



Good Neighbor Authority

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated March 2018

Q: What is the Good Neighbor Authority?

A: The Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) is an authority that stems from the 2014 Farm Bill allowing State agencies to enter into agreements with the US Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management to accomplish a variety of forest, watershed, and rangeland restoration activities on USFS lands, with the added benefit of using state mechanisms to complete work.

Q: Why is DNR engaging in the GNA?

A: There are many short- and long-term benefits of the GNA agreement in Washington state, including but not limited to:

- Reducing wildfire risk to communities and state trust lands
- Building upon traditional beneficial partnerships to benefit all lands across Washington
- Increasing the resiliency of Washington state forests to disease, insects and wildfire by working across ownership boundaries to increase treatment effectiveness
- Increasing community economic resiliency through creating opportunities associated with Federal lands through utilization of state resources to increase project efficiencies
- Provide additive capacity to federal partners to support an increase in pace and scale of restoration activities on Federal lands

Q: How does the GNA fit with DNR/Commissioner Franz's emphasis on Forest Health, Wildfire, and Rural Economic Development?

A: By fostering a collaborative approach and utilizing state processes and efficiencies, the collective capacity to restore and treat all forests regardless of ownership is increased. Projects will be evaluated based on mutual benefits to federal and state land, as well as benefits to local communities. The GNA expands the capability of the DNR to work across boundaries and accomplish larger landscape-level approaches to treating and restoring federal lands and build on work already accomplished or planned on state trust lands.

Q: What is the short- and long-term vision for the GNA in Washington?

A: DNR will be in an exploratory and developmental pilot phase through Q4 2018, as the agency evaluates and launches additional GNA projects, explores how to best utilize GNA in concert with DNR programs and priorities, and builds capacity to implement the program. During this time, additional funding sources may become available, including the development of program income – a key component of a self-sustaining program. In addition, DNR and USFS will be planning and implementing pilot projects in National Forests that are interested in the benefits of the GNA partnership.



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Q: What are the benefits to the Forest Service of having the State provide support through the GNA?

A: Some benefits to the Forest service include but are not limited to:

- Use of additional resources and state efficiencies to provide new capacity and tools to support ongoing forest service work, as well as new projects that may lack implementation, monitoring, or planning resources
- Accomplish more work on the landscape by working through collaboration and maximizing opportunities to leverage each agencies resources
- Increases partnerships from the top down/bottom up perspective, benefitting the boots on the ground to the agencies leadership

Q: How will the GNA benefit Trust Beneficiaries in Washington?

A: Trustees will see benefits through improved forest health on adjacent lands, which will provide additional protection against wildfire, insects, disease, and other potential risks to state investments. In addition, the GNA will function in an additive capacity to core programs and responsibilities of DNR. Consequently, the department expects little to no effect on current trust land operations and deliverables. The DNR will hire new field staff to implement GNA projects and utilize the benefit of third party contracting authorized through the agreement to increase work while maintaining the agency's normal day-to-day operations.

Q: How will the GNA benefit counties in Washington?

A: Counties will benefit from the jobs, forest health improvements, and restoration projects that the GNA will enable. In addition, and unlike forest restoration projects conducted through the USFS Stewardship Authority, Counties will receive a portion of the timber receipts returned to the USFS generated through certain GNA sales. Only projects that have a commercial timber component will produce receipts and many projects through the GNA will not have commercial components.

Q: Is the State taking over management responsibility of federal lands in Washington?

A: No. Washington State will bring additional resources to existing USFS capacity, beginning with implementation functions. In the future, DNR will work with USFS to explore how the GNA could bring new planning capacity to the forest service in the state.



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Q: What authority and responsibilities does the Forest Service retain?

A: National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decisions signature, approval of the silvicultural prescriptions, and marking guides. DNR acts as a “trusted agent” to implement restoration projects.

Q: Will state and federal laws be followed by DNR?

A: Yes, projects proposed under the GNA will in accordance with requirements of but not limited to:

- NEPA decisions and mitigations
- The State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA), on a project by project basis
- Other applicable laws including the Endangered Species Act and National Historic Preservation Act.

Q: What is Program Income?

A: Program Income (PI) is earned by the State from GNA restoration projects that have a timber or commercial product component. The State may use PI to recoup program costs incurred. PI itself is not monies of the United States which excludes it from payment to the counties, making it separate from timber receipts returned to the forest service. PI generated under the GNA will be utilized to conduct additional restoration activities and agency capacity for additive implementation and planning capacity within the USFS forest in which the PI was earned

Q: What has been accomplished to-date since the GNA was signed?

A: March 10, 2017-July 2017

- DNR and the USFS enter sign Master Agreement
- DNR signs two Supplemental Project Agreements (SPAs) to implement two pilot projects with the Gifford Pinchot National Forest (GPNF) and the Colville National Forest (CNF).

July, 2017-Winter 2018

- Implementation of Signed Agreements and projects occurring to date. GPNF Project will be finishing July 2018. CNF will continue implementing and auctioning first project in summer of 2018.
- Continuous outreach with forests around the state to scope additional projects and engaging stakeholders and the general public to educate and inform about what GNA is and how it works.
- DNR program development, mechanics, and budget design



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Q: What has been accomplished to date cont.

A: March 2018

- DNR hires 3 full-time project GNA positions to develop program and implement projects
- DNR begins foundation design of long-term program design within the agency
- Federal Lands Revolving Account passed in the State Legislature – an account dedicated to receiving and expending Program Income as agency legislation.
- \$1.8 million dollars acquired in Federal Grant dollars and State Capital dollars for staffing and implementation of projects.
- DNR exploring third party contracting through GNA to use DNR state contracts to implement portions or entire projects.
- Pilot projects developed on the 5 main National Forests in the State, as well as future projects.

March 2018 – fall 2018

- Pilot Project implementation scheduled to occur on each forest in the state
- Auction of Block of Nine Project schedule for summer 2018.
- Expansion of GNA capabilities will be explored, including emphasis on third party contracting and planning.

Q: How will additional projects beyond the first pilots be selected?

A: The DNR is committed to exploring the wide variety of projects capable under the GNA with our federal partners, and will develop a transparent process for identifying and selecting projects. Projects that align with the Commissioners priorities, are collaboratively developed, benefit local communities, and are mutually beneficial to the USFS and DNR are anticipated to be prioritized. Alignment with the Department's newly developed 20 Year Forest Health Strategic Plan will also be an important factor.

Q: Where can I find more information about the GNA?

A: More information about the GNA can be found on the DNR's GNA website located at: www.dnr.wa.gov/GNA including updated news and events, links to more GNA resources, and contact information.