

## **(NEPA) National Environmental Policy Act Requirement**

Intent – To strengthen partnership coordination, expedite response times, reduce administrative burdens, and increase capacity for grants, cooperative agreements, timber production, and wildland fire protection. To allow the FS to pay cooperators to perform preliminary environmental activities and receive payment prior to a NEPA decision, under an active agreement.

The USDA General Terms and Conditions for Federal Financial Assistance §1.11 and for Mutual Interest Agreements §1.13 restrict agencies from compensating cooperators and recipients for project activities until after NEPA determinations are complete and accepted by the agencies. This deviation allows NEPA support activities that are not inherently governmental and those activities must be identified in the agreement's scope of work. The cooperator or recipient may incur expenses associated with those activities and will be compensated for them.