

What Is Stewardship Contracting?

Stewardship contracting helps achieve land management goals while meeting local and rural community needs, including contributing to the sustainability of rural communities and providing a continuing source of local income and employment. It focuses on the “end result” ecosystem benefits and outcomes, rather than on what’s removed from the land.

Under Section 323 of Public Law 108-7, the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Land Management have been granted authority, until September 30, 2013, to enter into stewardship contracting projects for up to 10 years in length.

How Are Stewardship Contracts Used?

Stewardship contracting combines restoration activities on National Forest System lands into contract or agreement packages. Forest Service staff may use stewardship contracting as a tool to achieve restoration objectives identified through forest planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes.

Forest Service staff collaborate to build community partnerships with cooperating Federal, State, and local government agencies; tribal governments; nongovernmental organizations; and any interested groups or individuals to develop projects. Examples of interested groups or individuals include resource advisory committees, fire safe councils, resource

conservation districts, conservation groups, and watershed councils. Project proposals can be initiated from external sources as well as from within the agency.

What Is Unique About Stewardship Contracting?

Stewardship contracting provides the ability to...

- Bundle several contracts into one to treat a landscape
- Trade goods for services
- Retain receipts from forest products that need to be removed to meet restoration objectives and apply the receipts to needed service work within the stewardship project area
- Retain receipts and transfer them to another approved stewardship project
- Use multiyear and multiple-year contracts and agreements up to 10 years in length
- Collaborate upfront and throughout project development and implementation with government agencies, tribal governments, local communities, nongovernmental organizations, and any interested groups or individuals
- Use Best Value contracting to evaluate contractors’ proposals

How Does It Work?

When the Forest Service trades goods for services, most projects are incorporated into a single Integrated Resource Contract (IRC). An IRC includes forest product removal (goods) and restoration projects (services), which are offset by the value of the goods. One contractor is responsible for completing all work. The contractor may use subcontractors. The Forest Service solicits proposals from individuals and groups to accomplish land management goals. The quality of a proposal, expertise, and past performance of a contractor, as well as price, are key factors in awarding a contract or entering into an agreement on a Best Value basis.



What Are the Steps to Project Approval?

All project proposals created from a national forest/community partnership are coordinated with a district ranger. The district ranger submits a written proposal to the forest supervisor, who coordinates with the regional forester for project approval.

What Is the Stewardship Area?

A stewardship area is designated by the partnership. It can range from a stream corridor to an entire basin. Forest product removal and restoration projects can be implemented anywhere within the designated area.

How Can Funds Be Spent?

The exchange of goods for services must implement on-the-ground projects, such as removing vegetation to promote healthy forests or reduce wildfire hazards, restoring watershed areas, and restoring wildlife and fish habitat. In cases where the value of the goods is greater than the costs of the services, the Forest Service collects and retains the excess receipts. These retained receipts may be used to implement other stewardship contracts/agreements. Stewardship contracting funds may not be spent on such things as Forest Service overhead and salaries, construction of administrative or major developed recreation facilities, research, and land acquisition.





How Can You Be Involved?

The sooner you become involved, the sooner restoration projects will take place. Ask your stewardship contact if there are any ongoing projects or ones in the developmental stages. You can get involved and help others get involved in an existing stewardship project or even start one.

Contact

Contact the regional Forest Service office or the national office to ask specific questions about Stewardship Contracting.

Contacts and more information may be found at the following Web site:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/forestmanagement/projects/stewardship/index.shtml>

For information about your local national forest, grassland, and ranger district, visit

<http://www.fs.fed.us/>



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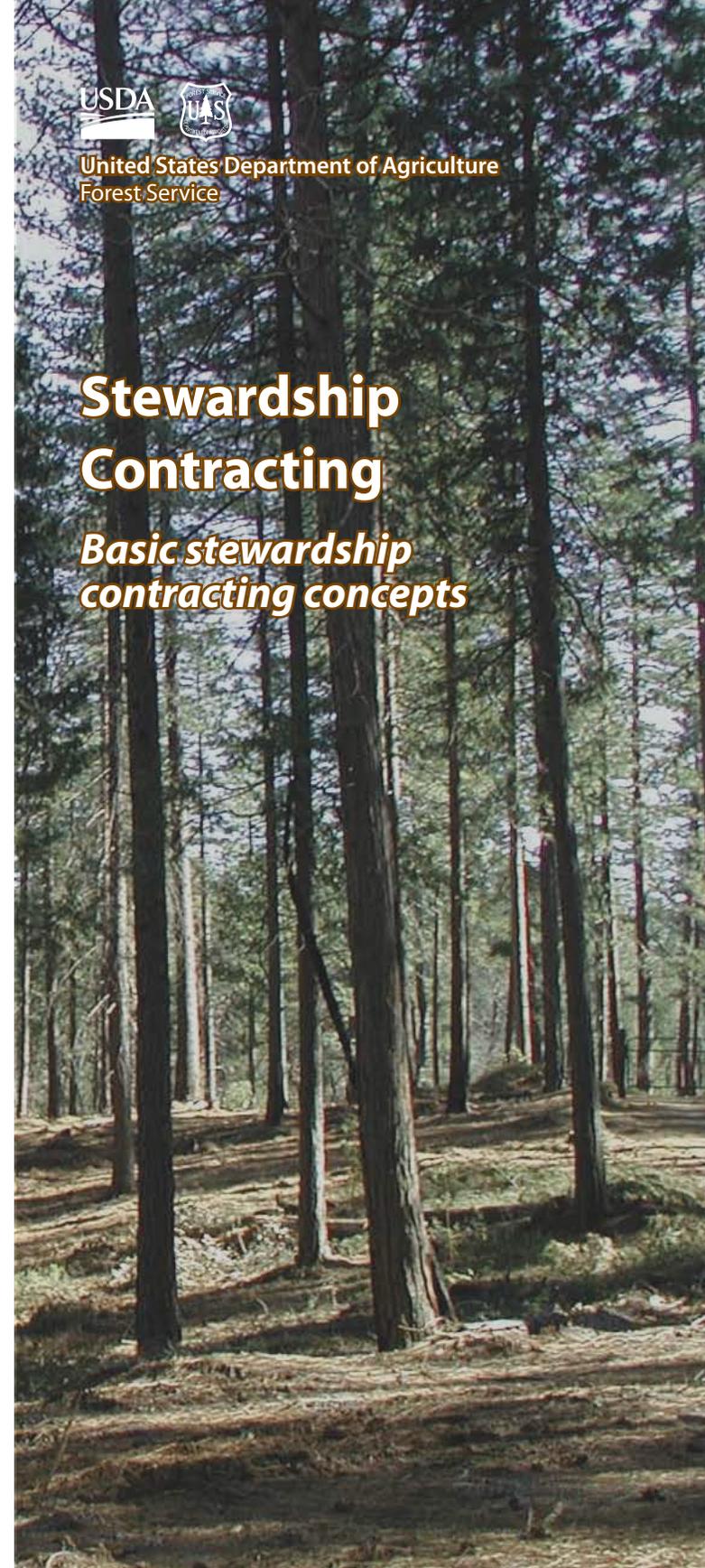
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Stewardship Contracting

Basic stewardship contracting concepts



Key Stewardship Goals Include:

- **Improve, maintain, and restore forest and rangeland health**
- **Restore/maintain water quality**
- **Improve fish/wildlife habitat**
- **Re-establish native plant species and increase their resilience**
- **Reduce hazardous fuel**