



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Joint News Release

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\$1 million invested in Northern Idaho through Good Neighbor Authority

MISSOULA, Mont., June 18, 2024 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Northern Region is investing \$1 million to expand the collaborative work with the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health through the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA).

The investments will fund projects on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest while also providing funding for staffing capacity for the IDL.

These funds will support approximately 3,000 acres of fuels reduction work administered by IDL such as fuel breaks and vegetation treatments to improve forest health. The funds will also expand road repairs to improve watershed conditions and provide access for wildfire management and implementation of project activities.

“Our strong partnership with IDL through the Good Neighbor Authority program is an important component in restoring National Forest System lands in Idaho,” said Deputy Regional Forester Tim Garcia. “The continuation of this successful partnership will ensure a healthier future for our National Forests and communities that are more resilient to wildfire.”

The additional investment in GNA expands forest management capacity to help meet Shared Stewardship goals. Through coordination with private landowners to define and implement cross-boundary projects, Shared Stewardship builds a holistic approach to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health, doubling the number of acres treated on National Forest System lands in Idaho by 2025.

The Shared Stewardship efforts emerged because of collaboration between the State of Idaho and the USDA Forest Service and analyzes how the focus of federal and state resources on critically needed treatments can impact at-risk forestlands extending from the national forests across all ownership boundaries. State and federal officials are working with diverse interest groups through partnerships and forest collaborative groups, to prioritize areas for treatment, improve coordination with adjacent forestland owners, and better leverage limited resources.

Work is underway throughout 621,400 acres of Forest Service land within a 2-million-acre landscape in the Idaho Panhandle which was jointly prioritized for fuels reduction and forest restoration activities.

“These funds will expand the work IDL is able to do on federal ground to better protect our communities,” said Idaho State Forester Craig Foss. “Much of the current GNA work is within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), where homes and forestland meet. This work is vital to help decrease the risk of catastrophic wildfire to adjacent forests, homes, and nearby towns.”

Work on federal lands within the WUI also helps IDL encourage similar work on bordering private forestlands, which in turn better protects the entire landscape, as is the goal of Shared Stewardship.

These cooperative efforts help improve forest health, reduce fuel and wildfire threats to communities and watersheds, and create more jobs and economic benefits.

To learn more about the collaborative work visit:

[Good Neighbor Authority | US Forest Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

[Good Neighbor Authority | Idaho Department of Lands \(idaho.gov\)](#)

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About the Northern Region One of the U.S. Forest Service:

The U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region, oversees 25 million acres of public lands stretching from the Dakotas to Montana and Idaho. Stretching from the prairies of the Dakotas to the majestic peaks of Montana and Idaho, these National Forests and Grasslands provide a multitude of benefits for the public and the environment. Our mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. We achieve this through a commitment to multiple-use management, ensuring a balance between conservation, recreation, and resource utilization.

About Good Neighbor Authority:

Established by Congress in 2014 and amended in 2018, Good Neighbor Authority provides the Forest Service a simple and straightforward way to enter into management agreements with states, tribes and counties. Today, the Good Neighbor Authority is essential in pooling federal, state, tribal, and county resources to complete more forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration work on national forests and grasslands.