

Networking with Government Contract Individuals



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AGENDA

- Where to Start
 - Understand the Agency you are seeking to contract with
 - Do your research
 - Network
 - Market Research
- Who to Contact
 - Contract Specialist
 - Technical Representatives
 - Program Managers
- Best Practices
 - Be able to articulate who you are and what you can do in 15 min or less
 - Less is often More
- Topics to consider discussing with businesses



DISCLAIMER!!

There is no one way to reach out to Agency contacts---

From experience, it isn't necessarily knowing the Contracting Officer that will gain an individual any additional exposure or benefits.

It is more so in knowing the technical individuals, in the area the business/client is located and networking with them.

These folks build the specifications, statements of work, requirements and know what their budgets are

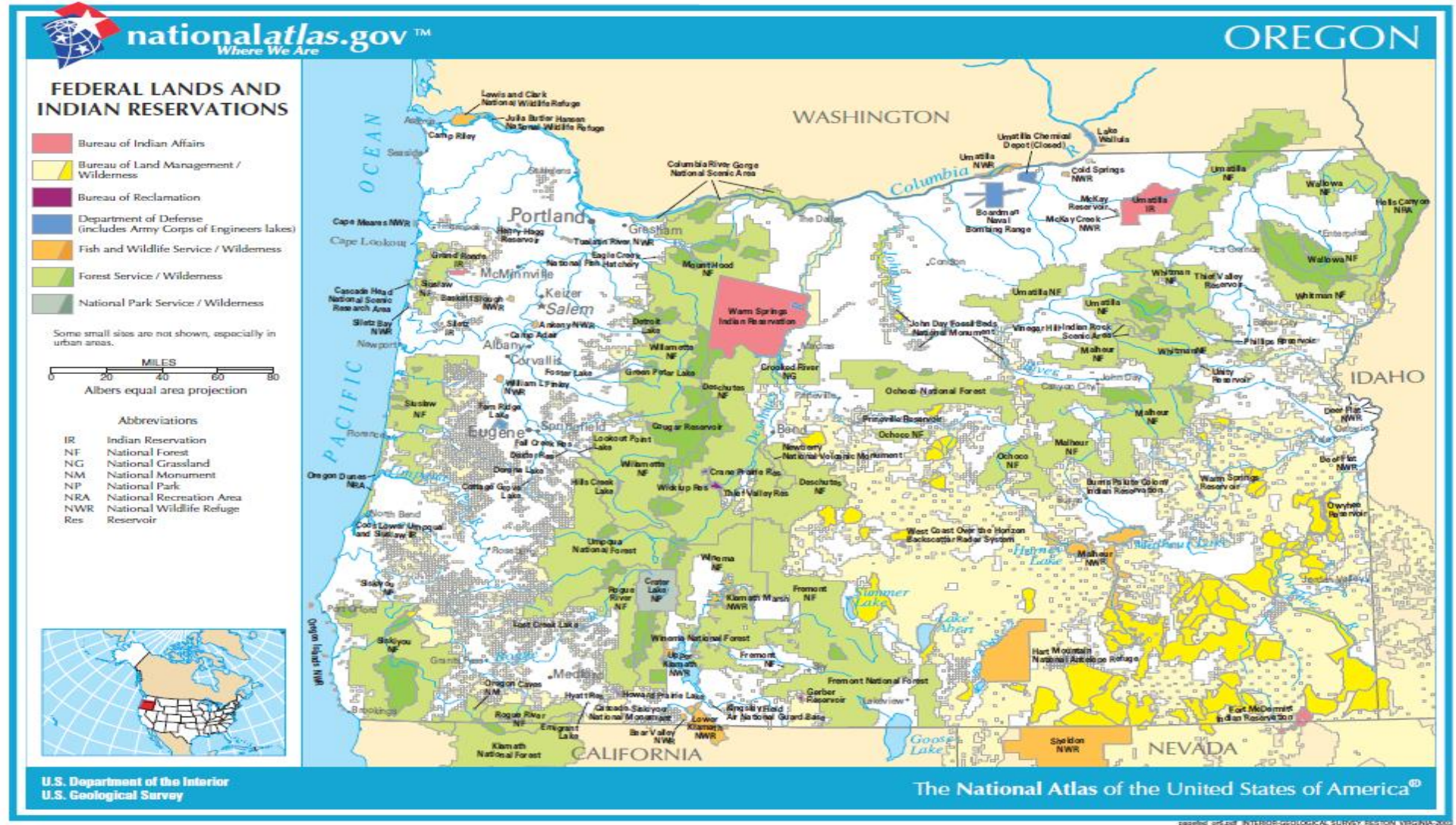
Past Performance (great or bad) is also a way of ensuring that agency folks know you, what you can do, and how well you do it- Clients need to keep this in mind!

WHERE TO START- Research

- **Do research on the agency you want to do business with**
 - Know the Agency Structure
 - *WO, RO, State Office, Local*
 - Understand what products and services they procure
 - *Are they in line with what your business offers*
 - Understand their Mission
 - *Do you know how they do business*
 - Understand their Fiscal Year
 - *Most agencies are October 1 to September 30*
 - *A lot of solicitations will be advertised from January to September, to spend flow down money*
 - Understand the agencies procurement thresholds
 - *Who are the micro purchasers*
 - *Where does the agency post requirements from Micro-Purchase Threshold to the \$25,000 Threshold*
 - *Where does the agency post requirements above the \$25,000 Threshold*



Map of Federal Lands and Indian Reservations In Oregon

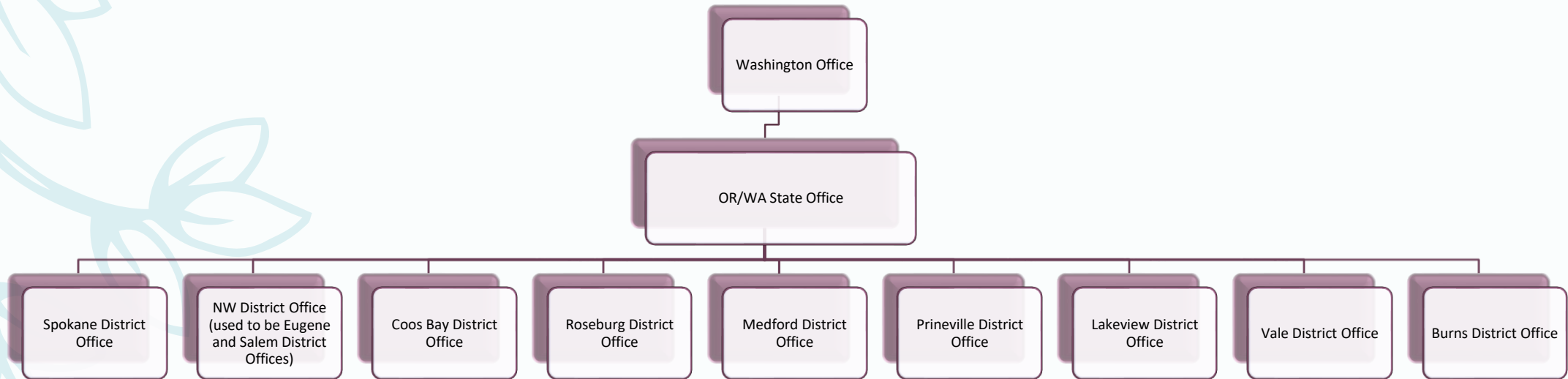


Agency Structure

- As a whole, the federal government is made up of agencies and each agency is broken down into various components:
 - National Offices, Regional or State Offices, Districts or Field Offices.
- Agencies are either decentralized or centralized in their buying activities, with each having its own mission, budget, contracting shop, and small business specialist.
- *The federal government spends billions annually on products & services ranging from paperclips to complex space vehicles*



OR/WA BLM Structure



- 9 District Offices
- Each district office has one or two purchasing agents with a \$25,000 warrant
 - Some may hold a higher warrant because they were grandfathered in before a lower threshold warrant of \$25,000 was enforced
- State Office Contract Specialists hold warrants with differing levels dependent on training, experience, and knowledge.



Map View- OR/WA BLM Locations



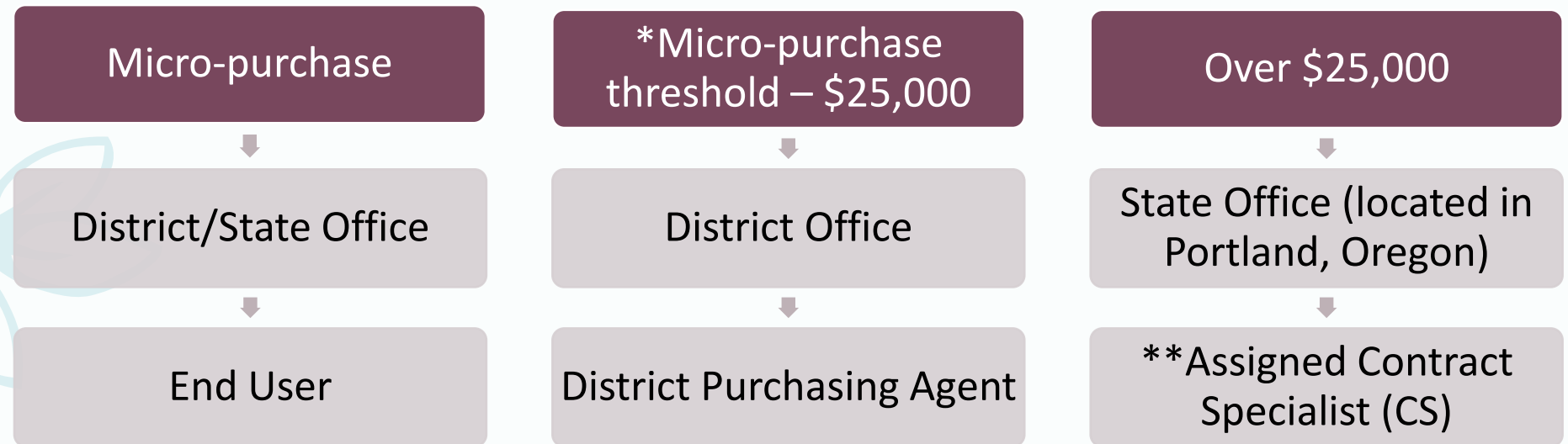
OR/WA BLM Thresholds and Workflow

Micro-purchase Thresholds:

Supplies: \$10,000

Services: \$2,500

Construction: \$2,000

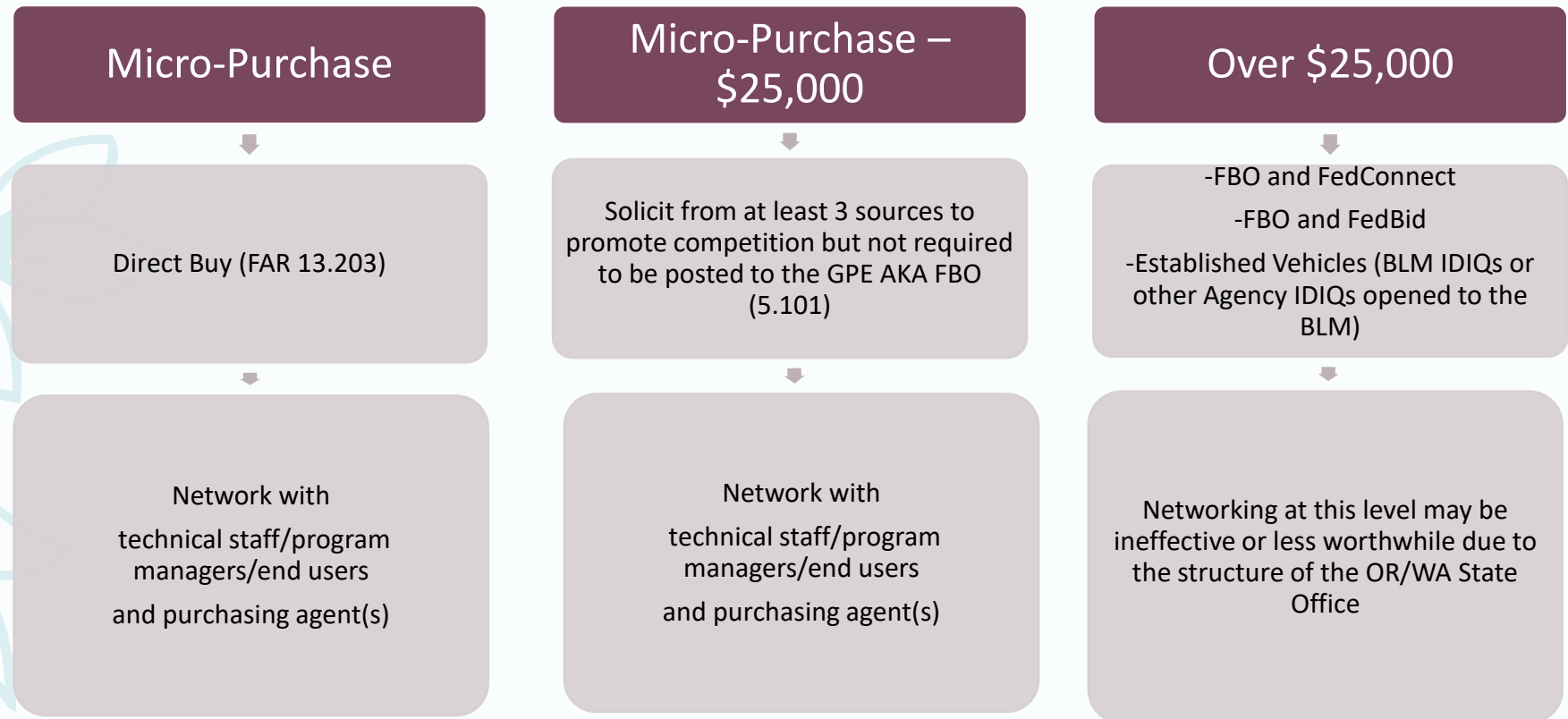


*If the requirement originates from a department at the OR/WA State Office then the requirement would still be processed by staff at the state office.

**The requirement may be assigned to a unwarranted CS (or a CS with a warrant below the Government estimate) for the requirement and paired with warranted CO to review and sign.



Strategies for marketing to the OR/WA BLM



Reminder of FAR Requirements for Set-Asides

- 19.203 (b)
 - Micro-purchase threshold - simplified acquisition threshold (SAT): FAR requires setting aside the acquisition for small businesses.
- 19.203 (c)
 - Above the simplified acquisition threshold. FAR requires the contracting officer to first consider setting aside an acquisition for the small business socioeconomic contracting programs (i.e., 8(a), HUBZone, SDVOSB, or WOSB programs) before considering a small business set-aside.

SAT: \$250,000



DOI Policy for Small Business Acquisition Screening

Department of the Interior Policy (BLM, F&WS, National Park Service, etc.)

Why is this important?



- SAT up to \$500K: small business screening has to be signed off by the Small Business Specialist at the field/regional office level
- \$500,000 up to \$50,000,000: small business screening has to be signed off by the Headquarters Small Business Specialist (Washington DC Small Business Specialist).
- Over \$50,000,000: small business screening has to be signed off by the Director of the Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization

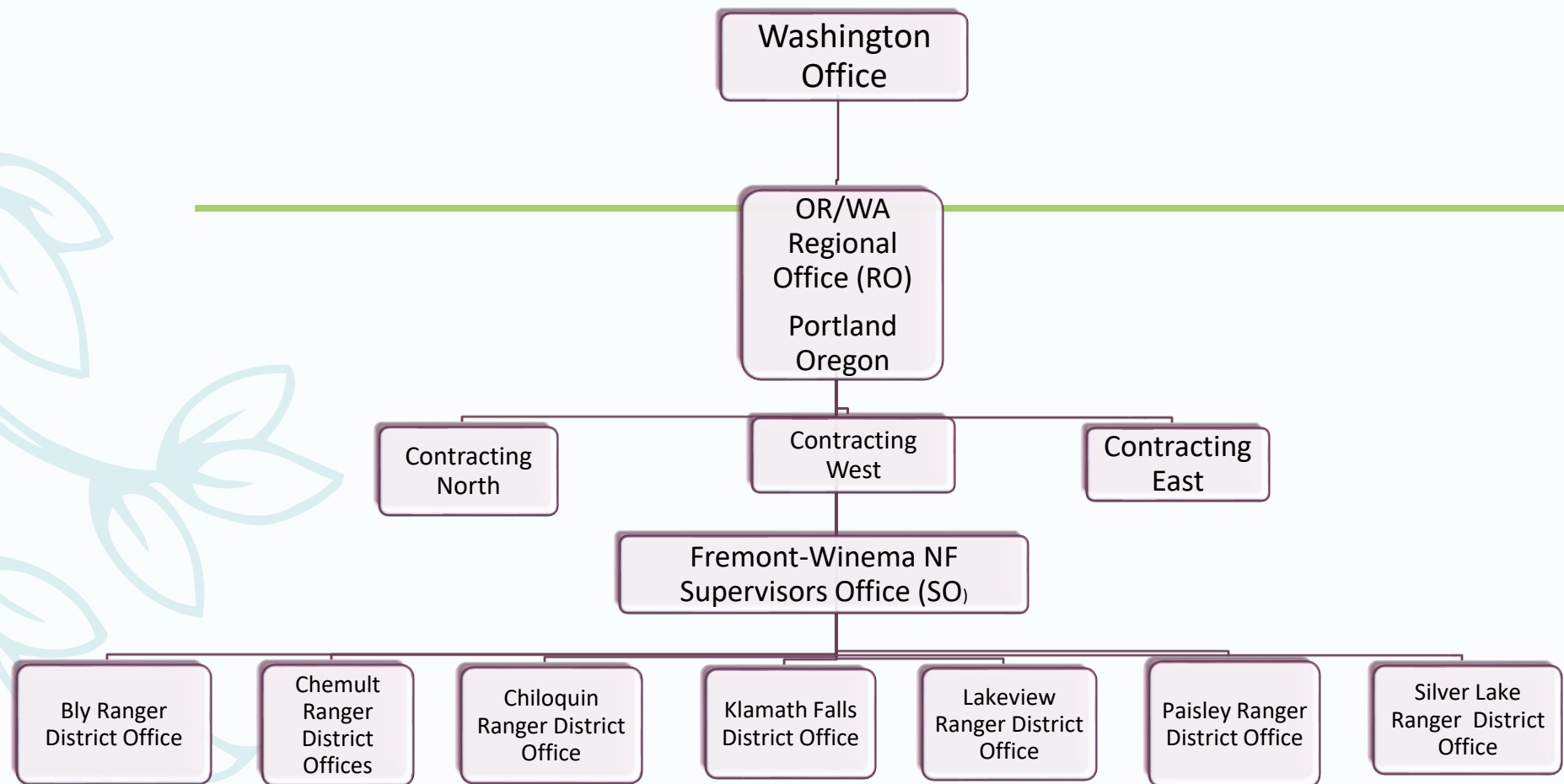


DOI Policy for Small Business Acquisition Screening

- Over the SAT, COs are required to document their market research in support of their set-aside in accordance with FAR Part 19.203(c) and his/her determination has to be signed the designated small business specialist or a higher up based on the Government's estimate for the project at hand.
- **BLM and FS COs uses SBA's DSBS database for their market research and therefore it is important for clients to have their profiles correctly entered so that COs can set aside requirements appropriately and limit competition when warranted.**

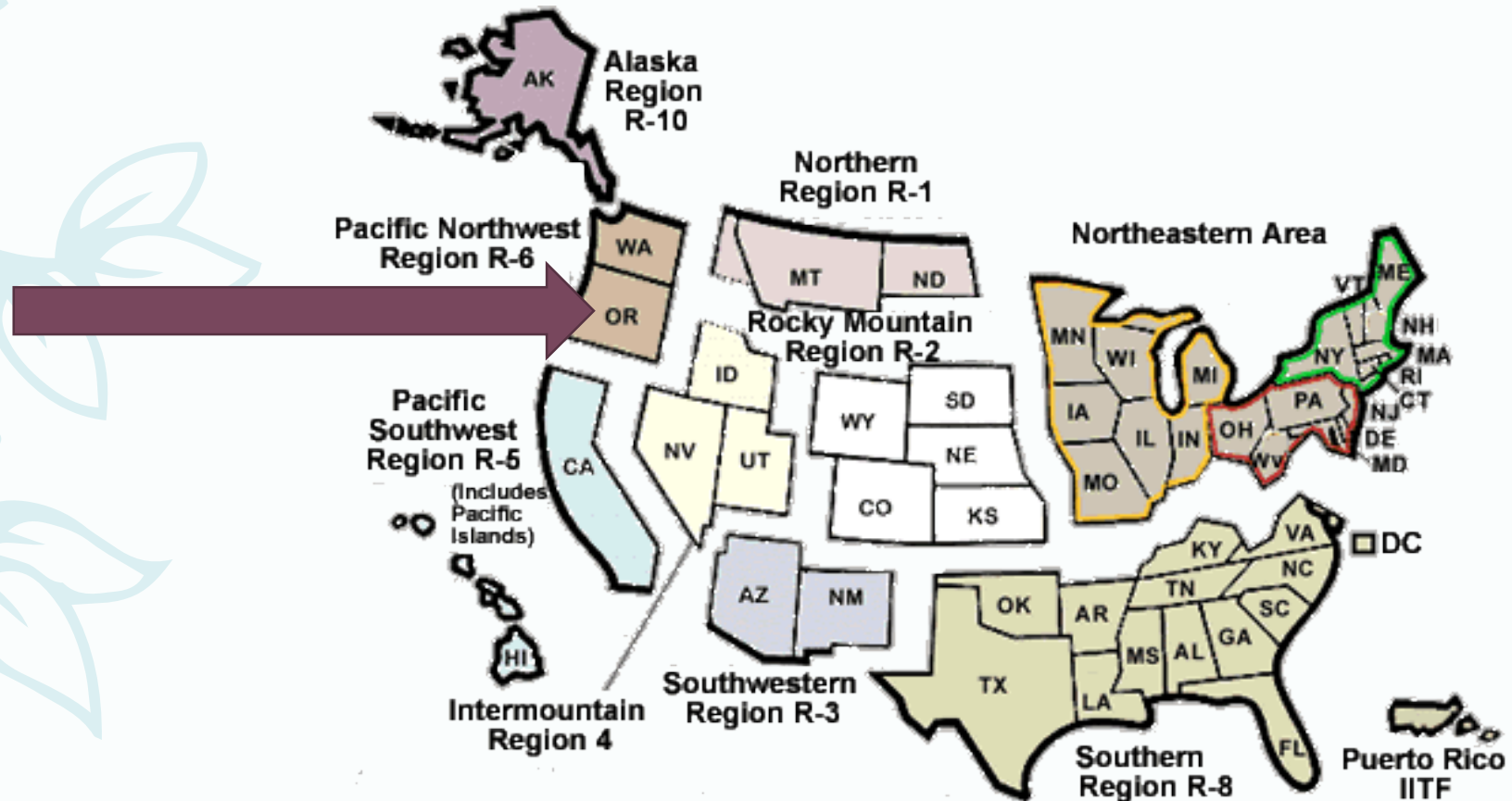


Forest Service Structure-



- Contract Specialist/Officers are typically located at the NF Supervisors Office level, however, depending on structure, may be centralized in specific locations within the region
- Each Contract Specialist has a warrant dependent training, experience, and knowledge.

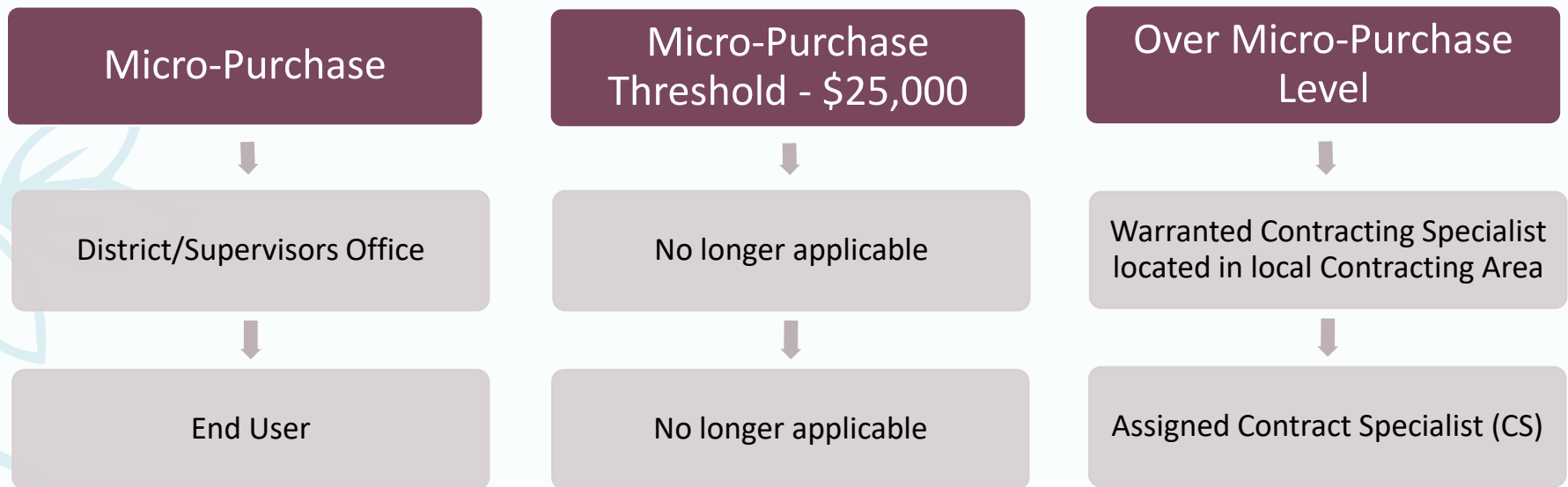
Forest Service Structure (by Regions)



National Forest Structure Example- Fremont-Wimena



Forest Service Thresholds and Workflow



There has been substantial changes in the USDA-FS Contracting organization-

- There are no district purchasing agents anymore, and some Forests don't have warranted CO's,

Agency Thresholds/Requirements

- Agencies are **required** to set aside work for small businesses up to the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT)
- The Simplified Acquisition Threshold are purchases that are between the micro-purchase level of;

(\$2000 for construction, \$2500 for Services, \$10,000 for supplies)

And not exceeding \$250,000. However, agencies can set aside for higher than the SAT if they deem appropriate and have knowledge that there is enough Small Businesses that can compete

- This requires the Contracting Officer to use small business unless the officer deems the 'rule of two' and there are not enough reasonable expectations currently being offered.

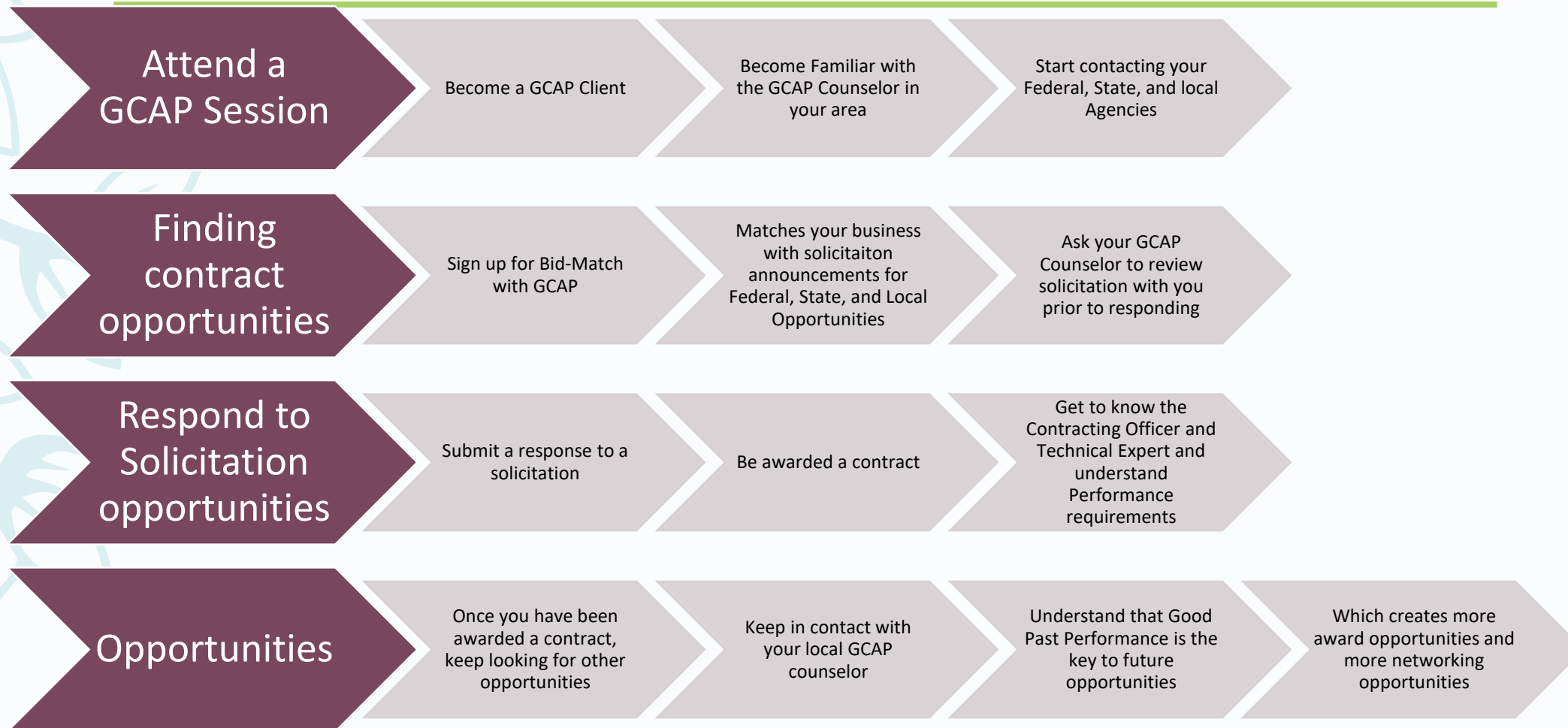


WHERE TO START- Networking

- NETWORK: NETWORK- NETWORK- NETWORK-----
 - Who do you know locally? Introduce yourself and distribute capability statement
 - Attend any outreach seminars, or networking opportunities.
- Create a Capability Statement
 - An agency will want to know “why your business” so be prepared to answer;
 - *Stand Out*
 - Be specific
 - Be Brief
 - Be realistic



Networking Opportunities



WHO TO CONTACT

- Do you know individuals from;
 - State Offices
 - District Offices
 - Local work centers
- Research solicitations;
 - Reach out to individuals noted on the solicitation
 - Introduce yourself and your business
- Are you seeking subcontracting work;
 - Know where to look for these opportunities
 - Go to pre-award site visits
 - *Will find out who the GOV Agency folks are*
 - *Will find out who the potential Prim Contractors are*
 - *Be ready to hand out a capability statement*



BEST PRACTICES

- Capability Statement
 - Create one to share as needed
- Practice the A,B,C;s
 - Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity
- Past Performance/Experience
 - Do you have PP and Experience for the type of work the agency requires
- SAM and DSBS
 - Ensure their SAM is accurate and the Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS) is completely filled out

TOPICS TO HAVE BUSINESSES CONSIDER

- *Do they understand set-asides and certifications?*
- *The Federal Government is required to set aside at least **23% of all contracting dollars exclusively for small businesses** so that they shall have the maximum practicable opportunity to participate in providing goods and services to the Federal Government*
 - *Hubzone, 8(a), WOSB, SDVOSB, ESB, DSB*
 - *Certifications; state and Federal*
- GSA
- VIPR
 - Process, length
 - I-Team
 - Who to contact



THESE OPPORTUNITIES OFFER DIFFERENT NETWORKING AVENUES

Summary

- Clients need to;
 - Understand the Agency's mission and procurement processes
 - Do Market Research
 - Network at all levels
 - *Meet agency folks*
 - *Create a capability statement*

Understand that there is no ONE right way to reach out to agency contacts- Just get to know them and create relationships



Questions

