



Good Neighbor Authority

March, 2021—Provided by the United States Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region

The objective of the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) is to improve coordination across federal, state, and private boundaries during hazardous fuels, insect and disease, and watershed restoration projects. The Forest Service's (FS) primary intent of GNA is to provide flexibility for **Forests to enter into agreements with state agencies (or counties/tribes) to implement activities on federal lands using federal or state funding**. The GNA partner is implementing land management activities on behalf of FS and can subsequently enter into sub-agreements, timber contracts, etc per their regulations (in compliance with FS stipulations) to execute the agreed upon work.

Project activities that can utilize GNA include:

- **Forest restoration:** Timber stand improvement, rx burning*, reforestation, timber sales to treat insect or disease infected stands, project support such as sale preparation, biological assessments, heritage surveys, environmental analysis.
- **Hazardous fuels reduction:** Forest thinning, piling, removing, etc.
- **Fish and wildlife habitat improvement:** Fish passages, instream fish structures, developing wildlife water sources, constructing turkey piles, installing duck boxes, rx burning.*
- **Watershed restoration:** Seeding for soil stabilization, decommissioning existing roads.

Key Considerations

- The Forest Service must retain responsibility for NEPA decisions under GNA, however all work pre and post decision can be done by the state partner.
- Most types of funds can be used: appropriations, state funds, program income, and third party funding for activities as appropriate.¹
- Partners can charge their established NICRA², or if they don't have one, a default of 10%.
- No match is required.
- Resource Conservation Districts do not qualify as state agencies under GNA, however can be engaged through a state, county or tribe.
- GNA can also be used when no transfer of funds is executed – just access to Federal lands.
- Where timber removal is considered, FS shall provide or approve all silviculture prescriptions and marking guides to be applied on Federal land. Revenue can be reinvested within GNA agreement SOW by state agency, as well as used for planning.
- GNA agreements may be executed for up to 10 years.
- GNA is not reciprocal – GNA does not allow federal crews to work on state/private lands (use participating agreement w/ Wyden).
- GNA is not a collection authority – FS cannot receive funds under GNA.
- GNA now allows for the reconstruction, repair, or restoration of National Forest System roads necessary to carry out authorized services pursuant to a GNA agreement.

*Rx burning under GNA is appropriate for habitat benefit, but otherwise likely more appropriate under the Cooperative Fire Agreement.

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¹ Stewardship retained receipts may only be used for stewardship contracts and agreements and are therefore not appropriate to fund GNA agreements.

² Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement