



FACT SHEET



United States Department of Agriculture
Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

United States Department of Interior
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Making a Difference Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest – Arizona

Under the Healthy Forests Initiative and the new Stewardship Contracting authority, the Forest Service now has a new tool to restore over-crowded forests on a landscape scale and to better protect communities from fire and insect attack. The White Mountain Stewardship Project is a new contract which allows the agency to set specific goals and outcomes for National Forest lands such as how many trees of various sizes need to remain, and gives contractors the freedom to select the harvesting method and subsequent removal of excess trees.



Ponderosa Pines- high stand density

A Request for Proposals (RFP) is currently being advertised. The primary feature of the stewardship contract is the 10-year term which encourages businesses to invest in the future of forest restoration activities. The stewardship contract will be performance based, including evaluation factors which persuade contractors to propose creative and efficient methods to produce quality results while utilizing local labor and industry to produce and market wood products and fiber to reduce the amount of wood burned on Forest lands.

Three site visits will be offered to prospective contractors to demonstrate the level of effort required. Contract awards will be based upon best value to the government with consideration given to past performance, local economic development and employment, and methods proposed to accomplish the work.

Elaine Zieroth, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Supervisor, said that “In the past, separate contracts have been awarded for multi-product timber harvest with associated slash treatments. This was usually followed by another entry for the thinning of some small diameter trees with treatment of that slash. This inefficient process is more costly to the taxpayer. The stewardship contract allows us to combine multiple entries into one operation resulting in cost savings to the taxpayer and producing a healthier forest in a shorter time.”



Small diameter material removal

The Forest Service plans to offer from 5,000 to 20,000 acres of forest lands to contractors each year, making this the largest restoration project in the nation. “The forest lands we need to work on in this contract are in the wildland/urban interface which currently has anywhere from 300 to 3,000 trees per acre on them. We hope to reduce those numbers to reflect historical growth, of about 20 to 60 trees per acre. We’ve got to reduce the number of trees across the Forests on a large scale to minimize the threat of catastrophic fire and enable the remaining trees to better resist drought and insects” Zieroth remarked.

For additional information about the RFP, please visit www.fedbizopps.gov or the Forests’ web site www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf.

For more information on the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and the Healthy Forests Initiative, visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/hfi/> or <http://www.doi.gov/hfi/newhfi/>