

STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTING: Fact Sheet

Authority

The Omnibus Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2003 authorized the USDA Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, for a period of 10 years, to undertake stewardship end results contracting projects, also known as stewardship contracting. The stewardship end result contracting provision was passed on February 20, 2003 and authorized by section 323 of Public Law 108-7.

Definition

Stewardship end results contracting projects are those activities used to accomplish the goals set forward in Section 323 of P.L. 108-7 whereby the Forest Service and the BLM would enter into contract or agreement, including consideration of source under public and private contracts, for services to achieve land management goals and meet local and rural community needs. In addition, the contract or agreement is awarded on a best-value basis.

Agency direction provides that stewardship contracts must include at least one of the new authorities granted by the legislation: where the value of timber and other forest products is applied as an offset against the cost of services received; or multi-year contract authority greater than 5 years but not to exceed 10 years.

Previous *Federal Register* Announcement

A notice of interim guidelines on stewardship contracting, with opportunity for public comment, was published in the *Federal Register* on June 27, 2003 jointly by the USDA Forest Service and the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management. Public input was accepted in writing until July 28, 2003.

Projects awarded:

Since the new authority became law on February 20, 2003, the Forest Service has awarded more than 30 stewardship projects.

The BLM has two stewardship projects. Both contracts are in Oregon and focus on fuels reduction with forest product removal. The two contracts were awarded to local contractors.

Emphasis:

Stewardship contracting emphasizes on-the-ground results and up-front collaboration with States, Tribes, local communities, and other interested parties in identifying and maintaining strong relationships of trusts with the public.

Compliance with existing laws and policies:

Stewardship contracting projects will meet the direction of FS and BLM's land use plans and management policies relating to existing special designations (e.g., Wilderness). They will comply with NEPA and other laws such as Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, and Clean Air Act.