overlapping with an existing landscape?

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Answer: There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to sentinel landscapes. If a landscape has identified natural resource, climate change, and incompatible development challenges similar to those of an existing, geographically proximate landscape, it may make the most sense for those groups of partners to be working together. If the two adjacent landscapes have separate sets of challenges and priorities, then it may be better to have two separate sentinel landscapes. This should be determined at the beginning of the planning process by determining which challenges and concerns are driving the desire for a sentinel landscape designation. This will be unique to each landscape.

Question: Is there a limit to the number of Sentinel Landscapes that will be designated in 2021?

Answer: The limit is determined by the FCC's resources to support the coordinator position and the number of federal agency employees available to provide support for the program. The FCC hopes to designate three to five sentinel landscapes, but this number is limited by the number of applications we receive and the resources available to support the partnership.