



AGREEMENT FOR SHARED STEWARDSHIP

Between

THE STATE OF WYOMING

And the

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREST SERVICE

This updated Agreement for Shared Stewardship is hereby made and entered into by the State of Wyoming, and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service to work towards shared interests and the national framework of Shared Stewardship.

Introduction

In 2020, Governor Mark Gordon and then Secretary Sonny Perdue crafted and enacted the first iteration of this Agreement for Shared Stewardship (Agreement). Since the original Agreement was completed, multiple beneficial projects have been implemented across the state of Wyoming. Areas in which this Agreement could be improved have been identified, creating a need for updating the existing Agreement. This new Agreement, and all addendum hereby incorporated by reference, shall serve as the new Agreement between the State of Wyoming (State) and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) and is effective upon final signature.

The State and the USDA Forest Service share mutual goals and commitments to advance Shared Stewardship in Wyoming. All parties in this Agreement commit to existing partnerships, programs, and initiatives. This document outlines the commitment of both the State and the USDA Forest Service, working in close partnership and good faith, to improve forests and grasslands across Wyoming.

This Agreement is not an authorizing tool; the parties will rely on all available authorities, including, but not limited to, the Good Neighbor Authority, applicable Farm Bill Authorities, and the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act, to implement priority projects.

The National Vision and Framework of Shared Stewardship

The USDA Forest Service initiative for cross-boundary land management is described in the 2018 document *Toward Shared Stewardship Across Landscapes: An Outcome-Based Investment Strategy*.

This strategy addresses challenges faced by federal, state, and private managers of forests and rangelands, including catastrophic wildfires, invasive species, degraded watersheds, insects and disease. Many of these challenges are not new but have changed in urgency, severity, frequency, or scale in recent years. Ecosystems and associated forest and grassland health, wildfire, watersheds, habitat, forage, and other resources are not strictly confined or defined by administrative boundaries, which make the concept and practice of Shared Stewardship vital to addressing these issues in a meaningful way.

Through Shared Stewardship, the State and the USDA Forest Service will work collaboratively to determine priorities, implement projects, share resources, and work towards identification of the highest need for protection or restoration within surrounding communities, watersheds, and priority areas across all lands. This approach addresses short term needs, long-term desired outcomes, and furthers multiple-use, sustained yield concepts. This outcome-based strategy has three primary elements:

1. Strategize on a statewide level. The State and USDA Forest Service will work together to achieve desired cross-boundary outcomes by combining mutual skills and resources. The State will lead in bringing stakeholders together to discuss strategies, issues, and priorities. Existing or newly developed statewide strategies will provide guidance for coordinating activities across jurisdictional boundaries, where appropriate.
2. Implement meaningful projects in the right places, at the appropriate scale. The State and the USDA Forest Service will utilize mapping and decision-making tools to identify the highest priority areas for projects to occur and work together to determine the appropriate scale for implementation.
3. Use all available tools to promote proactive management. The State and the USDA Forest Service will use all available authorities and tools to achieve desired outcomes and work towards implementation of strategies.

Mutual Commitments for Shared Stewardship in Wyoming

The State and the USDA Forest Service developed the following mutual commitments for Shared Stewardship in Wyoming:

1. ***We are committed to joint planning and resource sharing, especially in overlapping decision space, for immediate and ongoing work across the landscape.*** The State and the USDA Forest Service will work together to determine where and how to use available legal authorities and management tools, share financial resources, and leverage resources to the greatest extent possible to accomplish work across jurisdictional boundaries. We jointly commit to building, maintaining and expanding our collective relationships with communities, counties, tribal organizations, collaborative groups, community groups, conservation groups, and other stakeholders; to plan and act in a coordinated manner. We commit to work with all our partners to identify shared outcomes for cross-boundary work and utilize Good Neighbor Authority to the extent practicable. As of 2025, three state agencies (Office of State Land and Investment: State Forestry Division, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, and Wyoming Game and Fish Department) have used Master Agreements under the Good Neighbor Authority to accomplish needed work; these existing Master Agreements continue in accordance with their terms.

2. ***We are committed to continuing existing successful partnerships and programs.*** Wyoming and the USDA Forest Service have a long history of working cooperatively across landscapes through both state and federal programs. These long-standing partnerships and programs provide a foundation from which Shared Stewardship in Wyoming can be advanced. Current partnerships and programs include, but are not limited to: Forest Legacy, Health and Stewardship, Urban & Community Forestry, State Fire Assistance, Interagency Cooperative Fire Management and Response, Sage Grouse Implementation Team, Governor's Invasive Species Initiative, Bighorn National Forest Steering Committee, and the Programmatic Agreement on Compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act on USDA Forest Service lands in Wyoming. The State and the USDA Forest Service agree to collaboratively work in these partnerships and programs and identify and leverage other potential partnerships, initiatives, and programs in the future.
3. ***We are committed to collaborative planning and management.*** The State and the USDA Forest Service will work cooperatively to implement and integrate Wyoming's Forest Action Plan, Wyoming's Strategic Wildlife Action Plan and Strategic Habitat Plan, the Statewide Bighorn/Domestic Sheep Interaction Working Group plan, Wyoming's Greater Sage-grouse Executive Order, the USDA Forest Service's 5-year Vegetation Management Plans, land and resource management plans, and the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy. Parties will identify and map shared priorities across all lands and share proper and appropriate data and tools to implement land and resource management plans.

Modifications, Periodic Review and Termination of Agreement

The State and the USDA Forest Service will communicate on a regular basis to implement items outlined in this Shared Stewardship Agreement. The parties mutually agree to periodically review and make appropriate adjustments to this Agreement every four years, or as needs are identified, until the Agreement terminates in accordance with applicable law, regulation and policy. This Agreement is intended to be a "living document", to last no longer than 10-years. This Agreement will terminate 10-years from the date of the last signature.

General Terms and Conditions

1. Nothing in this Agreement affects the federal government's USDA Forest Service's government-to-government and trust relationship with Tribes or affects the USDA Forest Service's ability to exercise its authority under or ability to comply with federal law.
2. The State and the USDA Forest Service will evaluate the use of separate instruments to implement management activities associated with forest lands.
3. This Agreement in no way restricts the State and the USDA Forest Service from participating in similar activities with other entities.
4. This Agreement creates no right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity. The State and the USDA Forest Service shall manage their respective resources and activities in a separate, coordinated mutually beneficial manner to meet the purposes of this Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement authorizes the State and the USDA Forest Service to obligate or transfer anything of value.
5. Specific, prospective projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, property, and/or anything of value to a party requires the execution of separate agreements and are contingent upon numerous factors, including, as applicable, but not limited to:

availability of appropriated funds and other resources; cooperator availability of funds and other resources; administrative and legal requirements (including agency authorization by statute); etc.

6. Nothing in this Agreement is intended to alter, limit, or expand the agencies' statutory and regulatory authority.

Authorized Representatives

By signing below, each party certifies that the individuals listed are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to the Shared Stewardship Agreement.

In Witness whereof, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement as of the last date written below.

State of Wyoming

Date: 16 January 2026  _____

Mark Gordon, Governor of Wyoming

US Department of Agriculture

Date: 21 January 2026  _____

Thomas M. Schultz, Jr., Chief, USDA Forest Service

ADDENDUM 1

Increasing Responsible Forest Management in Wyoming

This addendum to the agreement for Shared Stewardship is directed at bolstering Wyoming's forest products industry and timber management. The addendum relates to those agencies of the State that closely manage or cooperate in the management of Wyoming's timber resources.

Introduction

Wyoming's forests and grasslands are an essential part of the state's identity and heritage, spanning millions of acres across rugged mountains, rolling foothills, and river valleys. From the lodgepole pine forests of the Medicine Bow and Shoshone to the mixed conifers of the Black Hills and Bighorns, these lands provide not only rich wildlife habitat and clean headwaters but also irreplaceable spaces for hunting, fishing, grazing, timber production, and recreation.

For generations, Wyoming citizens depended on and cherished forests as "working lands", supporting local economies and rural communities through forestry, livestock grazing, wood products, energy development, tourism, recreation, wildlife habitat, fishing and hunting access, and outdoor traditions. The stewardship of these diverse landscapes is inseparable from the Wyoming way of life, underscoring a commitment to manage forests with a focus on sustainability, access, resilience, and shared benefit for all who live in or visit the state.

These lands include all or portions of eight National Forests and one National Grassland, which together represent the backbone of Wyoming's forested landscapes:

Bighorn National Forest	Black Hills National Forest
Bridger-Teton National Forest	Caribou-Targhee National Forest
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest	Thunder-Basin National Grassland
Shoshone National Forest	Ashley National Forest
Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest	

Shared Vision for Increasing Active Forest Management

The State and the USDA Forest Service share a commitment to secure America's timber independence, revitalize rural economies, and protect Wyoming communities from catastrophic wildfire while recognizing the mutual benefits of a coordinated, landscape-scale approach to forest restoration and management. This includes the implementation of current and future national and state direction, including, but not limited to, the Forest Service National Active Forest Management Strategy, Executive Order 14225 - Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production, Secretarial Memo 1078-006 - Increasing Timber Production and Designating an Emergency Situation on National Forest System Lands, and Wyoming Executive Order 2025-04 - Increase of Active Forest Management in Wyoming.

Through existing authorities and the agreement for Shared Stewardship, the State and the USDA Forest Service will:

1. Expand sustainable domestic timber production by striving to jointly establish timber harvest goals by developing annual and 5-year work plans associated with those goals.
2. Streamline project delivery through the use of available tools and authorities that facilitate active forest management, including the implementation of new and expanded NEPA categorical exclusions and emergency authorities.
3. Leverage state-federal partnerships to address capacity constraints, enabling proper management of all lands and forest resources.
4. Enhance wildfire resilience, improve forest health, and enhance wildlife habitat by increasing the pace and scale of thinning, timber salvage, fuels reduction projects, and habitat restoration projects.

Timber-specific Objectives of Addendum 1

In many areas, timber-specific projects are in drastic need of implementation. This Addendum has identified three main areas of emphasis.

1. Wood Recovery and Utilization
 - a. Sustainable Timber Harvest: Increase wood product recovery from fuels-reduction and restoration projects, particularly an outlet for small-diameter wood.
 - b. Rapid Post-Wildfire Response and wood utilization: Co-develop and implement protocols for swift deployment of response teams and resources following wildfires
 - c. Market Development: Support local industry, milling, and bioenergy initiatives.
2. Collaborative Prioritization and Planning
 - a. Joint Identification of Priority Landscapes: use risk assessments, spatial data, and stakeholder input to annually identify and plan projects in high-priority areas for fuels reduction, restoration, and timber recovery.
 - b. Create Interagency Implementation Teams: In instances where resource sharing or agency expertise are not captured by other agreements or mechanisms, create interagency teams to address specific forest issues and maintain effective and efficient management of Wyoming forests.
 - i. These interagency implementation teams are to include other federal and state agencies, local government, and other partners.
 - c. Pilot Programs: pilot a new active management strategy within two National Forests in Wyoming, focused on increasing sustainable timber production while improving overall forest health and resilience. These landscapes will be strategically selected to demonstrate how the State's capacity, contracting efficiency, and local expertise can accelerate project implementation at a meaningful landscape scale.
 - i. The pilot projects will emphasize the efficiencies of the Wyoming Good Neighbor Authority on federal forested lands through streamlined planning, workforce integration, and expanded use of state contracting tools. Lessons learned through these pilot projects will inform future large-scale planning

efforts across Wyoming National Forests and provide a framework for integrating state-led implementation under the Shared Stewardship model.

3. **Monitoring and Adaptive Management**

- a. For monitoring purposes, the State and USDA Forest Service will create a combined tracking system for acres treated, wood recovered, and restoration outcomes.
- b. Based on progress, results, and stakeholder feedback, the State and USDA Forest Service will apply adaptive management strategies to adjust priorities and projects as necessary.

Other Shared Stewardship Opportunities

Through existing authorities and the agreement for Shared Stewardship, the State and the USDA Forest Service will identify opportunities to jointly manage other resources on Forest Service administered lands, including but not limited to:

1. Enhancing and providing sustainable wildlife habitat,
2. Supporting tourism and recreation opportunities,
3. Preserving and increasing grazing opportunities and Animal Unit Months (AUMs) statewide,
4. Exploring new opportunities to partner in energy development,
5. Engaging in collaborative planning.

The Parties affirm their commitment to collaborative decision-making, transparency, and a science-based, outcome-driven approach.

Commitment, Funding, and Review

To the extent consistent with existing authorities and available appropriations, the State and the USDA Forest Service agree to allocate staff, funding, and technical resources to jointly identify projects or other actions derived from the provisions of this Addendum. This Addendum will be reviewed annually and may be amended as new science or conditions warrant.