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NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Forest Service and State of Utah sign Shared Stewardship agreement

Salt Lake City, Utah — May 22, 2019 — Today, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue joined Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert to sign an agreement between the Forest Service and the State of Utah focused on shared stewardship.

As part of this Shared Stewardship Agreement, the State of Utah and the USDA Forest Service are working together to identify and map priority landscapes that will guide activities across jurisdictional boundaries. Utah and the Forest Service will work in partnership to restore these priority landscapes using all tools available, including existing programs such as Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative and the Governor's Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy.

"This agreement is about setting priorities together and combining resources to achieve healthier forests for the people of Utah," said Secretary Perdue. "We will use every available authority and tool at our disposal to support partnership efforts to improve forest health and target treatments in areas with the highest payoffs. We want to leave America's forests better than we found them and that means creating meaningful stewardship partnerships that proactively keep our forests healthy."

This shared stewardship agreement establishes a framework that will allow the State of Utah to work collaboratively with the Forest Service to accomplish mutual goals and effectively respond to the increasing suite of challenges on National Forest System lands within Utah.

"Through programs like the Watershed Restoration Initiative, which is responsible for restoring over 1.6 million acres of priority watershed statewide, our state has developed a history of working collaboratively with our federal and local partners," said Governor Herbert. "This new Shared Stewardship agreement offers us another tool in our toolkit to elevate cooperation with our federal partners. This added collaboration will help us address the most critical needs impacting the health of Utah forests and watersheds."

Under the agreement, the State of Utah and the USDA Forest Service will focus on landscape-scale forest restoration activities that protect at-risk communities and watersheds. Shared Stewardship responds to the urgent and growing challenges faced by managers and owners of forests in Utah and across the nation, among them catastrophic wildfires, invasive species, drought, and epidemics of forest insects and disease. Of particular concern are longer fire seasons and the increasing size and



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severity of wildfires, along with the expanding risk to communities, water sources, wildlife habitat, air quality, and the safety of firefighters.

The agreement can be found at: [Utah Agreement for Shared Stewardship](#).

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