

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Between The**  
**COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE**  
**And The**  
**COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**  
**And The**  
**USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**  
**COLORADO STATE OFFICE**  
**And The**  
**USDA FOREST SERVICE**  
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION**

This MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) is hereby made and entered into by and between the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD), the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Colorado State Office and the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region (USFS), hereinafter referred to as the Partners.

Background: The health of Colorado's forests and natural resources heavily influences the social, economic and environmental landscapes throughout the State. Forest health and natural resource management issues are not confined or defined by ownership and administrative boundaries. The signatory Partners represent some of the best expertise that exists in forest and natural resources related research and science, practice policy and implementation, and related education and conservation assistance.

Title: Improve stewardship across all lands through the collaborative partnership of USFS, CSFS, CACD and NRCS.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this MOU is intended to facilitate the CSFS, CACD, NRCS, and USFS in working together to ensure that respective program resources are used in the most effective, strategic, and complementary way. Furthermore, this MOU facilitates stewardship of forests and natural resources using an "all lands" landscape scale approach in an increasingly complex mosaic of private and public lands.

The Partners' intentions and commitments in this MOU have been developed to generate lasting benefits for Colorado's citizens and its natural resources by:

- Integrating skills, authorities, and fields of expertise, and
- Coordinating interagency response and forestry related conservation assistance to address critical resource concerns on all lands, and
- Providing common understanding and message about conservation priorities across landscapes.

More specifically, this MOU will promote Partner actions such as:

- a. Mutually beneficial use of the Colorado Statewide Forestry Resource Assessment and Strategy process to identify priority landscapes and values, to identify and cultivate engagement of motivated communities, landowners and industry leaders, and to retain and enhance health and productivity of working lands.
- b. Engagement of Partners where appropriate in the implementation of programs such as the Headwaters Restoration initiative, Conservation Stewardship Program, Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, and Forest Ag Tax program.
- c. Identification, support and integration as appropriate, of existing programs to reduce duplicated efforts and the resulting customer confusion, while improving the effectiveness and efficiency of each Partner's conservation programs.
- d. Creation of an integrated network for outreach and education opportunities, program delivery and services amongst Partners that promotes contact between the appropriate field office, landowners and general public.
- e. Conduct an annual interagency review of outcomes and milestones to gauge progress of the collaborative delivery, and to identify potential modifications or improvements to agency specific program delivery that will ultimately lead to better service to landowners and to stronger stewardship of private and public lands.
- f. Utilization of a statewide workgroup and collaborative meetings to enhance interagency interactions and cross-training opportunities.



## **I. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTERESTS:**

Throughout the United States there are a variety of federal, state and local government agencies with legislated responsibilities to provide assistance for certain aspects of natural resource conservation, productivity, and health on private and public lands. It is a priority for the signatories to this MOU to better coordinate activities and programs to improve the delivery of assistance to private and public land owners.

In September 2008, the National Association of State Foresters, the National Association of Conservation Districts, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and the US Forest Service signed a national MOU to promote newly shared responsibilities identified in the 2008 Farm Bill and to improve service to private forest landowners. This MOU is tied to the national MOU, and reflects the Partners' interests, opportunities and needs specific to Colorado for the mix of private and public lands in the state.

Forests and woodlands cover roughly 24 million acres of the approximately 60 million acres in Colorado. Of this, around 16 million acres are in federal ownership while 7 million are in private ownership. The Partners recognize that Colorado's natural resources are threatened and do not provide the full range of benefits that they are capable of providing. Challenges such as those listed below, can be better met by a collaborative approach that is strengthened by the assets and expertise of each of the Partners.

- development pressures
- wildfires
- landscape fragmentation
- loss of open space
- invasive species
- recreation pressure and conflicts
- funding cutbacks in natural resource education and resource management
- the complexity of the private and public lands interface
- adverse impacts to wildlife
- forest insects and diseases
- climate change
- loss of forest products infrastructure and services
- increasing human population and use pressures
- rural community economic vitality
- adverse impacts to air quality
- water quality and quantity
- loss of market for forest products

In consideration of the above premises, the parties agree as follows:

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Partners share a long-term commitment to the conservation and stewardship of Colorado's natural resources. Each of the Partners possesses somewhat unique, yet complementary sets of forestry and natural resource management skills, authorities, funding sources, and service delivery techniques. The Partners desire to explore and implement ways in which they can collaboratively utilize their respective assets in a manner that further enhance the quality of service and support that is available for landowners. The actions taken under this MOU will enable the Partners to accomplish their individual and collective conservation goals and missions with a resulting greater cumulative impact on the sustained health, diversity, and productivity of Colorado's lands.

The Partners recognize the unique and complementary role that each entity brings to the partnership:

- The ***Colorado State Forest Service*** has the primary leadership role and responsibility for delivery of forestry programs on state and private lands in Colorado. The CSFS has considerable experience in delivering information, education, technical and financial assistance opportunities to private landowners. The critical attribute CSFS brings to this relationship is their years of experience, knowledge and abilities delivering technical forestry assistance to private landowners.
- ***Colorado Association of Conservation Districts*** (CACD) represents the 76 Conservation Districts of Colorado whose Districts implement natural resource management at the local level in conjunction with the Colorado State Conservation Board, promote partner action, and serve as liaisons between private landowners and government assistance programs. Conservation Districts exist in all Colorado counties and are accessible and available to private forest landowners.
- The ***Natural Resources Conservation Service*** provides interdisciplinary expertise in natural resource conservation planning on private lands. The NRCS has extensive experience in resource planning integrating soil, water, air, plant, and animal resource concerns, and offers a variety of programs that provide management incentives and financial assistance to private landowners making conservation improvements. Like CACD, the NRCS has offices in nearly all counties across Colorado, and thus NRCS services are readily accessible to the majority of private landowners.
- The ***United States Forest Service*** has over a century of experience in the conservation and use of forest, rangeland and water resources using ecosystem management. The agency manages 14.5 million acres in Colorado as well as providing technical and financial assistance to CSFS and other entities that support or implement stewardship practices on state, tribal and private lands. The USFS has extensive research capabilities to explore and resolve emerging forest management issues, as well as authorities in place to share funds and technical responsibilities with other local, state and federal entities and to promote strong stewardship of natural resources on federal, state, tribal and private lands.



**II. IT IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED BY AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES THAT:**

- A. The Partners will charter a team of agency representatives to develop a Colorado Joint Forestry (CJF) Strategic Plan and, additionally, an Operations Plan. The Operations Plan will identify specific projects and concerns, to be updated annually. The CJF Strategic Plan will serve as a long range plan of three to five years and will articulate in more detail, the:
- Assets, strengths, and opportunities of each Partner's agency to mitigate the threats and challenges that jeopardize the health of Colorado's forests and private landowners' stewardship efforts utilizing the Colorado Statewide Forest Resource Assessment;
  - Actions designed to build on the strengths and opportunities that address the threats across land ownership boundaries;
  - Timeline for implementation of specific components of the CJF Strategic Plan;
  - Opportunities to co-locate or share personnel;
  - Shared and individual responsibilities for Partners' roles, responsibilities and leadership; and
  - Clear definition of what success looks like with a monitoring plan to measure progress.

B. PRINCIPAL CONTACTS. Individuals listed below are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this instrument.

**Principal Colorado Association of Conservation Districts Contacts:**

<b>Colorado Association of Conservation Districts Cooperator Program Contact</b>	<b>Colorado Association of Conservation Districts Administrative Contact</b>
Name: Harley L. Ernst President Address: 2860 Road QQ City, State, Zip: Flagler, CO 80815 Telephone: 970-357-4258 FAX: 719-686-0020 Email: <a href="mailto:jhe_farm@yahoo.com">jhe_farm@yahoo.com</a>	Name: Darlene Jensen Executive Director Address: P.O. Box 4138 City, State, Zip: Woodland Park, CO 80866 Telephone: 719-686-0020 FAX: 719-686-0020 Email: <a href="mailto:darlene@cacd.us">darlene@cacd.us</a>

**Principal Colorado State Forest Service Contacts:**

<b>Colorado State Forest Service Cooperator Program Contact</b>	<b>Colorado State Forest Service Cooperator Administrative Contact</b>
Name: Gregory Sundstrom Assistant Staff Forester, Forest Management Division Colorado State University Address: 5060 Campus Delivery Bldg. 1050 City, State, Zip: Fort Collins, CO 80225 Telephone: 970-491-5342 FAX: 970-491-7736 Email: <a href="mailto:gsund@lamar.colostate.edu">gsund@lamar.colostate.edu</a>	Name: Tom Wardle Assistant State Forester Colorado State University Address: 5060 Campus Delivery Bldg. 1050 City, State, Zip: Fort Collins, CO 80225 Telephone: 970-491-7394 FAX: 970-491-7736 Email: <a href="mailto:tom.wardle@lamar.colostate.edu">tom.wardle@lamar.colostate.edu</a>

**Principal Natural Resources Conservation Service Contacts:**

<b>Natural Resources Conservation Service Cooperator Program Contact</b>	<b>Natural Resources Conservation Service Cooperator Administrative Contact</b>
Name: Jonas Feinstein State Forester Address: 655 Parfet St. E201 City, State, Zip: Lakewood, CO 80215 Telephone: 720-544-2839 FAX: 720-544-2978 Email: <a href="mailto:jonas.feinstein@co.usda.gov">jonas.feinstein@co.usda.gov</a>	Name: Melanie Guinan Grants and Agreements Specialist Address: 655 Parfet St. E201 City, State, Zip: Lakewood, CO 80215 Telephone: 720-544-2810 FAX: 720-544-2965 Email: <a href="mailto:melanie.guinan@co.usda.gov">melanie.guinan@co.usda.gov</a>

**Principal U.S. Forest Service Contacts:**

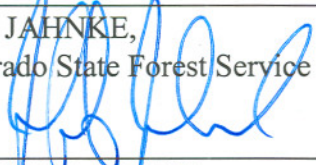
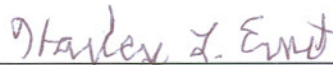
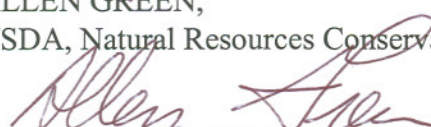
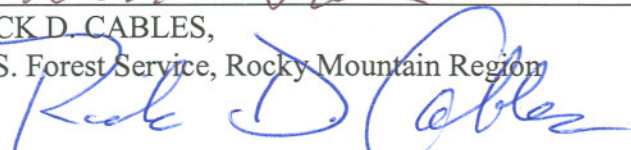
<b>U.S. Forest Service Program Contact</b>	<b>U.S. Forest Service Administrative Contact</b>
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- C. NON-LIABILITY. The Partners do not assume liability for any third party claims for damages arising out of this MOU.
- D. NOTICES. Any communications affecting the operations covered by this agreement Partners is sufficient only if in writing and delivered in person, mailed, or transmitted electronically by e-mail or fax, as follows:
- To the Partners, at the Partner's address shown in the MOU or such other address designated within the MOU.
- Notices are effective when delivered in accordance with this provision, or on the effective date of the notice, whichever is later.
- E. PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES. This MOU in no way restricts the Partners from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.
- F. ENDORSEMENT. Any of the Partner's contributions made under this MOU do not by direct reference or implication convey Partners endorsement of other Partner's products or activities.
- G. NONBINDING AGREEMENT. This MOU creates no right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity. The Parties shall manage their respective resources and activities in a separate, coordinated and mutually beneficial manner to meet the purposes(s) of this MOU. Nothing in this MOU authorizes any of the Parties to obligate or transfer funds. Specific projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, or property among the Parties require execution of separate agreements and are contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds. These activities must be independently authorized by statute. This MOU does not provide that authority. Negotiation, execution, and administration of these agreements must comply with all applicable law. Each Party operates under its own laws, regulations, and policies, subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Nothing in this MOU is intended to alter, limit, or expand the agencies' statutory and regulatory authority.
- H. MEMBERS OF U.S. CONGRESS. Pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 22, no United States member of, or United States delegate to, Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this MOU, or benefits that may arise therefrom, either directly or indirectly.
- I. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA). Public access to MOU or agreement records must not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been exempted from disclosure pursuant to Freedom of Information regulations (5 U.S.C. 552).

- J. TERMINATION. Any of the parties, in writing, may terminate this MOU in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of expiration.
- K. DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION. The Partners shall immediately inform the U.S. Forest Service if they or any of their principals are presently excluded, debarred, or suspended from entering into covered transactions with the federal government according to the terms of 2 CFR Part 180. Additionally, should the Parties or any of their principals receive a transmittal letter or other official Federal notice of debarment or suspension, then they shall notify the Partners without undue delay. This applies whether the exclusion, debarment, or suspension is voluntary or involuntary.
- L. MODIFICATIONS. Modifications within the scope of this MOU must be made by mutual consent of the Parties, by the issuance of a written modification signed and dated by all properly authorized, signatory officials, prior to any changes being performed. Requests for modification should be made, in writing, at least 30 days prior to implementation of the requested change.
- M. COMMENCEMENT/EXPIRATION DATE. This MOU is executed as of the date of the last signature and is effective through 6/1/2015 at which time it will expire, unless extended by an executed modification, signed and dated by all properly authorized, signatory officials.
- N. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES. By signature below, each party certifies that the individuals listed in this document as representatives of the individual parties are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this MOU. In witness whereof, the parties hereto have executed this MOU as of the last date written below.



JEFF JAHNKE, Colorado State Forest Service 	Date 8/31/10
HARLEY L. ERNST, Colorado Association of Conservation Districts 	Date 9-3-10
ALLEN GREEN, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service 	Date 9/2/10
RICK D. CABLES, U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region 	Date 9-20-10

The authority and format of this instrument have been reviewed and approved for signature.



MONICA H. CORDOVA  
U.S. Forest Service Grants & Agreements Specialist

8/25/2010  
Date

Burden Statement

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