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Photo: Laura Wagner

Western State Forestry Agencies Good Neighbor Authority Activities and Accomplishments

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Background

The Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) is a critical cross-boundary tool for improving forest conditions and increasing the pace and scale of restoration treatments across landscapes. The Authority allows the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to enter into agreements with states, counties, and tribes to conduct authorized restoration services on federal lands.

The Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF), representing State Foresters across the 23 western states and U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands, has supported GNA since its beginning as a pilot and, later, its permanent expansion in the 2014 Farm Bill¹. Recent amendments to the Authority, including road reconstruction, repair, and restoration fixes for National Forest System (NFS) and BLM roads, and the authority for states to retain GNA timber sale revenues for reinvestment in additional restoration services, have benefited GNA's success.

States are essential partners in implementing GNA, and state forestry agencies have embraced opportunities to use GNA in coordination with their Forest Service and BLM partners. Sixteen of the 23 CWSF member states have either or both Forest Service and BLM-managed lands to implement GNA. Recognizing the opportunities for GNA implementation in the West, CWSF established a GNA Task Force comprising state forestry agency GNA staff with the intent to provide a platform for peer learning, and exchanging information, resource materials, and ideas.

This document is a combined effort of CWSF staff and the GNA Task Force to capture and share GNA activities and accomplishments across the West. Thirteen western state forestry agencies staff provided responses to a CWSF GNA data sensing. This document synthesizes the information gathered from those 13 western state forestry agencies, and is intended to provide a snapshot of their collective GNA accomplishments from the time each state forestry agency began using the Authority to the close of state fiscal year (FY) 2023 (June 30, 2023).

¹ Agricultural Act of 2014, [P.L. 113-79, sec. 8206](#)

GNA Agreements

Western state forestry agencies began utilizing GNA quickly following its permanent enactment in the 2014 Farm Bill (Table 1). The Colorado State Forest Service began GNA work under the permanent authority in 2015², followed by the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (AZ DFFM), the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (MT DNRC), and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) in 2016. From 2017 – 2018, seven additional western state forestry agencies entered into GNA agreements.

Table 1. Timeline of When Western State Forestry Agencies Commenced GNA

State	2015	2016	2017	2018
Alaska			X	
Arizona		X		
California		X		
Colorado	X			
Idaho		X		
Montana		X		
Nebraska				X
New Mexico				X
North Dakota			X	
Oregon		X		
South Dakota			X	
Washington			X	
Wyoming			X	



Photo: Fred McCartney, Nebraska Forest Service

At the time of this synthesis, the 13 state forestry agencies reported 149 active GNA agreements with the Forest Service and 34 expired or closed-out agreements (Table 2). This number includes Forest Service Master Agreements, Supplemental Project Agreements (SPAs), and Stand-alone Agreements. With the BLM, the 13 states reported 17 active agreements and 11 expired or closed-out agreements. The agreements cover activities and projects on 61 national forests and 22 BLM districts across the West.

The Wyden Authority is referenced in 38 western state forestry agencies' GNA agreements. The Forest Service and the BLM have the authority under Wyden to complete restoration work on non-federal lands that benefit watersheds on public lands³. While revenues generated from timber sales conducted under a GNA agreement may not be utilized off federal lands as required by the 2018 Farm Bill⁴, appropriated federal dollars under a GNA agreement may be combined with the Wyden Authority to conduct eligible restoration services on neighboring state and private lands.

² Colorado and Utah were authorized under various federal appropriations acts to pilot GNA prior to the permanent authority in the 2014 Farm Bill
³ Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Agreements ([P.L. 104-208, sec. 124](#), [P.L. 105-277, sec. 323](#), as amended in [P.L. 108-7, sec. 135](#), [P.L. 109-54, sec. 434](#), and [P.L. 111-11, sec. 3001](#))

⁴ Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, [P.L. 115-334](#)

Table 2. State Forestry Agencies Active and Expired GNA Agreements with the Forest Service and BLM

State	Active Forest Service Master Agreements	Active Forest Service SPAs	Active Forest Service Stand-alone Agreements	Active BLM GNA Agreements	Expired/ Closed Out Forest Service GNA Agreements	Expired/ Closed out BLM Agreements
Alaska	1	3	0	0	0	0
Arizona	1	4	2	0	4	2
California	1	3	0	1	1	0
Colorado	2	25	1	3	6	1
Idaho	1	5	4	1	0	2
Montana	1	0	8	1	0	0
Nebraska	1	2	0	0	1	0
New Mexico	1	2	0	0	5	0
North Dakota	0	0	1	0	0	0
Oregon	2	33	0	5	7	3
South Dakota	1	1	0	1	3	0
Washington	2	21	0	2	0	1
Wyoming	1	19	0	3	7	2
Totals	15	118	16	17	34	11

GNA Authorized Restoration Services Accomplishments



Photo: Carolina Manriquez, Colorado State Forest Service

Western state forestry agencies have completed numerous authorized restoration services under GNA agreements (Table 3). To date, it has been most widely utilized by states for non-commercial fuels and forest health projects, followed by project preparation fieldwork, timber sales, and invasive weed control. State forestry agencies have also utilized the Authority for road repair and decommissioning projects, environmental analyses, aquatic organism passage, wildlife habitat improvement, native seed purchase, herbicide purchase, reforestation, monitoring, and planting.

Seven western state forestry agencies have completed 254 timber sales across 78,261 acres under GNA agreements (Table 3 and Table 4). These timber sales have generated 658,273 MBF of timber and a combined net value of \$66,620,170. Several agencies, IDL, MT DNRC, and ODF, have used GNA to conduct comprehensive environmental analyses for 12 Categorical Exclusions encompassing 41,989 acres. AZ DFFM, IDL, MT DNRC, ODF, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources (WA DNR) have used GNA to complete discrete National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) surveys across 564,613 acres.



Photo: Bill Wolf, Colorado State Forest Service

Table 3. Western State Forestry Agencies GNA Restoration Services Accomplishments

State	Non-commercial Fuels & Forest Health (acres)	Invasive Weed Control (acres)	Road Repair and Decommissioning (miles)	Aquatic Organism Passage (Bridge and Culvert Repair) (number)	Wildlife Habitat Improvement (acres)	Discrete NEPA Surveys (acres)	Project Preparation Fieldwork (acres)	Timber Sales (acres)	Other
Arizona	3,409	47	-	-	-	841	29,450	7,843	23 native seed purchase (acres), 97 herbicide purchase (acres)
California	1,800	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Colorado	887	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	6,150	400 aerial spray, Tussock moth control (acres)
Idaho	5,014	924	398	14	-	479,361	9,207	10,122	1,812 reforestation (acres)
Montana	498	180	77	-	-	6,387	1,150	17,120	-
Nebraska	667	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Mexico	1,710	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Dakota	187	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oregon	16,666	475	90	-	-	24,887	23,885	21,710	650 monitoring (acres)
South Dakota	-	18	-	-	-	-	15,566	-	-
Washington	9,879	294	292	2	361	53,137	7,445	8,458	338 planting (acres)
Wyoming	3,485	-	-	-	552	-	358	6,858	435 aspen monitoring (acres)
Totals	44,202	1,937	857	16	913	564,613	92,061	78,261	

Table 4. Western State Forestry Agencies GNA Timber Sale Metrics

State	Number of Timber Sales Sold	Volume of Timber Sold (MBF)	Net Value of Timber Sales Sold
Arizona	5	65,674	-\$2,729,509
Colorado	68	139,340	\$1,165,000
Idaho	40	112,545	\$20,022,523
Montana	45	93,300	\$14,183,190
Oregon	41	121,380	\$13,060,632
Washington	22	94,186	\$20,068,334
Wyoming	33	31,848	\$850,000
Totals	254	658,273	\$66,620,170

Eleven of the 13 western state forestry agencies responded that their state agency staff conduct GNA activities and projects (Table 5). Ten execute private-sector contracts, and seven utilize other grants and agreements such as state agreements, county agreements, universities, etc.

Table 5. Who Completes GNA Activities?

State	State forestry employees	Private-sector service contracts	Other grants and agreements (state agreements, county agreements, universities, etc.)
Alaska	x		
Arizona	x	x	x
California	x	x	x
Colorado	x	x	x
Idaho	x	x	x
Montana	x	x	
Nebraska		x	
New Mexico		x	
North Dakota	x		
Oregon	x	x	x
South Dakota	x		x
Washington	x	x	x
Wyoming	x	x	
Totals	11	10	7

GNA Structures and Staffing

Across the West, state forestry agencies have taken various approaches to GNA structures within their agencies and the number of staff contributing to GNA activities. When asked whether the state forestry agency considers GNA an established/dedicated program within the agency or as a tool for implementation, responses were split, with seven responding that GNA is a program vs. six that consider GNA a tool (Table 6). The number of staff also significantly varies by state forestry agency with a range of no permanent or seasonal (dedicated or non-dedicated) GNA staff at the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (AK DOF),

CAL FIRE, the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department Forestry Division, and the North Dakota Forest Service, up to 36.67 full-time equivalent (FTE) of permanent and seasonal staff at ODF (Table 7).

Table 6. Is GNA a Tool or an Established Program within State Forestry Agencies?

State	Program	Tool
Alaska		x
Arizona		x
California		x
Colorado	x	
Idaho	x	
Montana	x	
Nebraska		x
New Mexico		x
North Dakota		x
Oregon	x	
South Dakota	x	
Washington	x	
Wyoming	x	

Table 7. GNA Staffing Numbers in Western State Forestry Agencies

State	Number of permanent state forestry agency staff in the GNA program	Number of dedicated seasonal state forestry agency GNA staff (FTE)	Number of dedicated and non-dedicated seasonal state forestry agency GNA staff (FTE)
Alaska	0.00	0.00	0.00
Arizona	5.00	0.00	0.00
California	0.00	0.00	0.00
Colorado	14.40	3.00	3.00
Idaho	15.00	6.90	6.90
Montana	21.00	0.00	3.00
Nebraska	0.33	0.33	0.33
New Mexico	0.00	0.00	0.00
North Dakota	0.00	0.00	2.00
Oregon	25.00	2.67	9.00
South Dakota	1.25	0.00	0.00
Washington	30.00	0.00	0.00
Wyoming	1.00	5.00	0.00
Totals	112.98	17.90	24.23

GNA Funding

Funding for GNA activities and projects is supplied through various sources. Prior to the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)⁵, there were no federal appropriations specifically for GNA work, and any Forest Service or BLM funds used for GNA came from existing budget line items (BLIs). BIL appropriated \$200 million total for FY 2022 to 2026 to GNA agreements, \$160 million to the Forest Service, and \$40 million to BLM. State appropriations and third-party funds may also be used for GNA work. Finally, revenue generated from GNA timber sales is also used to conduct additional authorized restoration services indicated within GNA agreements.

In total, \$105,491,535 in federal appropriations have been awarded across the 13 western state forestry agencies for GNA implementation since its permanent authorization (Table 8). During the same timeframe, seven agencies have received state appropriations equating to \$58,127,515. Five state forestry agencies received third-party funding totaling \$12,386,367, and seven western states have generated \$49,687,629 in revenues from GNA timber sales to implement additional restoration services identified within GNA agreements.

Table 8. Western State Forestry Agencies GNA Funding

State	Federal funding received for GNA	State funding received for GNA	Third-party funding for GNA	Revenue-generated from GNA
Alaska	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0 ⁶
Arizona	\$13,002,200	\$2,150,900	\$10,069,367	\$97,955
California	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Colorado	\$25,700,000	\$6,000,000	\$284,000	\$1,165,000
Idaho	\$12,011,587	\$1,917,907	\$1,100,000	\$16,551,110
Montana	\$11,875,000	\$14,400,000	\$828,000	\$8,306,865
Nebraska	\$654,630	\$0	\$0	\$0
New Mexico	\$2,573,499	\$0	\$0	\$0
North Dakota	\$649,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Oregon	\$16,207,513	\$20,733,708	\$0	\$10,346,699
South Dakota	\$477,905	\$0 ⁷	\$0	\$0
Washington	\$11,040,000	\$12,525,000	\$0	\$12,470,000
Wyoming	\$8,000,000	\$400,000	\$105,000	\$750,000
Totals	\$105,491,535	\$58,127,515	\$12,386,367	\$49,687,629

Closing

GNA remains a critically important authority across western state forestry agencies to accomplish restoration treatments across forested landscapes in coordination with their Forest Service and BLM partners. Utilizing the CWSF platform, western state forestry agencies share information, including data metrics, successes, and lessons learned regarding GNA implementation to improve the use of the Authority across the West. The CWSF GNA Task Force anticipates refreshing this document annually with updated information.

⁵ Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, [P.L. 117-58](#)

⁶ At the time of data gathering, Alaska was in progress calculating total revenue-generated from GNA timber sales.

⁷ At the time of data gathering, South Dakota was in progress calculating state funding received for GNA activities.