

Criteria	Low (1 Point)	Meets Expectations (3 Points)	Exceptional (5 Points)	Score
Furthering WREN Program Goals and NEWT Mission	Proposal focuses primarily on active forest management or extractive practices.	Proposal explicitly meets WREN's goal and addresses ecological questions relevant to unmanaged, rewilding, or recovering forest systems.	The proposal meets WREN's goal and aligns with NEWT's values, clearly articulating why this work is important for understanding and protecting wildlands.	
Alignment with WREN Funding Categories	Work does not fit into defined WREN funding categories.	Work fits into one WREN funding category.	Work fits well into one or more of the defined funding categories.	
Scientific Merit/Ecological Insight	Research question is unclear or poorly framed; methods are weak, inappropriate, or unlikely to yield meaningful ecological insight.	Research question and methods are clear and appropriate; project is grounded in existing knowledge and contributes meaningfully to understanding forest ecological processes.	Project is well-designed, insightful, rigorous, and addresses a gap in wildlands or forest ecology. Demonstrates strong grounding in existing literature, methodological choices, and clear awareness of uncertainty and limits.	
Demonstration of Need/Novel Contribution to Wildlands Ecology	Proposal does not clearly articulate why the work is needed or how it adds value beyond existing research or monitoring.	Proposal clearly describes the need for the work and situates it within existing research, contributing incremental or localized knowledge.	Proposal makes a compelling case for need, directly addressing a documented or clearly explained gap in wildlands or forest ecology. Project adds meaningful value even if exploratory, short-term, or focused on baseline or observational data.	
Wilderness Ethics/Consideration and Mitigation of Ecological Impact	Project is high impact (requires permanent structures or significant soil/plant disturbance).	Proposal uses non-destructive methods or clearly identifies steps to mitigate impacts.	Proposal demonstrates strong ethical grounding in non-intervention and respect for wilderness values. Proposal clearly articulates how research design minimizes impacts.	
Feasibility/Capacity to complete work	Timeline, scope, or budget are missing or unrealistic; proposal raises serious concerns about the applicant's ability to complete the work as described.	Project is feasible within the proposed timeframe and budget. Applicant demonstrates adequate capacity to complete the work.	Project is well-scoped and realistic, with a clear understanding of logistical, seasonal, and analytical constraints. All other funding is secured.	
			Total Score	/30
Recommend Funding?	Yes / No	Partial \$		
Additional Comments:				