

# “I want to do project X with partner Y and I want it to be an agreement”

Subtitle: A peek into the life of a Grants Management Specialist

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## Professional Journey

The progression:

**Field-going:** "...we *could do* so many great things for the resource..."

**NEPA:** "...what is the *process to authorize* doing great things?"

**G&A:** "we have authorization, now *how do we DO* great things?"



# What kinds of agreements support your work?

*Share in the chat box*



*USFS and Tennessee  
WRA enter into Good  
Neighbor Authority  
Agreement on the  
Cherokee Natl Forest*

# A Year in the Life: G&A

- **Oct 1** – G&A encourages program managers to submit their projects EARLY
- **Nov 1 – Dec 31** – tumbleweeds and crickets...GMSs do closeouts
- **Jan – Feb** – budget arrives, “early obligation” dates are set, MOST projects are submitted (up to 300 in a week!).
- **Jan-May** – ten certified GMSs juggle processing actions with a goal of executing by May 1 (appropriated funds).
  - *Eight trainee GMSs – can process, but not sign agreements*
  - *Program managers and partners can become anxious as field season nears.*



# The continuing G&A year...

- June to Sept – fire agreements, incoming funding, no-fund agreements.
  - *Prior to “early obligation,” this was a very busy time (end of year – where can I put this money?!)*
- Back to Oct – Dec – the cycle begins again: GMSs encourage program managers to submit projects early...but mostly work on closing agreements.

# A Day in the Life of G&A

A typical day:

- Manage emails
- Review/edit submitted documents
  - Work with/train program managers – email/Teams/phone
- Answer inquiries – from program managers and partners
  - *This is where the title applies: “I want to do project X with partner Y and I want it to be an agreement.”*
  - *Is it an agreement? WE BUY = contract; WE SHARE = agreement; THEY BUY/USE = special use permit*
- Attend training – required maintenance for certified GMSs
  - Takes 2-3 years to fulfill requirements to become a certified GMS

Who are you working with to develop agreements?



*Share in the chat box*

*USFS and SCA*



# Authorities: laws that enable us to work with partners

- Agreement types “use” different authorities:
  - Interagency
    - Economy Act or Service First*
  - Collection
    - Co-Op Funds 1914*
  - Challenge Cost-Share
    - Interior and Related Appropriations Act of 1992*

## AUTHORITIES THAT CROSS DEPUTY AREAS

### *Cooperative Funds and Deposits Act, as amended (P.L. 94-148) (16 U.S.C. 565a-1)*

- Conduct pollution abatement.
- Provide cooperative manpower, job training, and development programs.
- Develop and publish cooperative environmental education and forest history materials.
- Support forestry protection.

### *Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (P.L. 102-154)*

#### Conduct:

- Trail maintenance and/or grooming
- Fish and wildlife habitat improvement
- Wildlife monitoring
- Watershed restoration
- Environmental education.

### *Cooperative Funds Act (16 U.S.C. 498)*

- Accept monies received from voluntary contributions toward work in forest investigations, protection, management, or improvement of NFS lands.
- Improve wildlife habitat.
- Plant trees.

### *Granger-Thye Act (16 U.S.C. 572)*

- Accept monies for the benefit of depositor if it is for work the Forest Service is authorized to perform.

### *Public Land Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 1701)*

- Provide work experience and training on public lands to low income young men and women in research, forest, recreation management, or resource protection activities that support of the Forest Service mission.

## CONTINUE (from back panel)

### *Economy Act (31 U.S.C. 1535)*

- Obtain services, supplies, materials, or equipment from another Federal agency.

### *Service First (43 U.S.C. 1703)*

- Share facilities and services between U.S. Department of the Interior and other USDA agencies.

## STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY

State and Private Forestry within the Forest Service reaches across the boundaries of the NFS lands to States, Tribes, communities, and nonindustrial private land owners. Related authorities authorize providing technical and financial assistance to States and others to help sustain the Nation's forests and protect communities and the environment from wildland fires.

### *Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act (P.L. 95-313, as amended)*

- Assist forest stewardship on private, State, and local lands.
- Improve timber stands.
- Manage insect infestation and disease.
- Support urban forestry.
- Aid fire prevention.
- Manage and support Forest Legacy Program.

### *Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) (P.L. 105-77, as amended)*

- Enhance forest products in the eastern hardwood industry.

### *Collaborative Forest Restoration—Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (P.L. 106-393 §605)*

- Apply only to projects in New Mexico.
- Promote healthy watersheds.
- Reduce threat of large high intensity wildfire.
- Improve function of forest ecosystems.



United States Department of Agriculture



Partnering for the Sustainability, Protection, Restoration, and Stewardship of National Forests and Grasslands

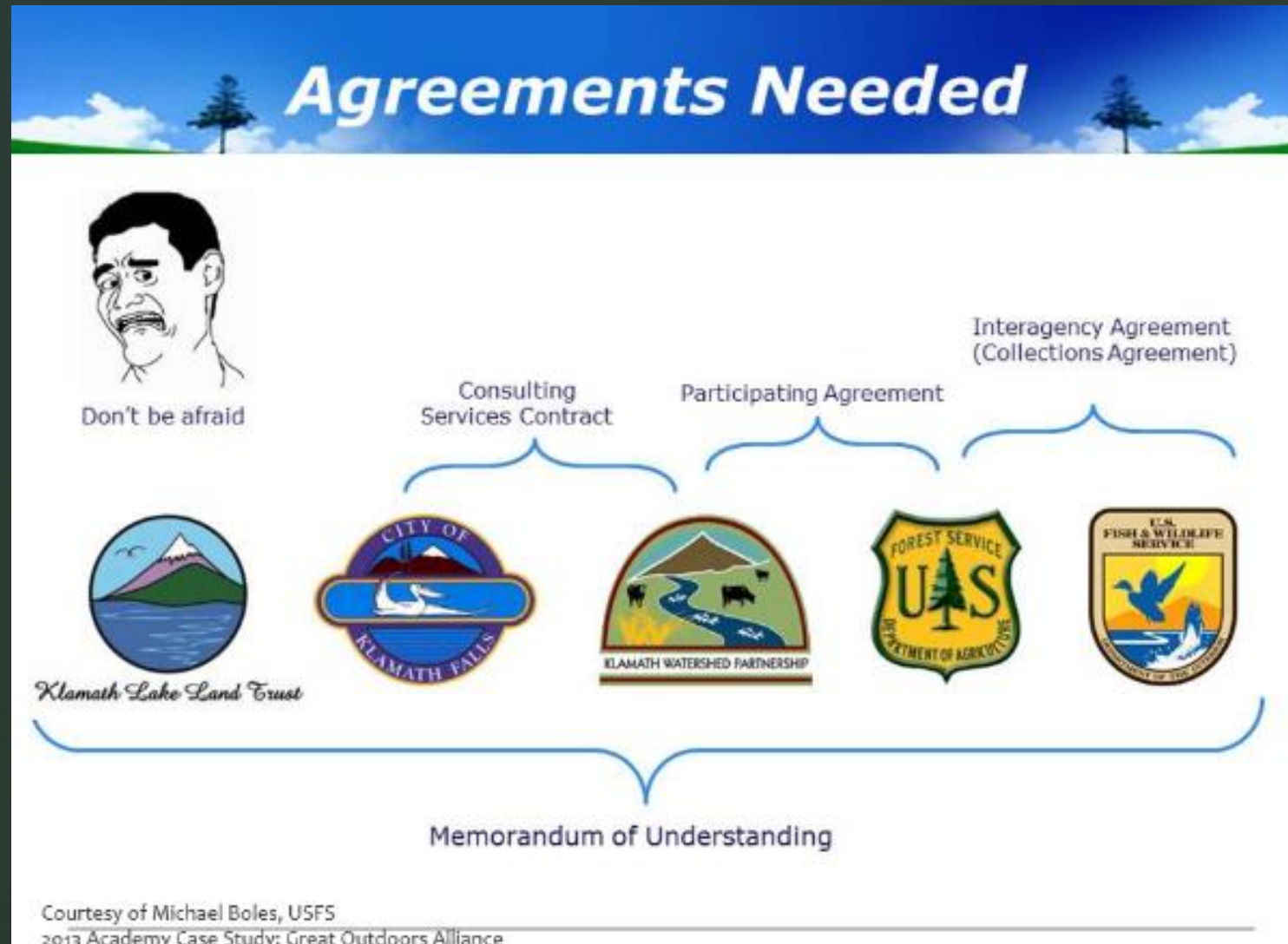
WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON AUTHORITIES AND TYPES OF PROJECTS AWARDED IN MY PROGRAM AREA?



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Simple or complex? Well, tell me more...



# MbN class connections



- Competencies that benefit a USFS Grants Management Specialist:
  - Partner cultural awareness – *can be key in rural areas, working with Tribes, etc*
  - Developing and managing agreements – *understanding, and teaching, the process*
  - Financial management – *understanding the budget process, and spending options*

## ➤ MbN class connections



- And also...
  - Conflict management – *differences of opinion about how to best DO things*
  - Entrepreneurship – *creatively finding flexibility within the rules*
  - Influencing/negotiating – *with partnership staff, other internal/external parties*
  - Political savvy – *staying in the loop of changes, trends and priorities*



# Building your Network

*How to work well with Grants & Agreements*

- Talk to G&A early and often
- Be prepared to describe!
- Details matter
- Consider timing



Thank you

*for your attention*

