



News Release

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Good Neighbor Authority Master Agreement Signed

(Boise) - The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and the Forest Service's Northern and Intermountain regions have signed a statewide Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) Master Agreement aimed at improving forest health, reducing the occurrence and severity of wildfires, and creating more economic opportunity.

"This master agreement provides the authority for all the national forests within Idaho to enter into local agreements with IDL to implement projects on the ground," Northern Region Forester Leanne Marten said.

The IDL and Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests are drafting the first Good Neighbor Authority Agreement for a specific project in Idaho. It will enable the IDL to assist the Forest Service by implementing a timber salvage sale project in north-central Idaho. An agreement is expected to be reached this summer.

IDL will sell the timber and administer the forest restoration project in the fall. Excess revenues from the project will be held in a Good Neighbor Authority dedicated account to do more work on federal lands in future projects in cooperation with the Forest.

"Success in Idaho during the start-up phase of Good Neighbor Authority requires financial commitments from all partners, including the State of Idaho, Forest Service and forest industry," Idaho State Forester David Groeschl said. "The Forest Service contribution will pay for a program manager, forester and grants/contracts analyst as well as some contractor field preparation costs for a three- to five-year period."

The State of Idaho commitment comes in the form of administration and in-kind services provided through IDL staff and budget authority approved by the Idaho Legislature earlier this year. The forest industry contribution will cover one-time capital outlay costs (laptops, vehicles, radios, etc.) in the first year, along with ongoing funds to help cover contractor fees.

The program performance will be evaluated in three years to determine if the initial investment is worthwhile. Anticipated results include more acres treated to improve forest and watershed health, more timber volume made available to Idaho markets, and initiation of a financially self-sustaining program.

"The goal of Good Neighbor Authority in Idaho is to increase the pace and scale of forest and watershed restoration activities on federal forests," Intermountain Region Forester Nora Rasure said. "These cooperative efforts can help improve forest health, reduce fuels and threats to communities and watersheds from catastrophic wildfires, and create more jobs and economic benefits."

State Forester Groeschl agreed. "Successful implementation of GNA in Idaho will require a focused and committed effort from all partners over the next several years to achieve these benefits."

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