



GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY

PROGRAM UPDATE 2023



ABOUT GNA

Authorized under the 2014 Farm Bill, the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) allows federal land management agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, to work collaboratively with state governments to address forest health and wildfire risk issues on federal lands. At the most basic level,

GNA enables federal agencies to enter into agreements with state authorities to conduct activities like forest management, wildfire prevention, and restoration projects on federal lands. The State of Montana, through the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, is capitalizing on the authority to accelerate the pace and scale of forest management regardless of ownership.

HOUSE BILL 883 AND GNA

Funding from House Bill 883 is significantly enhancing the GNA program's capacity, supporting increased work in NEPA analysis, and boosting forest restoration contracting. These funds are also leveraged to maximize the impact of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other federal resources, aiming to amplify state investments in reducing wildfire risk and improving forest health.

2023 BY THE NUMBERS

10



TIMBER
SALES SOLD

33



SERVICE CONTRACTS
AWARDED

21.7 MILLION



BOARD FEET
SOLD

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Under a program dedicated to GNA implementation at DNRC, foresters collaborate with federal partners to develop and implement forest management and restoration projects that improve forest health and reduce wildfire hazards. The use of state contracts and procurement processes creates efficiency and results in shortened implementation and project completion timelines. GNA timber harvests provide economic stimulus through the sale of sawlogs and other raw material to Montana sawmills and wood product manufacturers; employment for loggers, forest contractors, and natural resource/engineering companies; improves forest road access for the recreating public and wildfire suppression crews; and reduces wildfire threats and impacts to communities, municipal watersheds, and forested landscapes.



CUMULATIVE PROGRAM STATS

2018 TO PRESENT DATE

OVER 100 MILLION BOARD FEET SOLD

WITH A CONTRACT VALUE OF **\$15.2 MILLION**

50

TIMBER SALES SOLD

38,497

ACRES

**UNDER ACTIVE
MANAGEMENT**

81

**SERVICE RESTORATION
CONTRACTS AWARDED**

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY



Pictured above: GNA Westside Bypass Project, 2023.

Snowshoe Granite 1000 Roadside Fuel Break Project - Kootenai National Forest

Situated just south of Libby, this crucial project lies within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) and aligns with priorities in the Lincoln County CWPP. The goal is to boost community safety by creating a fuel break covering 1,398 acres, with 1,192 of the acres slated for commercial harvest.

DNRC and the Kootenai National Forest worked collaboratively on the project design and scope of work. DNRC hired a contractor to complete National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation, and the analysis is set to wrap up in July 2024. Implementation is scheduled for later in the summer. This project is an example of the multiple benefits of efficient forest management for communities and the economy.

Westside Bypass Wildfire Resiliency Project - Lolo National Forest

The Westside Bypass Project reduces severe wildfire risks on national forest system lands, spanning the area between state and private ownership west of Seeley Lake and the community of Seeley Lake to the east. Covering 4,866 acres within the wildland-urban interface, it includes 678 acres of private land and 344 acres of national forest system lands within the Seeley Lake Game Preserve.

Through a combination of thinning, improvement, and regeneration cuts, the project is promoting species such as ponderosa pine and western larch creating a mosaic forest with diverse age classes of lodgepole pine. This outcome further lessens the threat of widespread impacts from insect and disease and increasing wildfire resilience.

As of January 2024, 98% of the harvest activity is complete with subsequent post-harvest activities, including temporary road deconstruction and various forest management practices, continuing through 2025. This strategic initiative underscores the commitment to proactive forest management, ensuring the long-term health and resilience of the landscape.

Pictured below: GNA Ashley Fuel Break Project, 2023.



