

Forest Service National Saw Policy and Volunteers and Partners (3/8/18)

- The new policy creates consistent training, evaluation and certification standards and requirements for anyone using chain saws and/or cross cut saws on National Forest System Lands.
- Inconsistencies nationwide led to the revision of the saw policy.
- A major change is requiring cooperating partners (working under an agreement) who use saws on NFSs to be trained, evaluated and certified per the new policy.
- There is no change as it pertains to Forest Service volunteers, who should have been trained, evaluated and certified all along - volunteers under FS volunteer agreements are considered as Federal employees for OWCP/tort and must have the same relevant trainings and certifications for the task at hand as FS employees.
- The Saw policy does NOT apply to contractors or entities who are operating under a Special Use Permit (such as outfitter and guides or concessionaires).

Volunteers under Forest Service Volunteer agreements and Partners working under a Challenge Cost Share or Participating Agreement

- All volunteers, individual or group volunteers, operating under a Forest Service volunteer agreement (form OF-301a), or challenge cost share or participating agreement partners who have *their* volunteers, staff, participants and/or employees, who are **using saws** (chain saw and/or

cross cut) on National Forest System Lands must be trained, evaluated and certified.

- Current certifications are good until they expire, at which time the requirements under the new policy are applied.
- Volunteers and Partners using saws on NFS Lands must be current in 1st Aid and CPR for any saw operations, including prior to training, evaluation and certification or re-certification.
- The policy allows for volunteer or partner C-certified sawyers (when designated by the Forest Service) to instruct, evaluate and make recommendations to the Forest Service for certification.

Specific Requirements for challenge cost share and participating agreement partners

- Consultants hired by challenge cost share or participating agreement partners to conduct saw training must be trained, evaluated and certified per the new saw policy.
- Cooperating partners can develop their own saw training, evaluation and certification program that must be vetted and approved by the Forest Service. Program must meet same standards.

Additional information:

Joni Packard, Regional Volunteer, Youth and Service/21CSC
Program Manager

USDA Forest Service, Northern Region, jpackard@fs.fed.us, (406)
329-3187