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Idaho, Forest Service renew timber vows

Officials reveal goal to double logging volumes in attempts to improve forest health, reduce wildfire risk

By ERIC BARKER
LEWISTON TRIBUNE

Idaho and the U.S. Forest Service said Friday they will attempt to double logging volumes on federal land as they seek to improve forest health and reduce the risk of wildfires.

The goal was embedded in a Shared Stewardship memorandum of understanding signed by Gov. Brad Little, Forest Service Chief Tom Schultz and Idaho Department of Lands Director Dustin Miller that renewed a similar commitment first made in 2018.

The new document doesn't green light any new tools or authorities. Instead it amounts to a celebration of their past work under the Good Neighbor Authority and a pledge to take it further.

"We are building on a foundation of cooperation and resource-sharing and expanding that work across entire landscapes and ownership boundaries," Little said in a news release. "I am confident that our continued efforts and partnerships will deliver lasting benefits for Idaho's forests and our rural communities."

The Good Neighbor Authority allows state and local governments to implement projects like timber sales and restoration work that is designed and approved by the Forest Service. Shared Stewardship encourages federal land managers to collaborate with states, tribes, local governments and private land owners to design and implement projects that address threats such as insect infestations and wildfires that cross ownership boundaries.

In Idaho, 64 Forest Service timber sales with a combined volume topping 209 million board feet have been sold and administered by the Idaho Department of Lands under the Good Neighbor Authority in the last decade.

Friday's agreement includes a goal of increasing the annual volume of GNA sales from 50 million board feet to 100 million board feet by working together to plan, design and administer logging projects.

Clete Edmunson, executive director of the Associated Logging Contractors of Idaho, told the Lewiston Tribune the partnership has led to more work in the woods.

"It's a path forward to open up more Forest Service forested lands to partner with the state," he said. "It keeps our guys working and running."

Edmunson cautioned that sluggish economic activity and high interest rates

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LIGHT UP THE SEASON PARADE



Olivia Anderson/Lewiston Tribune

Santa Claus waves to families from his sleigh during the "Light Up the Season" parade Thursday along Main Street in Moscow.

Moscow parade lights up the sky



Olivia Anderson/Lewiston Tribune

Attendees react to passing floats during the "Light Up the Season" parade Thursday along Main Street in Moscow.

Evening tree lighting and parade draw thousands to Main Street

By ANTHONY KUIPERS
MOSCOW-PULLMAN DAILY NEWS

The wintry slush on the ground did not stop thousands of people from ringing in the holiday season Thursday night in Moscow.

The city's annual "Light up the Season" parade and tree lighting took place on Main Street and lit up the December sky.

As is tradition, the event kicked off with a countdown to the lighting of a more than 20-foot tall tree towering over Friendship Square. The tree comes from Hash Tree Company in Princeton, according to Moscow City Administrator Bill Belknap.

People also arrived decorated in their own holiday lights, from their festive sweaters to light-up necklaces and hats.

Moscow High School cheerleaders with holiday lights on their pom-poms

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Skylar Meade pleads guilty to two murders

He admits to killings in north central Idaho during his flight from Boise prison

By DEAN A. FERGUSON
LEWISTON TRIBUNE

LEWISTON — A prison escapee has pleaded guilty to murdering two north central Idaho men in March of 2024.

Skylar Meade, 33, pleaded guilty Thursday to two counts of first-degree murder in Nez Perce County 2nd District Court. In exchange for his plea, he will be spared the death penalty.

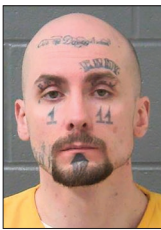
"Meade will spend the rest of his life locked

up," Nez Perce County Prosecutor Justin Coleman wrote in a news release. "The victims' families and communities will be spared the difficult and prolonged trial and appeal process."

For admitting to killing James Mauney, 83, of Juliaetta, and Gerald

Henderson, 72, of Orofino, Meade agrees to be sentenced to two consecutive life sentences, without the possibility of parole.

On March 20, 2024, Meade escaped from a hospital with alleged accomplice Nicholas Umphenour, 30, where he was being treated for self-



Meade

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Providers say costly changes are coming to Idaho mental health care

Medicaid cuts will cost the state millions, burden local governments and hospital, according to health officials

By RACHEL SUN
LEWISTON TRIBUNE AND
NORTHWEST PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Health care providers say budget cuts that went into effect Monday to programs serving people in crisis and those with severe mental health disorders could end up costing the state upward of \$150 million in the first year, and add financial and staffing burdens to local governments, mental health care providers



Boyce



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and law enforcement.

THE COST

A report by the Idaho Association of Community Providers and the Idaho ACT Coalition said the cuts to those programs, which total roughly \$20 million, could cost some \$150 million in other

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Trib Report: This week covers a murder charge, a murder confession and the possibility of prayer at Lewiston City Council meetings. To watch the latest episode, scan this QR code.



Inside today: Golden Times
Lewiston librarian calls it a career



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