Quick Guide

Innovative Contracting: A Guide for Collaborative Groups and Community Partners

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The US Forest Service purchases goods and services to help meet its land management objectives. Forest collaboratives, community-based organizations, and others frequently express interest in increasing local economic activity and community outcomes from service contracts and timber sales. But they may not be sure of how federal contracting operates, or what actions they might take to obtain their desired outcomes. The Ecosystem Workforce Program has provided numerous resources for community-based groups in the past, such as lists of definitions and case examples. Here, we update and compile several of these resources as well as offer a new, central web page (http://ewp.uoregon.edu/economy) for easy access.

Definitions and descriptions contained here are from interviews and written interpretation of available manuals and documents, and not from laws, court cases, or the Code of Federal Regulations unless otherwise noted. The details of many of these terms are interpreted differently and continue to evolve. Readers concerned with the legal specifics of each term should consult federal code, public laws, Federal Acquisition Regulation, the Office of General Council, case law, and the Forest Service Manual.

Tips for collaboratives and community partners

1. Challenge: Not enough service contracts or timber sales

Opportunity: Plan with the goal of creating a steady supply

The most likely role that a collaborative group or community partners might play in innovative contracting is to help plan a steady supply of management activities. For example, the Malheur National Forest chose to invest in a ten-year contract and raise timber targets in part because the work of two local collaboratives had already led to the implementation and planning of several projects. This created a supply of restoration contracts and timber sales that could be placed into a task order.

- Coordinate with Forest Service partners to identify a stream of future planning areas on which to work, which your collaborative may build into a strategic or other kind of workplan. Carefully track progress on each project. Groups that actively seek and document their agreements also allow the Forest Service to more clearly see where they may successfully manage.
- Keep the collaborative healthy. Dedicated facilitation, integrity of collaborative processes, and extensive engagement/coordination with each other and the Forest Service between meetings are necessary. If timber and restoration targets are increasing substantially, or there are other changes such as stakeholder transitions, the group will need to be careful to address stakeholder concerns and find a scale and pace of work that they feel meets their mission.

2. Challenge: Collaborative members and community partners do not understand the contracting infrastructure, or the people who work within it.

Opportunity: Plan with the goal of creating a steady supply

Knowing how Acquisition Management (AQM) is organized can help collaboratives and partners understand basic sideboards and processes. It can also help them become more effective at identifying ways to increase economic impacts. Timber is organized separately from AQM, and there are designated Timber Contracting Officers who administer timber sales and integrated resources timber contracts (see "Stewardship Contracting").

- Invite area agency AQM and timber Contracting Officers to a meeting to describe their work and the regulations and rules that govern it. This can help increase collaborative understanding and mutual relationships. Sharing specific examples of past contracts may especially help collaborative stakeholders comprehend the complex world of contracting. Keep in mind that different Contracting Officers may have varying interpretations of contracting authorities and varying comfort levels with taking innovative approaches. Not all will necessarily provide the same information or try the same things. Sometimes, an officer from another Forest may provide an alternate perspective. If you are interested in stewardship contracting, invite an AQM Stewardship Team staff person to attend as well, and expect the Stewardship Team to be

involved in helping local staff on your Forest as described above.

- Review contracting documents from other projects in similar landscapes or contexts. This can help you learn more about the options available in their situation.
- Be open and clear about timelines. A complex contract can take months to develop. In addition to normal contract preparation, it may be necessary to research and write new clauses and approaches. Contract preparation time and stress on the contracting specialists increases during the fire season, when staff may be reduced, and at the end of the fiscal year, when there is a lot of work to accomplish.
- Consult available resources. There is an increasing amount of information about contracting regulations, both in print and on the Internet. Since there have been many changes to these regulations over the past few decade, check that you have the most recent version. Resources are available at the end of this document in the Appendix, as well as online at: http://ewp.uoregon.edu/economy.

3. Challenge: Local contractors are not bidding on or winning contracts

Opportunity: Assess contractor capacity, invite them to the collaborative, seek training, and encourage the agency to pursue innovative contracting approaches.

- Understand the capacity of local contracting firms and workers. To learn how to conduct an assessment and view examples, visit: http://ewp.uoregon.edu/economy
- Build a relationship between local contractors and the collaborative. Contractors can provide useful insights to collaborative processes, explaining how contract structures and work specifications might play out in practice and their possible costs. Although attending collaborative meetings can be a challenge for contractors, having a connection with them can help groups better understand their local capacity.
- Host trainings for local contractors. It is important to train contractor s in how to respond to requests for proposals, especially for stewardship contracts, and to understand some of the particular work specifications in innovative contracting. Training sessions in which the Forest Service presents in considerable detail what is expected may receive more quality proposals. Pre-bid field tours and meetings can also be useful.
- Work with the agency to consider different contracting options. Where appropriate, certain kinds of structures, subcontracting opportunities, and equipment options can make contracts more viable for firms located in rural communities.
  - When deciding contract size, type, and duration, take the capacity of the local contracting sector into account to the extent possible. Within ecological and regulatory limits, collaboratives and the agency could consider structuring contracts based on knowledge of local equipment capacity, crew size, and bonding capacity. For example, some contractors are more likely to be able to undertake a contract that requires one backhoe for four months than one that requires four backhoes for one month; or a five-person crew for two months than a ten-person crew for one month.
  - Look for opportunities to create local benefit through subcontracts. There may be local contractors who are not performing federal contracting work, often because they do not want to deal with the process. Contractors that do perform federal contracts may subaward to these entities, creating access for them. Some non-local contractors may also hire some workers locally.
  - Add clauses to the solicitation that ask the contractor to specify how they will benefit the local community. As the Malheur 10-Year Contract was being developed, for example, the Blue Mountain Forest Partners wrote a letter to the forest supervisor proposing that award to a local contractor and projection of delivery of a large proportion of the material to a local mill should be priority criteria. The collaborative should screen their letter to ensure that it is consistent with the mission and operating principles of the group, and follow its procedures for voting or otherwise making decisions.

4. Challenge: Collaborative prescriptions and innovative contracting approaches may increase workload for timber sale and service contract administration.

Opportunity: Consider feasibility of cutting prescriptions and other specifications; consider a sampling monitoring strategy to reduce inspection and documentation needs

Collaborative groups seek agreement on management approaches that they believe will integrate ecological, economic, and social outcomes. Some of these include more complicated prescriptions, such as the "Individuals-Clumps-Openings" method to create heterogeneity, or use of the Van Pelt guidelines to identify older trees. These prescriptions, and some of the contracting tools like designation by prescription, can be challenging for contractors and the Forest Service alike.

- Discuss possible prescriptions with marking crews or supervisors. Most collaborative members are not familiar with marking, and how feasible their prescriptions may be to accurately mark.
- Pilot new approaches like designation by prescription on a smaller and/or less complex project.
- Encourage your agency partners to seek pilot authority from the Regional Office for new approaches as needed.
- Develop a sampling method for monitoring and documenting implementation that puts less burden on timber sale administrators.
- Conduct field tours with other collaboratives, agency staff, and contractors who have used similar prescriptions and tools to learn from their experience.
- Have a frank discussion in the collaborative about desired specificity and accuracy of implementation of prescriptions, and the tradeoffs with efficiencies. Ask hard questions, such as "Is 90% correct okay"? Carefully examine trust and willingness to take risks in this context.

5. Challenge: Innovative contracting can create new risks for the Forest Service and contractor.

Opportunity: Be aware of and avoid unnecessary risks, and focus on good cost estimation

- Consider the risks and other costs in a new and unfamiliar kind of project. These may range from bonding to fire liability to unclear contract specifications. Weigh the risk against the cost to evaluate whether the Forest Service or the contractor should shoulder the risk and the possible rewards, or, perhaps, whether the risk could be eliminated all together.
- Encourage good cost estimation from the beginning. By default, procurement cost estimation is frequently based on recent and historical information for service and construction costs on similar projects or in the same Acquisition Area. This can be efficient for standard work but may be less effective when working with innovative contracting. Naturally, cost estimating is difficult when requirements are new. Cost estimates that are far below bids can create considerable disappointment and lost time if solicitations have to be withdrawn and reworked. People who are unsure of the viability of the project may become even less supportive when the gap between estimate and bid prices is large. Most bidding processes now provide opportunities for negotiation with bidders and reworking so that prices can be adjusted prior to award. However, poor cost estimates nonetheless may increase discomfort and inhibit innovation.

6. Challenge: There is no feedback loop to learn from innovative contracting

Opportunity: Create a monitoring program

Multiparty monitoring is a requirement for use of stewardship contracting authorities, as well as an important means of learning and building trust for any collaborative and partners. Monitoring, especially taking field trips with the contractors and recipients of products, can help a group and its agency partners learn more about the realities of implementing collaborative prescriptions. They may find that some of their desired approaches do not translate readily to their desired outcomes, and that there is a need to learn and adapt. Collaboratives may wish to make monitoring a deliverable in future grant proposals, and seek support for field tours and documentation of learning and rationales for new adaptive approaches.

Definitions and descriptions

Acquisition, contracting, and procurement

Acquisition

"The acquiring by contract with appropriated funds of supplies or services (including construction) by and for the use of the Federal Government through purchase or lease, whether the supplies or services are already in existence or must be created, developed, demonstrated, and evaluated" [FAR 005-82/06-08-2015, subpart 2.1]. Procurement is used interchangeably and has the same meaning as acquisition.

- Acquisition Management (AQM) manages contracting, while the Timber Program manages timber sales.
- Each national forest has at least one Contracting Officer, who develops and executes contracts, and a Contracting Officer's Representative, who goes into the field and inspects the work. National forests are then grouped into acquisition areas. In Region Six, there are four Acquisition Areas (North, East, West, and Fire). Each area has one or two leads, plus all the Contracting Officers for the forests in the area. In addition, Region 6 has an Acquisition Management Stewardship Team to support all new stewardship contracting projects. This team assists national forests with contract policy and procedures, and coordination with Grants and Agreements. The team can also provide advice regarding what can realistically be accomplished given the authorities and project area, as well as examples and other technical assistance and resources.

Contract

"A mutually binding legal relationship obligating the seller to furnish the supplies or services (including construction) and the buyer to pay for them." [FAR 005-82/06-08-2015, subpart 2.1]. Contracts do not include grants and cooperative agreements. "'Contracting' means purchasing, renting, leasing, or otherwise obtaining supplies or services from

nonfederal sources. Contracting includes description (but not determination) of supplies and services required, selection and solicitation of sources, preparation and award of contracts, and all phases of contract administration." [FAR 005-82/06-08-2015, subpart 2.1].

Request for proposal (RFP) and request for quotation (RFQ)

As the Forest Service commonly uses them, the request for proposal and the request for quote are similar tools. In both cases, the Forest Service may ask bidders to provide a bid price and a proposal that might include, for example, information about how they propose to complete the project, what equipment they will use, the skill level and experience of the personnel. The Forest Service may ask bidders to clarify responses and bidders may change their price or withdraw their bid at any time prior to contract award.

The RFQ is generally used for small, relatively simple projects whereas the RFP is generally used for larger and more complex projects. The Forest Service may use the RFQ for projects estimated to cost less than $150,000. The formats of the RFP and RFQ differ, with the RFQ being much simpler. In addition, the advertising requirements for a RFQ are less stringent than for a RFP. Under some circumstances, a contracting officer may solicit offers orally for a RFQ by telephone whereas a RFP requires a written proposal or formal presentation.

Best value to the government

One of the key features of both the RFP and the RPQ is that "best value to the government," not simply price, may be considered when awarding a contract. When using best value, the Forest Service can evaluate responses based on criteria that are identified in advance and reflect management objectives. For example, the Forest Service frequently considers the contractor's technical proposal, past performance, and contractor experience in addition to price when considering the best value to the government. When submitting an offer, a contractor provides a bid price, but also a proposal that responds to the informational request in the contract solicitation. Traditionally, the opportunity to award based on best value to the government applies only to procurement and not to timber sales. However, stewardship contracting authorities require that the agencies consider best value to the government.

Bundled contracts

Bundled contracts combine several work tasks that have been traditionally
issued separately into a single contract. The Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997 directs agencies to, "avoid unnecessary and unjustified bundling of contract requirements that precludes small business participation in procurement as prime contractors" (15 USC 631). However, the Forest Service may design and package work to meet management objectives. This includes combining different types of work occurring in a single area to reduce impacts of multiple entries. It may also involve work across larger areas to create longer duration contracts for small businesses and workers or to create administrative efficiencies.

Indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ)

Traditionally, Forest Service contracts were written for a specified amount of work to be accomplished in a specified amount of time for a specified amount of money. In an IDIQ contract, the agency offers a contract that contains a minimum and maximum amount of work that the contractor will be asked to perform. The contractor submits a per unit (often per acre) bid based on sample units (acres) that the Forest Service wants to treat. When signing a contract, the government and the contractor commit to a minimum amount of work and a contract start and end date. The government then issues task orders to request work during that time period.

Multiple-award IDIQ solicitations

The multiple award IDIQ is similar to a regular IDIQ except that it awards the work to several different contractors based on a single solicitation; each awardee will get a minimum amount of work at their proposed prices. Services are purchased using a task order rather than a new contract.

Performance-based, end-results

Performance-based, end-results contracts focus on the desired outcome rather than the way that the contractor is required to achieve those results. The contract financially rewards the contractor based on the extent to which the firm achieved the end result not whether the firm used a particular method or prescription to get to that result.

Small Business Set Asides

With a few exceptions, the federal government is required to set aside for small businesses nearly all contracts that a small business could perform, and the Forest Service sets aside most of its contracts for small businesses. Generally, small forestry services businesses are defined as having less than $7.5 million dollars in annual revenue, except for small businesses providing support activities for forest fire suppression and fuels management, which are defined as having less than $19 million in annual revenue.

Disadvantaged Business [8(a)] Set Asides

In addition to general small business set asides, the Forest Service may restrict the bidding pool to qualified disadvantaged firms, so-called 8(a) firms. To qualify for this program, the business owner must be from a traditionally disadvantaged group (such as African American, Native Americans, Hispanics, some Asian-Americans, or women), have limited net worth, and be growing the company.

Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zones

In 1997, Congress directed the Small Business Administration to identify HUB Zones. HUB Zones are Indian reservations, impoverished rural counties, and qualified urban census tracts. Rural counties qualify as HUB Zones when they have a median household income of less than 80% of the statewide average or have an unemployment rate greater than 140% of the statewide average. To qualify as a HUB Zone firm, a business must have its primary office in a HUB Zone and 35% of its employees must live in a HUB Zone. Once signed up for the program, firms are eligible for federal contracts that are set aside for HUB Zone firms. Any contract with an estimated valued above $100,000 is to be set aside for qualified HUB Zone firms if there are two or more qualified firms likely to bid on the contract. HUB Zone maps and qualifications are available at: http://map.sba.gov/hubzone/maps/.

Timber sales

Different laws than those for contracting govern the Forest Service's "sale of timber. The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) governs the details of selling of timber from National Forest lands. The Forest Service sells timber primarily through the bid or a fixed price contract. Whenever the Forest Service has a project with an appraised value above $10,000, the Forest Service must advertise the timber sale and then offer it through a sealed or open bid. However, national forests "may sell without further advertisement, at not less than appraised value, any timber previously advertised for competitive bid but not sold because of lack of bids. . ." (36 CFR 223.85). Although the Forest Service may include a wide variety of material in a timber sale to meet management objectives, it is required to choose the highest bidder, except under a narrow set of circumstances such as purchaser debarment. Unlike procurement using the RFP or RFQ, the Forest Service may not consider the best overall value to the government (factors such as logging skills or attention to environmental damage); only the price offered by potential purchasers.

The purpose of the timber sale has shifted, and it is seen as one among many tools to achieve ecological goals. As this change has occurred, Forest Service personnel have disagreed about the amount and kinds of trees removal and other activities that can be included in a timber sale. The Forest Service Region 6 interpretation is that:

> "If a commercial product does not have economic value, i.e., can not be reasonably sold since the cost of operation exceeds the economic value (a negative appraisal and clearly no market value based on market experience and conditions), the agency can provide removal rights to any successful bidder [of a service contract]" (USDA Forest Service, Region 6 2001, p. 57).

This interpretation means the NFMA grants Forest Service managers discretion to determine the appropriate mix of economically viable and non-viable forest products in a timber sale contract in order to accomplish land management objectives identified in the environmental analysis.

Stewardship contracting

Section 347 of the 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act authorized the Forest Service to test a suite of contracting authorities in a series of pilot projects. In the FY 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Act, Congress authorized similar authorities until 2013 for use across the US Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Congress then made these authorities permanent in the 2014 Farm Bill. These authorities include: designation by description or prescription, retention of receipts, goods for service, longer multi-year contracts, and best value. These mechanisms may only be used for specific land management goals, including:

"(1) road and trail maintenance or obliteration to restore or maintain water quality;
(2) soil productivity, habitat for wildlife and fisheries, or other resource values;
(3) setting of prescribed fires to improve the composition, structure, condition, and health of stands or improve wildlife habitat;
(4) removing vegetation or other activities to promote healthy forest stands, reduce fire hazards, or achieve other land management objectives;
(5) watershed restoration and maintenance;
(6) restoration and maintenance of wildlife and fish habitat; and
(7) control of noxious and exotic weeds and reestablishing native plant species." (Sec. 323 of P.L. 108-7, 2003.)

Best value

As described above, the Forest Service already had the authority to award procurement contracts on the basis of best value but not timber sales. Stewardship contracting authority requires the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to award stewardship timber sale contracts based on best value, not simply highest bid.

Multi-year contracts

The Forest Service can award 10-year timber sale contracts under traditional authority. The stewardship contracting authority changes the limit from 5 years to 10 years for the maximum contract length for procurement contracts.

Designation by description/prescription

In a service contract, the Forest Service and BLM may describe actions to be taken or desired end results. In a timber sale contract, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management may either use paint to indicate trees to be removed or provide descriptions that would lead any two people to choose the same trees. The stewardship contracting authority allows the Forest Service to describe a desired end result in a timber sale contract. For example, the Forest Service might want the end result to be 200-foot sight-distances for bighorn sheep. The contract solicitation asks the contractor to describe how they will meet the objectives. Monitoring plots or other techniques are used to ensure that the contractor has achieved the desired end result.

Goods for services

Generally, the federal government is prohibited from trading goods for services. It is not permissible to augment appropriated funds by exchanging something of commercial value. A good is, "an asset of the Federal Government that has economic value, i.e. something that the public is willing to pay for" (USDA Forest Service, Region 6 2001 p. 55).

If the project or a subset of it could be packaged as a viable timber sale, then combining it with service work would constitute a trade of goods for services and would not be permitted under normal circumstances. Stewardship contracting authority allows the creation of a single contract in which commercially valued timber is exchanged for work that the Forest Service would normally have to pay for. In the contract, the Forest Service exchanges goods (timber) for services (other restoration work). The goods-for-services authority allows timber removal to be put in a single contract with other restoration work such as culvert removal, road decommissioning, or grass seeding.

Integrated Resource Timber Contract (IRTC): A form of contract used when the value of the product is as much or more as the cost of the services. IRTCs are administered by the Timber Contracting Officer. There is no authority for use of IDIQ. Collection of retained receipts is permitted.

Integrated Resource Service Contract (IRSC): A form of contract used when the cost of the services exceeds product value. It is administered by the AQM Contracting Officer. There is full authority for use of IDIQ and multi-year contracting. Retained receipts cannot be generated.

Retention of receipts

In general, the Forest Service is required to send the receipts from a timber sale, less deposits, to various trust funds and to the Federal Treasury and Congress must appropriate work to be performed under a service contract. Stewardship contracting authority allows the Forest Service to retain the money from an agreement or contract and spend it on further restoration activities at the project site from which the monies are collected or at another site.

Stewardship agreements

Stewardship agreements can be made with a nonprofit organization, other government agency, or Tribe. There must be mutual benefit to the agency and partner(s). A Master Stewardship Agreement (MSA) is signed to establish the overall terms of the agreement followed by specific Supplemental Project Agreements (SPAs) for project work. These are administered by a Grants and Agreement Specialist.

Wildfire suppression contracting

Some fire suppression services are contracted out, from direct firefighting to supplying fire camps with catering, sanitation, etc. Fire contracting is largely centralized at the national level, and requires different system, procedures, and contacts than regular acquisition management. The Washington Office Acquisition Management (AQM) provides centralized acquisition support for "national contract" Fire Incident resources such as Aircraft, contracted Fire Crews, Caterers and Showers. Operational support also includes general Acquisition and Grants and Agreements support for Forest Service Headquarters staffs, property surveys and disposal, and Washington Office facilities management.

National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)

The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is the focal point for coordinating the mobilization of resources for wildland fire and other incidents throughout the United States. Located in Boise, Idaho, the NICC also provides Intelligence and Predictive Services related-products designed to be used by the internal wildland fire community for wildland fire and incident management decision-making. The NWCC serves as the focal point for interagency resource coordination, logistics support, aviation support and predictive services for all state and federal agencies involved in wildland fire management and suppression in the region.

Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC)

Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC) serve as the focal point for regional interagency resource coordination, logistics support, aviation support and predictive services for all state and federal agencies involved in wildland fire management and suppression within a region. There are ten regional coordination centers designated by the regions: Eastern, Southern, Southwest, Rocky Mountain, Northern Rockies, Great Basin, Northwest, Northern California, Southern California, and Alaska.

System for Award Management (SAM)

The System for Award Management (SAM) is the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of previous systems. There is no fee to register for this site. Contractors must be signed up as a contractor approved to do business in SAM before they sign up for the Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR) system (see below).

Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR) system

VIPR (http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipr.php) was introduced to fire procurement in January of 2009. Forest Service regions use VIPR to issue solicitations and award agreements for resources secured under preseason agreements. AQM manages Incident Procurement, which is administered through VIPR system, which is designed to solicit, award, and administer preseason Incident Blanket Purchase Agreements (I-BPAs; see below). Using VIPR will require that vendors obtain a Level 2 eAuthentication Account. Those contractors signed up in VIPR must first be signed up as a contractor approved to do business in SAM.

Incident Blank Purchase Agreement (I-BPA)

Incident Blanket Purchase Agreements (I-BPA) are issued to contractors that have responded to the solicitation through the Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR) application. I-BPAs are awarded to those vendors who offer a fair and reasonable price as determined by the Regional and National level Fire Contracting Officers, who enter into these agreements. All Preseason I-BPAs are competitively solicited every 3 years. If vendors miss the solicitation period, they will not have an opportunity to acquire an I-BPA for 3 years.

In addition, the vendor must "pass" the following equipment and personnel requirements:

- Equipment meets the minimum specifications and quality standards;
- Key personnel possess the minimum training qualifications;
- Vendor has acceptable past performance

Choosing by Advantage (CBA)

The CBA methodology (http://www.decisioninnovations.com/about.html) is a kind of best value adopted by agency experts representing Acquisition Management (AQM) and Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) as a means of evaluating equipment offered for use on incidents by not only price, but also equipment attributes and location considerations. CBA is a well-tested and widely used decision making process the Forest Service utilizes extensively, as do other government agencies and private industry. In concept, the process is simple and accurate: "Decisions must be based on the importance of advantages."

Each type of equipment has identified criteria that are important to the agency. Each criterion has a "relative importance" when compared to the other criteria for that equipment type, and has multiple attributes. A point value is assigned to each attribute of that criterion. The attribute point value multiplied by the criterion's relative importance provides the advantage points for that equipment criterion. When points are assigned to all advantages of all equipment, they are added to obtain the total advantage points for the equipment. Each point total is divided by the price for that equipment, resulting in "Total Advantage per Dollar of Cost". It may not be the cheapest price, it may not be the best equipment, but it will show the greatest advantage to the government. Those pieces of equipment offering the greatest advantage in relation to price (highest total advantage per dollar) will be ranked highest on the Dispatch Priority List (DPL).

Dispatch Priority List (DPL)

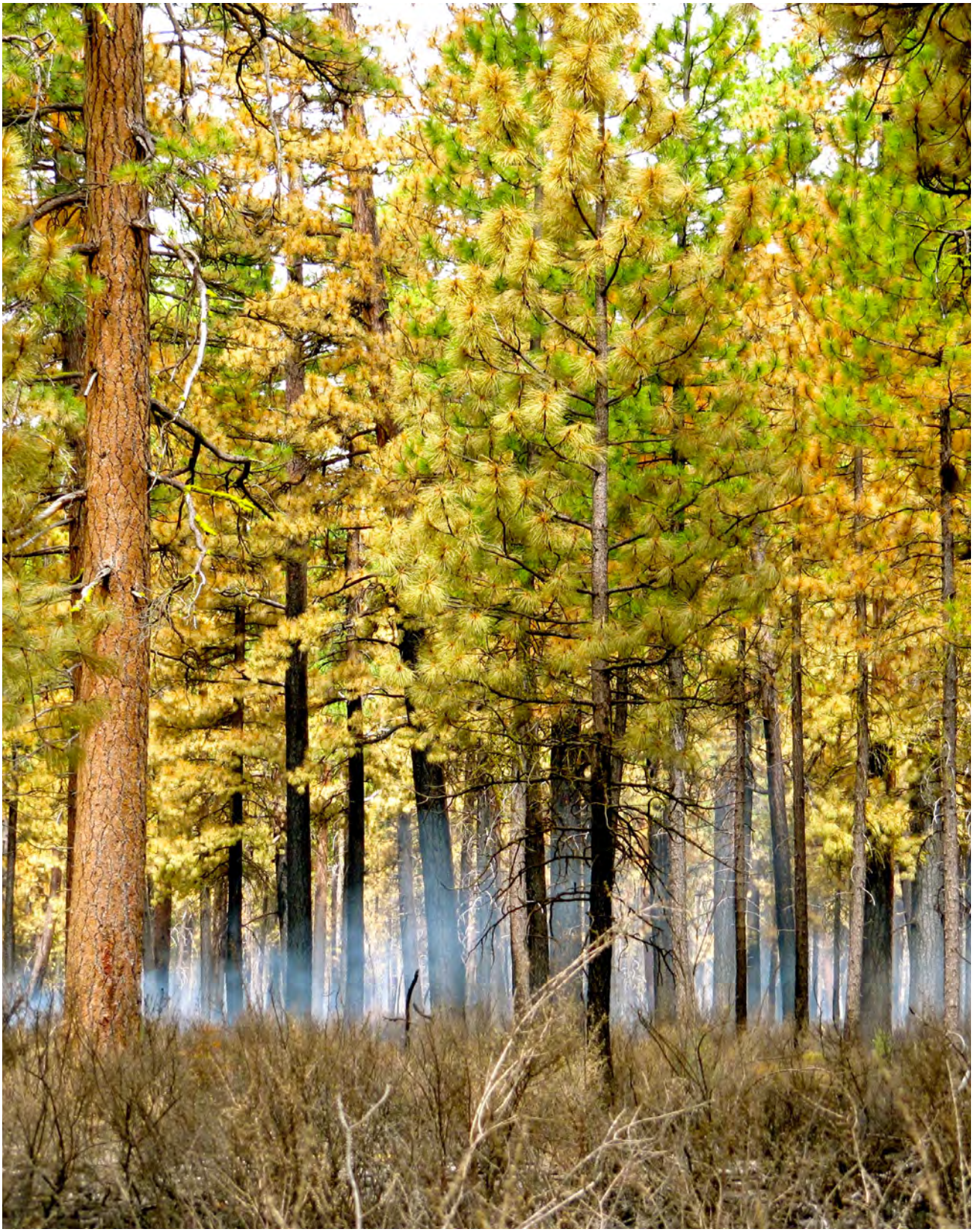
The Dispatch Priority List (DPL, http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/dispatch.php) is used once an incident command team orders a resource for suppression service. When an order is received from the incident, the dispatcher will contact the first vendor on the list to fill the order. If that vendor is unavailable, the dispatcher will continue moving down the list until the order is filled. If an incident orders a specific configuration of equipment (i.e. dozer with a winch), the dispatcher will contact the first vendor on the list who has the equipment that meets the needs of the incident. Each vendor's position on the DPL is determined by weighing advantages for each piece of equipment in relation to the quoted price. The equipment offering the overall best value is dispatched first.

Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS)
The Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) is used to order resources to an incident. The resource order requests will go from the incident to the local dispatch center and if the "host dispatch center" cannot fill the order, the request will go to the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC).

Call when needed (CWN)
Call when needed (CWN) contracts are an agreement for a certain rate for services or use of equipment, without a guarantee of payment. Payment is only rendered if services are rendered. Most I-BPAs for equipment are specified as call when needed resources.

Mandatory Availability Period (MAP)
Mandatory availability periods (MAPs) are the specific time frames, usually ranging between 90 and 180 days, when the operators are contractually obligated to federal or state fire protection agencies to have resources ready for deployment, when required. National contracts such as Type 2IA hand crews and the national mobile food service contract is require contracted resources to be available for a mandatory period of time and from a preset list of designated or staged points across the US during the MAP.

Incident only Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement (EERA)
Incident-only EERAs are used to sign up contracted resources not available through the I-BPA competitive process due to availability or exhaustion of the DPL. Incident-only
EERAs are valid only for the duration of the incident they were signed up on. Once the incident releases the contracted resource, the agreement is no longer valid.



Appendix: Links and Resources

Forest Service manuals and handbooks

http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/prc/legal-administrativeresources/administrative

Acquisition and contracting

Federal Acquisition Regulation and terminology:
https://www.acquisition.gov/

Region 6 Contracting and AQM contacts:
http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r6/workingtogether/contracting/?cid=fsbdev2_027134

How to do business with the Forest Service:
http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r6/workingtogether/contracting/?cid=fsbdev2_027107

Fact sheet for labor-intensive contracting:
http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r6/workingtogether/contracting/?cid=fsbdev2_027134

Doing business with the USDA:
http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5390350.pdf.
http://map.sba.gov/hubzone/maps/

Stewardship contracting

Overview:
forestsandrangelands.gov/stewardship/index.shtml
http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/Stewardship_Contracting/

Stewardship contracting training and information resources:
http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/Stewardship_Contracting/training.shtml
http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5190565.ppt.

Region 6 stewardship contracting User Guide:
http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5360608.docx

Pinchot Institute overview:
http://www.pinchot.org/gp/Stewardship_Contracting

Case studies and report:
The Role of Communities in Stewardship Contracting FY 2014 Programmatic Monitoring Report and Project Case Studies to the USDA Forest Service, January 2015 (PDF, 1.3 MB)

Permanent Authorization of Stewardship Contracting in the Farm Bill:
http://www.pinchot.org/doc/495

Stewardship contracting guidebooks:
http://www.sustainablenorthwest.org/blog/posts/stewardship-contracting-guidebooks

Stewardship contracting for landscape-scale restoration:
Stewardship Contracting for Landscape-Scale Restoration

Strategies for supporting frontline collaboration:
http://uncgcollaborativecapacity.wikispaces.com/file/view/Strategies+for+Supporting+Frontline+Collaboration+Report.pdf

Red Lodge Clearinghouse resources:
http://rlch.org/content/stewardship-contracting

Resources on interpretations of conditions that can be included in timber sales:
Contracting Task Force. 2001.Contracting task force report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Unpublished report. On file with: Cassandra Moseley, 5247 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 97403-5247

Monismith, C. 2000. Implementing the Starkey restoration project through creative contracting. Unpublished report. 11 p. On file with: Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, P.O. Box 907, Baker City, OR 97814.

Fire

Incident Procurement—AQM:
http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/

Methodology for I-BPA Award and Dispatch Priority
National Dispatch Standard Operating Guidelines for Contracted Resources

National Mobilization Guide (full version) pdf

Grants and agreements

Overview:
http://www.fs.fed.us/working-with-us/grants

USFS Partnership Resource Center:
http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/prc/home

Timber sale

Timber Sale Preparation Handbook:
http://www.fs.fed.us/cgi-bin/Directives/get_dirs/fsh?2409.18

Region 6 Timber Sale Administration:
http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet/!ut/p/c4/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gjAwhwtDDw9_AI8zPyhQoY6BdkOyoCAGixyPg!/?navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&cid=fsbdev2_027061&navid=160120000000000&pnavid=160000000000000&ss=1106&position=Not%20Yet%20Determined.Html&ttype=detail&pname=Region%206-%20Resource%20Management

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