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Forest Service Assistance Programs

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Summary

Congress has established several forestry assistance programs within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support the management of state and private forests. These programs are under the jurisdiction of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, which often examine them in the periodic legislation to reauthorize agricultural programs, commonly known as farm bills. For example, in the 2018 farm bill (Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018; P.L. 115-334), Congress reauthorized and modified existing programs and established some new forestry assistance programs.

Forestry assistance programs (in contrast to agriculture conservation programs that include forestry activities) are primarily administered by the USDA Forest Service (FS). These FS assistance programs generally provide technical and educational assistance such as information, advice, and aid on specific projects. Other programs provide financial assistance, usually through grants (with or without matching contributions from recipients) or cost-sharing (typically through state agencies, with varying levels of contributions from recipients). Many programs provide both technical and financial assistance.

FS assistance programs have various objectives. Some of the assistance programs provide support for planning and implementing forestry and related land management practices (e.g., Forest Stewardship, Urban and Community Forestry). Other programs provide assistance for forest restoration projects that involve more than one jurisdiction and address regional or national priorities (e.g., Landscape Scale Restoration). Other programs provide support for protecting forestlands from wildfires, insects, and diseases, and from converting forestland to nonforest uses (e.g., Community Forest and Open Space Conservation, Forest Legacy). Other programs provide support for addressing concerns related to forest health, such as insect and disease infestation (e.g., Forest Health). Programs also exist to enhance state and rural wildfire management capabilities (e.g., State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance) and to promote the use of forest products (e.g., Wood Innovation). International Forestry is often included as a FS assistance program, because it provides technical forestry help and because it is funded through the FS appropriations account for forestry assistance programs (State and Private Forestry). Some programs have been combined for administrative purposes.

By law, most of the programs provide assistance to state partner agencies. The state agencies can use the aid on state forestlands or to assist local governments or private landowners. How the states use the resources is largely at the discretion of the states, though it must be consistent with the authorization of each program and with the national priorities for state assistance established by Congress in the 2008 farm bill.

Most—but not all—FS assistance programs are available nationally and are permanently authorized to receive discretionary funding. However, one program receives mandatory funding. Overall funding for the FS assistance programs in FY2021 was \$286.2 million, a decrease relative to FY2020. Much of the difference between FY2021 and FY2020 funding can be attributed to changes to the FS's budgetary structure. The Administration requested \$335.0 million for FY2022. Full-year appropriations for FY2022 have not been enacted, but Congress has provided \$355.4 million in supplemental appropriations for FY2022 through two laws, including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58).

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act also authorized and appropriated funding for new FS assistance programs and activities and provided additional congressional direction for existing programs.

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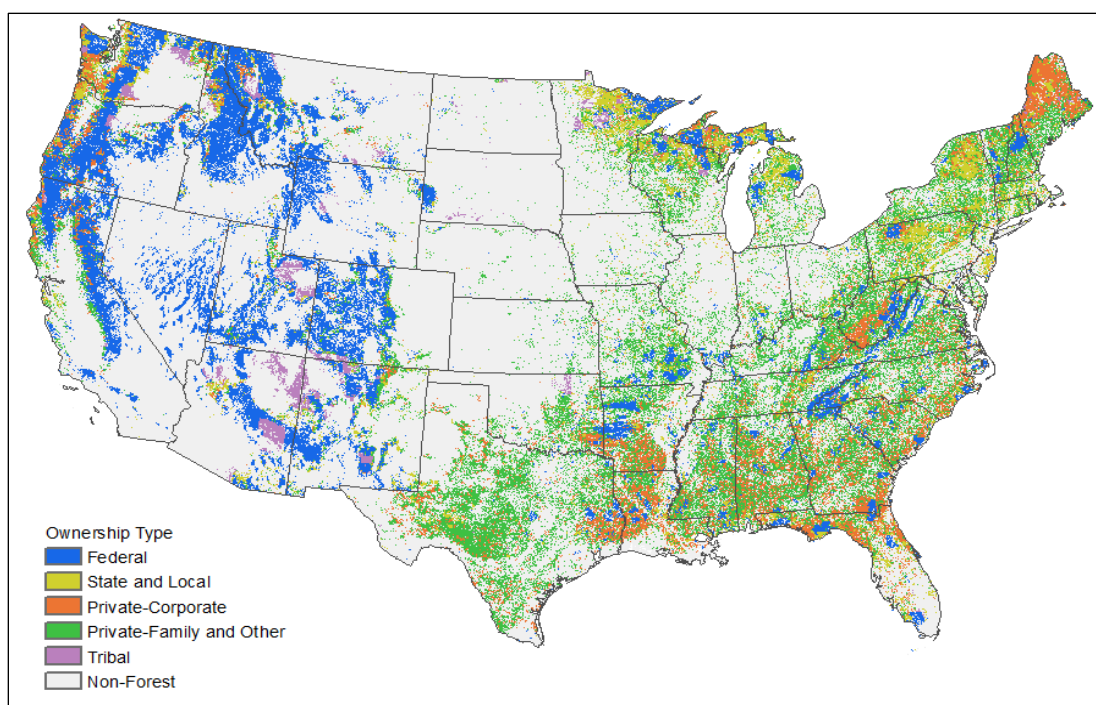
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Introduction

There are approximately 765 million acres of forestlands in the United States, most of which are privately owned (443 million acres, or 58%) by individuals, families, Native American tribes, corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and other groups (see **Figure 1**).¹ The federal government has numerous programs to support forest management on those private forests and on nonfederal public forests (such as those owned by state, county, and local governments). These programs support a variety of forest management and protection goals, including activities related to planning for and responding to wildfires, as well as supporting the development of new uses and markets for wood products. These programs are primarily administered by the Forest Service (FS) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and often with the assistance of state partner agencies.

Figure 1. Forest Landownership in the Conterminous United States Circa 2014



Source: CRS analysis of data from Jaketon H. Hewes, Brett J. Butler, and Greg C. Liknes, *Forest Ownership in the Conterminous United States circa 2014 - geospatial data set*, Forest Service Research Data Archive, 2017, at <https://doi.org/10.2737/RDS-2017-0007>.

Notes: Data are not available for Alaska, Hawaii, or the U.S. territories.

This report provides information on FS forestry assistance programs, including those authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; P.L. 117-58; see the “The Infrastructure

¹ The figure of 765 million acres reflects forestland in the conterminous United States, Alaska, and Hawaii, but do not reflect forest resources in U.S. territories. Sonja N. Oswald et al., *Forest Resources of the United States: A Technical Document Supporting the Forest Service 2020 Update of the RPA Assessment*, USDA, FS, 2019, at https://www.fia.fs.fed.us/program-features/rpa/docs/2017RPAFIATABLESFINAL_050918.pdf. For more discussion on forest ownership, see CRS Report R46976, *U.S. Forest Ownership and Management: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Katie Hoover and Anne A. Riddle.

Investment and Jobs Act”). Following a brief background and overview, this report describes the applicable programs, types of activities funded, eligibility requirements, authorized program duration and funding level, and requested and enacted program appropriations. Other agencies, inside and outside of USDA, also administer programs that may have forest conservation or protection benefits. Such agencies include the USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and agencies within the Department of the Interior.² These programs are outside the scope of this report.

Background

Providing federal assistance for nonfederal forest management has been a component of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA’s) programs for more than a century. Initial forestry assistance efforts began with the creation of the USDA Division of Forestry in 1881 (to complement forestry research, which began in 1876). Forestry assistance and research programs grew slowly, and, in 1901, the division was upgraded to the USDA Bureau of Forestry. In 1905, the USDA Forest Service (FS) was established when the USDA Bureau of Forestry merged with the Interior Department’s Division of Forestry (which at the time administered the *forest reserves*; these were later renamed *national forests*). In addition to providing forestry assistance and conducting forestry research, the FS administers the National Forest System, a system of federal lands consisting of 193 million acres of national forests, national grasslands, and other land designations.

The Senate and House Agriculture Committees have jurisdiction over forestry in general, forestry assistance, and forestry research programs. Congress authorized specific forestry assistance programs in the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924 (P.L. 68-270; 43 Stat. 653). This law guided those programs for more than half a century, until it was revised in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (CFAA; 16 U.S.C. §§2101 et seq.).

Congressional Action

The House and Senate Agriculture Committees often examine these programs in the periodic omnibus legislation to reauthorize agriculture and food policy programs, commonly known as the *farm bill*.³ The previous three farm bills each contained a stand-alone forestry title.⁴ Most recently, the 2018 farm bill reauthorized, modified, and repealed existing FS assistance programs and reauthorized requirements for statewide forest assessments.⁵ In addition, the 2018 farm bill provided statutory authorization and congressional direction for two current programs that were operating under existing, but broad, authorizations (the Landscape Scale Restoration program and Wood Innovation program). The program authority and funding for many of the agricultural programs—including three forestry programs—authorized through previous farm bills are

² For more information on other U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs, see CRS Report R40763, *Agricultural Conservation: A Guide to Programs*, by Megan Stubbs; CRS Report R40763, *Agricultural Conservation: A Guide to Programs*, CRS Report R42854, *Emergency Assistance for Agricultural Land Rehabilitation*, by Megan Stubbs; and CRS In Focus IF10288, *Overview of the 2018 Farm Bill Energy Title Programs*, by Kelsi Braemort.

³ For more information on the farm bill generally, see CRS In Focus IF10187, *Farm Bill Primer: What Is the Farm Bill?*, by Renée Johnson and Jim Monke.

⁴ The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 farm bill; P.L. 110-246), the Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 farm bill; P.L. 113-79), and the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 farm bill; P.L. 115-334) each included stand-alone forestry titles. For more information on the 2014 farm bill, see CRS Report R43076, *The 2014 Farm Bill (P.L. 113-79): Summary and Side-by-Side*, coordinated by Ralph M. Chite. For more information on the forestry provisions in the 2014 farm bill, see CRS Report R43431, *Forestry Provisions in the 2014 Farm Bill (P.L. 113-79)*, by Katie Hoover. For more information on the 2018 farm bill, see CRS Report R45525, *The 2018 Farm Bill (P.L. 115-334): Summary and Side-by-Side Comparison*, coordinated by Mark A. McMinimy.

⁵ The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 farm bill; P.L. 115-334). For more information on the 2018 farm bill, see CRS Report R45525, *The 2018 Farm Bill (P.L. 115-334): Summary and Side-by-Side Comparison*, coordinated by Mark A. McMinimy. For more information on the forestry provisions in the 2018 farm bill, see CRS Report R45696, *Forest Management Provisions Enacted in the 115th Congress*, by Katie Hoover et al.

scheduled to expire at the end of FY2023 unless Congress provides for an extension or reauthorizes them.

In addition, the IIIJA contained several provisions pertaining to FS assistance programs.⁶ These included establishing new assistance programs, providing statutory authorization and direction for existing programs, and appropriating funding. Little information on IJA program implementation is available, particularly for the new programs. As such, they are not included in the “Forest Service Assistance Programs” section of this report. However, the IJA authorizations and appropriations are discussed in the “The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act” section at the end of this report.

Overview

The FS assistance programs may provide technical assistance, financial assistance, or both. Technical assistance includes providing guidance documents, skills training, or data or otherwise sharing information, expertise, and advice, either broadly or on specific projects. Technical assistance also may include the development and transfer of technological innovations. Financial assistance is typically delivered through formula or competitive grants (with or without contributions from recipients) or through cost sharing (with varying levels of matching contributions from recipients). For example, the Forest Health Protection program provides both types of assistance: financial assistance in the form of funding for FS to perform surveys and to control insects or diseases on state or private lands (with the landowner’s consent and cooperation) and technical assistance in the form of data, expertise, and guidance for addressing specific insect and disease infestations.

Several FS assistance programs are implemented through state partners (e.g., state forestry or natural resource agencies). In these cases, FS provides technical and financial aid to the states, which then provide information and assistance to private landowners or specified eligible entities.⁷ Previous farm bills expanded some agricultural conservation programs to include forestry practices; thus, direct federal financial assistance to private forest landowners may be feasible through those conservation programs.⁸ See **Table 1** for a brief summary of the FS programs addressed in this report. More information on each program is available in the “Forest Service Assistance Programs” section of this report.

Table 1. Forest Service Assistance Programs

Program	Authorization		Type	Eligible Recipients	Primary Activities
	Citation	Funding			
Collaborative Forest Restoration	P.L. 106-393 ^a	Discretionary; \$5 million	Financial	Collaborative groups in New Mexico	Forest restoration

⁶ Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), P.L. 117-58.

⁷ States may request to receive one consolidated payment for all the authorized cooperative forestry assistance programs (16 U.S.C. §2108).

⁸ For information on USDA conservation programs, see CRS Report R40763, *Agricultural Conservation: A Guide to Programs*.

Program	Authorization		Type	Eligible Recipients	Primary Activities
	Citation	Funding			
Community Forest and Open Space Conservation	16 U.S.C. §2103d	Discretionary; such sums as necessary	Financial	Local governments, tribes, nonprofit organizations	Purchase forestlands threatened with conversion to other uses
<i>Cooperative Fire Protection</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Fire Assistance Volunteer Fire Assistance 	16 U.S.C. §2106	Discretionary; such sums as necessary	Technical and financial	States	Wildfire preparedness, prevention, control and use; fire equipment and training, etc.
<i>Forest Health Protection</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Lands Cooperative Lands 	16 U.S.C. §2104	Discretionary; such sums as necessary	Technical and financial	States	Survey, prevent, suppress, or control forest pests, insects, and diseases
Forest Legacy	16 U.S.C. §2103c	Discretionary and mandatory; such sums as necessary ^b	Financial	States	Purchase forestlands threatened with conversion to other uses
<i>Forest Stewardship</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance to States Rural Forestry 	16 U.S.C. §2103a, 16 U.S.C. §2107, 16 U.S.C. §2102	Discretionary; such sums as necessary	Technical and financial	States	Planning, forest and watershed restoration, reforestation, wildlife habitat improvement, and others
International Forestry	16 U.S.C. §4501	Discretionary; such sums as necessary	Technical and financial	Other countries	Planning and management; fire, insect, and disease prevention and control; rehabilitation
Landscape Scale Restoration	16 U.S.C. §2109a	Discretionary; \$20 million through FY2023	Financial	State	Forest restoration projects
Urban & Community Forestry	16 U.S.C. §2105	Discretionary; such sums as necessary	Technical and financial	State, tribal, local governments; private organizations	Planning, education, tree planting and maintenance

Program	Authorization		Type	Eligible Recipients	Primary Activities
	Citation	Funding			
<i>Wood Technology and Innovation</i>					
• Community Wood Energy / Innovation	7 U.S.C. §8113	Discretionary; \$25 million through FY2023	Technical and financial	State, tribal, and local governments; other organizations	Education; technology development and transfer, market development, applied research
• Hardwood Technology Transfer and Applied Research	16 U.S.C. §1650	Discretionary; such sums as necessary			
• Rural Revitalization Technologies	7 U.S.C. §6601	Discretionary; \$5 million through FY2023			
• Wood Innovation Grant	7 U.S.C. §7655d	No specific funding authorization			

Source: CRS.

Notes:

- a. The Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (P.L. 106-393) has not been classified to the *U.S. Code*.
- b. The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) is permanently authorized to receive such sums as necessary through discretionary appropriations. Starting in FY2021, however, the Great American Outdoors Act (P.L. 116-152) provided for mandatory appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for FLP, among other programs.

To be eligible to receive funds for most programs—particularly programs authorized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (CFAA) or added as amendments to the CFAA⁹—each state must prepare a State Forest Action Plan, consisting of

- a statewide *assessment* of forest resource conditions, including the conditions and trends of forest resources in the state; threats to forestlands and resources, consistent with national priorities; any areas or regions of the state that are a priority; and any multistate areas that are a regional priority; and
- a long-term statewide forest resource *strategy*, including strategies for addressing the threats to forest resources identified in the assessment; and a description of the resources necessary for the state forester to address the statewide strategy.¹⁰

The State Forest Action Plans are to be reviewed every 5 years and revised every 10 years.¹¹ All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 8 territories are covered by a State Forest Action Plan.

⁹ Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (CFAA; 16 U.S.C. §§2101 et seq.).

¹⁰ These requirements were added by the 2008 farm bill (16 U.S.C. §2101a). To see each state’s Forest Action Plan, see National Association of State Foresters (NASF), at <https://www.stateforesters.org/forest-action-plans/>. For all of the programs in this report, the term *state forester* may also include any other equivalent state official.

¹¹ For more information, see NASF, “Forest Action Plans,” at <https://www.stateforesters.org/forest-action-plans/>

Each state must also publish an annual funding report and have a State Forest Stewardship Coordination (FSC) Committee.¹² Chaired by the state forester and composed of federal, state, and local representatives (including representatives from conservation, industry, recreation, and other organizations), the FSC Committee makes recommendations on statewide priorities on specific programs as well as on the development and maintenance of the State Forest Action Plan.

National Funding Priorities and Objectives

In 2007, the Forest Service (FS) initiated an effort to “redesign” its State and Private Forestry (SPF) programs to improve program delivery and effectiveness. As a result of this process, FS—in conjunction with state partners—identified three nationwide themes and objectives to provide a framework for prioritizing and allocating funds and resources. Congress codified these national priorities in the 2008 farm bill (16 U.S.C. §2101(c)). The three priorities are as follows:

Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses. Objectives include identifying and conserving high-priority forest ecosystems and landscapes and promoting active and sustainable forest management strategies.

Protect forests from threats. Objectives include identifying, managing, and reducing forest and ecosystem threats (e.g., uncharacteristic wildfire, insects and disease, and invasive species) and conducting post-disturbance forest restoration activities.

Enhance public benefits from trees and forests. Objectives include promoting the ecological, economic, and community benefits derived from trees and forests, including protecting water quality and quantity; conserving wildlife and fish habitat; providing open space; and providing outdoor recreation opportunities.

Funding

Most—but not all—FS assistance programs are available nationally and are permanently authorized to receive discretionary funding. With one exception, all FS assistance programs require funding through the annual discretionary appropriations process and typically are funded in annual Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations acts. Most of the assistance programs are funded through the FS’s State and Private Forestry (SPF) account, although some programs are funded or allocated from other accounts or programs. The exception is the Forest Legacy Program (FLP). In FY2020 and previous years, the FLP received discretionary appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).¹³ The Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) made the LWCF mandatory spending starting in FY2021.¹⁴ In FY2021, mandatory funding for FLP was \$94.3 million. The Biden Administration requested \$94.3 million in mandatory FLP funding for FY2022.¹⁵

Until FY2021, funding for FS assistance programs had remained relatively stable over the past 15 years in terms of nominal dollars but had declined in terms of inflation-adjusted constant dollars (see **Figure 2**). The FY2021 funding of \$286.2 million reflects a decrease in funding relative to earlier years. This decrease is primarily due to several changes in FS’s budgetary structure. In

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¹² As authorized in the 1990 farm bill (§1222 of P.L. 101-624), 16 U.S.C. §2113(b).

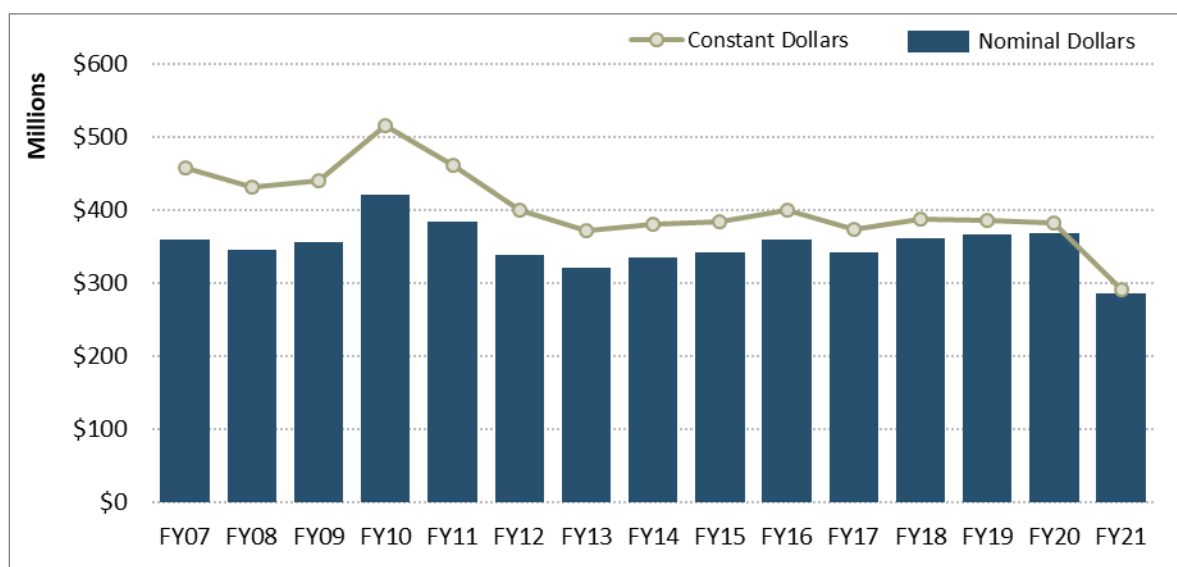
¹³ 54 U.S.C. §200301. For more information, see CRS Report R44121, *Land and Water Conservation Fund: Appropriations for “Other Purposes”*, by Carol Hardy Vincent and CRS Report R46563, *Land and Water Conservation Fund: Processes and Criteria for Allocating Funds*, coordinated by Carol Hardy Vincent.

¹⁴ The Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA, P.L. 116-152). For more information, see CRS In Focus IF11636, *The Great American Outdoors Act (P.L. 116-152)*, by Carol Hardy Vincent, Laura B. Comay, and Bill Heniff Jr.

¹⁵ The GAOA requires the President to submit annually to Congress “detailed account, program, and project allocations” for the full amount available for specified programs, including for the Forest Legacy Program, and provided for Congress to make alternative funding allocations to those programs.

addition to FLP being funded through mandatory appropriations, other budgetary changes were enacted in the FY2021 appropriations law.¹⁶ These changes included the establishment of an Operations account to fund certain fixed costs related to overhead and administrative expenses; previously, funds for these activities were allocated from other accounts through FS’s practice of using cost pools. This change resulted in decreases to account-level appropriations. In addition, the FY2021 appropriations law established a *salaries and expenses* line item within the SPF account (and several other accounts); this change resulted in decreases to program-level appropriations within the SPF account. The nature of these budgetary changes makes comparisons to earlier years challenging.

Figure 2. Funding for FS Assistance Programs, FY2007-FY2021



Source: CRS analysis using data compiled from the tables prepared by the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations and annual agency budget documents.

Notes: Figures reflect total annual discretionary appropriations, including rescissions and supplemental funding, for FS assistance programs, including appropriations provided through the FS’s State and Private Forestry (SPF), Wildland Fire Management, and National Forest System accounts. FY2021 figures also reflect funding appropriated to the SPF account for salaries and expenses. Figures adjusted to FY2021 constant dollars using the annual GDP Chained Price Index from the White House Office of Management and Budget, Table 10.1, “Gross Domestic Product and Deflators Used in the Historical Tables—1940-2026” in *Historical Tables*, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Historicals>.

The Administration requested \$333.5 million in FY2022 (see **Table 2** for FY2017-FY2021 appropriations and the FY2022 budget request; more information on each program is available in the “Forest Service Assistance Programs” section of this report). Regular FY2022 appropriations were not enacted by the start of the fiscal year, but two continuing resolutions (CRs) provided funding at FY2021 levels through February 18, 2022.¹⁷

¹⁶ P.L. 116-260. For more information on the budgetary changes, see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*, committee print, prepared by U.S. Government Publishing Office, 117th Cong., 1st sess., March 2021, Legislative Text and Explanatory Statement, Book 2 of 2 (Washington: GPO, 2021), p. 1406.

¹⁷ The first continuing resolution enacted for FY2022 provided funding at FY2021 levels through December 3, 2022 (P.L. 117-43, Division A); the second continuing resolution provided funding through February 18, 2022 (P.L. 117-70).

FY2022 Supplemental Appropriations

Congress has appropriated \$355.4 million in supplemental appropriations for FY2022 to date. Division B of P.L. 117-43 (the first enacted continuing resolution for FY2022) provided \$50.0 million in supplemental appropriations for FY2022 for FS's SPF account for necessary expenses related to wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural disasters from calendar years 2019, 2020, and 2021. Congress did not allocate the \$50.0 million in FY2022 supplemental funding to specific SPF programs or activities. In addition, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; P.L. 117-58) provided \$305.4 million in supplemental appropriations for FY2022 (and funding in future years) for existing FS assistance programs and for funding some of the activities authorized by IIJA.

Table 2. FS Assistance Programs Appropriations, FY2017-FY2021 Enacted and FY2022 Requested

(nominal dollars, in millions)

Program	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022 Request
Collaborative Forest Restoration Program ^a	4.0	3.0	—	—	—	—
Community Forest & Open Space Conservation	2.0	4.0	4.8	4.0	4.0	4.0
Cooperative Fire Protection ^b	93.0	96.0	107.3	100.0	92.4	92.4
<i>State Fire Assistance</i>	78.0	80.0	81.0	82.0	73.4	81.1
<i>Volunteer Fire Assistance</i>	15.0	16.0	17.0	18.0	19.0	17.0
<i>Supplemental</i>	—	—	9.3	—	—	—
Forest Health Protection ^c	94.5	98.0	98.4	100.0	46.2	59.2
<i>Federal Lands</i>	55.5	55.5	56.0	56.0	15.5	22.5
<i>Cooperative Lands^d</i>	39.0	42.5	42.4	44.0	30.7	36.7
Forest Legacy ^e	50.3	61.1	62.5	64.0	-5.8	—
Forest Stewardship ^f	20.0	26.5	22.0	21.0	11.9	17.9
International Forestry	8.0	9.0	9.0	12.0	15.4	15.4
Landscape Scale Restoration	14.0	14.0	14.0	14.0	14.0	21.0
Urban and Community Forestry	28.0	28.5	29.5	32.0	31.9	31.9
Wood Technology and Innovations ^g	27.7	22.1	20.2	21.7	24.8	36.2
Salaries and Expenses ^h	—	—	—	—	51.3	62.7
Total	341.6	362.2	367.7	368.7	286.2	335.0
Percentage of Total FS Discretionary Appropriationsⁱ	6%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%

Source: CRS analysis using data compiled from the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, communications with the Forest Service (FS) Legislative Affairs staff, and FS annual budget documents, including the FY2022 Budget Justification, available from at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/budget-performance>.

Notes: Table reflects rescissions and supplemental funding as noted. The programs are funded through the FS's State and Private Forestry (SPF) account, unless otherwise specified. This table does not reflect \$355.4 million in supplemental appropriations for FY2022 enacted to date. Columns may not add due to rounding.

- a. According to FS Legislative Affairs staff, as of November 2021, the charter for the advisory committee required for the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP) is expired, and activities under this program—such as soliciting new project proposals—will not resume until the advisory committee has been

- re-chartered. The FY2022 budget request does not include a specific request for funding the CFRP, which was previously funded through allocations from the Wildland Fire Management (WFM) account.
- b. The Cooperative Fire Protection program is sometimes referred to as *Cooperative Fire Assistance (CFA)* for appropriations purposes. FY2019 figures reflect \$9.3 million in emergency supplemental funding for disaster recovery purposes. Those funds were not further allocated between the State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance programs. CFA was funded through the WFM account in FY2017, and in the SPF account starting in FY2018. The Administration's FY2022 budget request proposed changing the names of those programs to *National Fire Capacity* and *Rural Fire Capacity*, respectively.
 - c. The Forest Health Protection program is sometimes referred to as *Forest Health Management (FHM)* for appropriations purposes. The total FHM figures reflect emergency supplemental appropriations provided to the Cooperative Lands program: \$1.5 million in FY2018 and \$0.4 million in FY2019.
 - d. The Cooperative Lands figures reflect emergency supplemental appropriations of \$1.5 million in FY2018 and \$0.4 million in FY2019.
 - e. The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) figures reflect rescissions of \$12.0 million in FY2017, \$5.9 million in FY2018, \$1.5 million in FY2019, \$5.8 million in FY2021. Starting in FY2021, FLP is funded through mandatory appropriations and no discretionary funds were requested or provided.
 - f. These Forest Stewardship figures reflect emergency supplemental appropriations of \$6.0 million in FY2018 and \$1.5 million in FY2019.
 - g. Wood Technology and Innovations includes funding for several programs, including grants for wood innovation, biomass and wood energy market development, and related research programs. The funds are allocated from several FS appropriations accounts, including SPF, WFM, and Forest and Rangeland Research.
 - h. The FY2021 appropriations law (P.L. 116-260) established a new budgetary structure for FS's discretionary appropriations accounts, including the establishment of a *salaries and expenses* budget line item in the SPF account, among other changes.
 - i. For information on FS discretionary appropriations, see CRS In Focus IFI1974, *Forest Service: FY2022 Appropriations*; CRS In Focus IFI1638, *Forest Service: FY2021 Appropriations*; and CRS Report R46557, *Forest Service Appropriations: Ten-Year Data and Trends (FY2011-FY2020)*.

Forest Service Assistance Programs

The following section provides basic information on each of the FS assistance programs, including

- brief program description;
- program activities;
- eligibility requirements;
- the FS appropriations account budget line item (BLI) that provides funding for the program;
- authorized funding levels and any funding restrictions;
- FY2021 funding level in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-260);
- FY2022 funding level requested by the Administration;
- FY2022 supplemental appropriations provided through IIIJA, if known;
- statutory authority, recent amendments, and *U.S. Code* reference;
- expiration date of program authority unless permanently authorized; and
- program's website link.

Information for the following tables is drawn largely from agency budget documents and presentations, explanatory notes, and websites. Further information about these programs may be found on the FS SPF website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf> and on the "cooperative forestry" page.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP)

Program purpose and description	CFRP (also known as the Community Forest Restoration Program) was established to encourage collaborative partnerships among community groups in New Mexico to improve forest ecosystem functioning and watershed conditions and reduce the threats of catastrophic wildfires or insect and disease outbreaks.
Activities	Provides cost-share grants of up to \$360,000 for forest restoration projects to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires, reestablish fire regimes, preserve old and large trees, replant deforested areas, and increase small-diameter tree utilization on public and tribal lands in New Mexico.
Eligibility requirements	Collaborative groups consisting of a diverse and balanced group of stakeholders, government, and tribal representatives are eligible to apply for funding. Projects must be on public (federal, state, county, or municipal) or tribal lands in New Mexico.
FS Appropriations account	Funds are allocated from National Forest System (NFS) Hazardous Fuels account.
Funding authority	Up to \$5 million annually.
FY2021 funding	\$0; According to Forest Service Legislative Affairs staff, as of November 2021, the charter for the advisory committee required for the program is expired, and activities under this program—such as soliciting new project proposals—will not resume unless the advisory committee has been re-chartered.
FY2022 Administration request	The FY2022 budget request does not include a specific request for CFRP.
Statutory authority	Authorized in Title VI of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-393).
Authorization expires	The program is permanently authorized, but the charter for the advisory committee is expired.
Program website	https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r3/workingtogether/grants/

Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP)

Program purpose and description	CFP provides financial assistance to establish community forests for community benefits by acquiring and protecting private forestlands.
Activities	Provides up to 50% cost-share grants to purchase the fee simple title of eligible private forestlands. Funding may not be used to purchase conservation easements. The lands to be purchased must be privately owned, at least five acres, 75% forested, and threatened by conversion to nonforest uses, such as residential development, mineral extraction, industrial use, or commercial uses other than timber production. The purchased lands must be managed for public economic, recreational, environmental, or education benefits to communities and provide public access.
Eligibility requirements	Local governments, Indian tribes, or qualified nongovernment organizations are eligible to apply for funding. Proposals are submitted to state foresters (or equivalent tribal officials) and then forwarded to FS. Proposal ranking and project selection criteria are outlined in 36 C.F.R. 230.5.
FS appropriations account	SPF Cooperative Forestry.
Funding authority	No specified authorization level, and FS may allocate 10% of the appropriated funds to state foresters for program administration.
FY2021 funding	\$4.0 million.
FY2022 Administration request	\$4.0 million.
Statutory authority	Authorized in the 2008 farm bill (§8003), 16 U.S.C. §2103d.
Authorization expires	Permanent authority.
Program website	https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/private-land/community-forest/program

Cooperative Fire Protection: State Fire Assistance (SFA)

Program purpose and description	<p>The Cooperative Fire Protection (FP) program consists of two components, State Fire Assistance (SFA) and Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA, described in the following section). The program’s overall purpose is to provide assistance to encourage effective, coordinated, and uniform responses to wildfire, with an emphasis on improving preparedness (such as fire planning and initial attack capabilities) for state and local government fire agencies to respond to wildfires on nonfederal lands, and mitigation (such as hazardous fuels reduction and wildfire prevention activities) for state and local government agencies to reduce the risk of or damage from catastrophic wildfires.</p> <p>The SFA component provides assistance for preparedness activities to promote firefighter safety, capability, and capacity, and community mitigation activities to reduce wildfire risk to communities and promote community fire planning.</p>
Activities	<p>Provides financial assistance, technical training, and equipment to state foresters to promote fire protection on nonfederal lands. States may use funds for preparedness activities (e.g., development of fire readiness plans, facility maintenance); firefighting activities, training, and support (e.g., dispatch centers); to purchase, maintain, or rehabilitate equipment; and for program administration. Assistance is also provided for community mitigation programs, including conducting hazardous fuels reduction projects on nonfederal lands and supporting the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans and/or Firewise certification. Manages and provides financial assistance to states to acquire fire-related equipment through the Federal Excess Personal Property Program (FEPP) and educational programs (e.g., the Smokey Bear public service campaign).</p>
Eligibility requirements	<p>Funding is provided to state foresters or equivalent state officials. A minimum level of funding is allocated annually to each state to ensure a base fire management capacity (at least \$100,000), and additional funds are allocated based on acres of nonfederal land, population, and required level of fire protection.</p>
FS appropriations account	<p>SPF Cooperative Fire Assistance.</p>
Funding authority	<p>No specified authorization level for most activities, and up to \$35 million annually is reserved for SFA cost-share assistance.</p>
FY2021 funding	<p>\$73.4 million (\$92.4 million total provided for FP).</p>
FY2022 Administration request	<p>\$73.4 million; the request continued a proposal to rename the program <i>National Fire Capacity</i> [\$92.4 million total requested for FP]. The IJA provided \$17.6 million in supplemental appropriations for FY2022 for SFA (\$88.0 million total from FY2022 to FY2026).</p>
Statutory authority	<p>Authorized in CFAA and amended by 1990 farm bill (Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990; P.L. 101-624, §§1215, 1220), 16 U.S.C. §2106.</p>
Authorization expires	<p>Permanent authority.</p>
Program website	<p>CRS was unable to locate a website specific to the FP program. For information on FS wildfire programs, see https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire.</p>

Cooperative Fire Protection: Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)

Program purpose and description	<p>The Cooperative Fire Protection (FP) program consists of two components, State Fire Assistance (SFA, described in the preceding section) and Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA). The program's overall purpose is to provide assistance to encourage effective, coordinated, and uniform responses to wildfire, with an emphasis on improving preparedness (such as fire planning and initial attack capabilities) for state and local government fire agencies to respond to wildfires on nonfederal lands, and mitigation (such as hazardous fuels reduction and wildfire prevention activities) for state and local government agencies to reduce the risk of or damage from catastrophic wildfires.</p> <p>The VFA component supports state efforts to provide organization, training, and equipment for rural fire departments to protect and respond to wildfires on nonfederal lands in rural areas.</p>
Activities	<p>Provides up to 50% cost-share grants and technical assistance to states to provide education, planning, training, and equipment for rural fire departments to improve fire protection capabilities and effectiveness.</p>
Eligibility requirements	<p>Funding is provided to state foresters or equivalent state officials. States may use the funds to support any organized, not-for-profit, fire protection organization that provides services to a community with a population under 10,000 or whose firefighting personnel is at least 80% volunteer.</p>
FS appropriations account	<p>SPF Cooperative Fire Assistance.</p>
Funding authority	<p>No specified authorization level for most activities, and up to \$35 million annually is reserved for VFA cost-share assistance.</p>
FY2020 funding	<p>\$19.0 million (\$92.4 million total provided for FP).</p>
FY2022 Administration request	<p>\$19.0 million; the request continued a proposal to rename the program <i>Rural Fire Capacity</i> (\$92.4 million total requested for FP). The IJA provided \$4.0 million in supplemental appropriations for FY2022 for VFA (\$20.0 million total from FY2022 to FY2026).</p>
Statutory authority	<p>Specific authorization for VFA was initially provided as the Rural Community Fire Protection program in the 1973 farm bill (Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973; P.L. 93-86 §27) but was eliminated and replaced by an unrelated program in the 1996 farm bill (Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act; P.L. 104-127 §§741(a)(4) and (5)). Since then, Congress has continued to provide appropriations to the program under the broader FP program, as authorized in CFAA and amended by the 1990 farm bill (§§1215, 1220), 16 U.S.C. §2106.</p>
Authorization expires	<p>Permanent authority.</p>
Program website	<p>CRS was unable to locate a website specific to the FP program. For information on FS wildfire programs, see https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire.</p>

Forest Health Protection (FHP): Federal Lands and Cooperative Lands

Program purpose and description	FHP was created to protect trees, forests, and wood products from negative impacts due to natural and man-made causes nationwide. The program is implemented through two subprograms: Federal Lands and Cooperative Lands.
Activities	<p>The Federal Lands subprogram surveys and monitors forest health conditions on federal lands, performs pest suppression efforts on federal and tribal trust lands (including lands managed by other federal agencies and tribal governments), and coordinates an integrated pest management program and specific prevention and suppression programs for major insects, diseases, and invasive species across all landownership types.</p> <p>The Cooperative Lands subprogram provides technical and financial assistance to states to conduct forest surveys to detect, monitor, and assess forest conditions across nonfederal lands. Financial assistance may also be provided through 50% cost-share grants for projects or programs to treat specific forest health problems.</p>
Eligibility requirements	FS can act on its own lands and other lands with consent, cooperation, and participation (including financial contributions). Other federal land management agencies submit suppression-related project requests to the FS for approval. Financial assistance is provided to states to support a base level of forest health expertise at the appropriate state partner agencies; these funds are allocated based on nonfederal forest acreage, among other factors.
FS appropriations account/BLI	SPF Forest Health Management.
Funding authority	No specified authorization level.
FY2021 funding	\$46.2 million (\$15.5 million for Federal Lands; \$30.7 million for Cooperative Lands).
FY2022 Administration request	\$59.2 million (\$22.5 million for Federal Lands; \$36.7 million for Cooperative Lands).
Statutory authority	Authorized in the CFAA and amended by the 1990 farm bill (§1218), 16 U.S.C. §2104.
Authorization expires	Permanent authority.
Program website	https://www.fs.fed.us/foresthealth/

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

Program purpose and description	FLP provides financial assistance to protect environmentally important forest areas that are threatened by conversion to nonforest uses.
Activities	Provides up to 75% cost-share grants to states to acquire eligible private forestlands, either through fee-simple purchases or conservation easements. Landowners with FLP conservation easements on their property must manage the land consistent with the purposes for which the land was enrolled in the program, and may include timber production, hiking, hunting, and fishing. Financial assistance may also be provided to the states to administer the program.
Eligibility requirements	<p>Funding typically goes to state forestry agencies or equivalent to purchase and hold the title or easement. Nonprofit organizations may hold the title or conservation easement for donated tracts. A federally or state-recognized tribe may participate in partnership with the state.</p> <p>States must have and maintain State Forest Action Plans, which must include a Forest Legacy Assessment and recommendations for Forest Legacy Areas. The assessment evaluates current and future forest uses statewide and defines the criteria the state will use to identify, recommend, and prioritize threatened environmentally important forest areas as Forest Legacy Areas. The FS designates Forest Legacy Areas within the state upon approval of the state's Forest Action Plan. The acquired lands must be within a designated Forest Legacy Area, at least 75% forestland, and be acquired from a willing seller.</p> <p>Project selection is a three-step competitive process. First, the State FSC Committee evaluates proposals and makes recommendations to the state; second, the state then submits recommendations to the FS; and third, the FS makes the final selection.</p>
FS appropriations account/BLI	SPF Cooperative Forestry.
Funding authority	No specified authorization level. Since FY2004, funding has been provided through discretionary appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Starting in FY2021, funding from the LWCF is mandatory. For more information, see CRS In Focus IF11636, <i>The Great American Outdoors Act (P.L. 116-152)</i> and CRS Report R46563, <i>Land and Water Conservation Fund: Processes and Criteria for Allocating Funds</i> .
FY2021 funding	\$94.3 million (mandatory appropriations).
FY2022 Administration request	\$94.3 million (mandatory appropriations).
Statutory authority	Authorized in the 1990 farm bill (§1217), 16 U.S.C. §2103c.
Authorization expires	Permanent authority.
Program website	https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy/program

Forest Stewardship Program (FSP)

Program purpose and description	<p>FSP was established to encourage long-term stewardship on nonindustrial private forestlands (NIPFs). NIPFs are defined as “lands with existing tree cover, or suitable for growing trees, and owned by any private individual, group, association, corporation, tribe, or other private legal entity” (16 U.S.C. §2103a(c)). Forest stewardship is not defined directly or indirectly by reference in the statute.</p> <p>Since FY1993, two other programs have been funded and administered as part of FSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Forestry Assistance (RFA), which supports reforestation and genetic resources activities, such as nursery management and seed development and storage; and • Financial, Technical, and Related Assistance to States (Assistance to States), which fosters coordination between federal and state organizations and technological development and implementation for forest data collection and use.
Activities	<p>Provides technical and financial assistance to states, which provide information and assistance to private landowners. Technical assistance includes activities such as landowner outreach and education, development of forest stewardship management plans, and fostering stewardship planning across multiple owners for a landscape-level approach.</p>
Eligibility requirements	<p>State forestry agencies or equivalent. States must have and maintain State Forest Action Plans. States may use funds to provide financial assistance to private landowners.</p>
FS appropriations account/BLI	<p>SPF Cooperative Forestry.</p>
Funding authority	<p>No specified authorization level.</p>
FY2021 funding	<p>\$11.9 million.</p>
FY2022 Administration request	<p>\$17.9 million; the request continued a proposal to rename the program as <i>Working Forest Lands</i>.</p>
Statutory authority	<p>FSP was authorized in the CFAA and amended by the 1990 farm bill (§1215), 16 U.S.C. §2103a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFA was authorized in the CFAA and amended in the 1990 farm bill (§1213), 16 U.S.C. §2102. • Assistance to States was authorized in the CFAA and amended in the 1990 farm bill (§1215), 16 U.S.C. §2107.
Authorization expires	<p>Permanent authority.</p>
Program website	<p>https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/forest-stewardship/program</p>

International Forestry Programs

Program purpose and description	International forestry programs support forestry and natural resource activities outside of the United States to promote conservation and sustainable forest management and global environmental stability.
Activities	Provides financial and technical assistance to countries to promote development and transfer of technical, research, managerial, education, and administrative skills to forest managers. Includes research and assistance through the Institute of Tropical Forestry and Institute for Pacific Islands Forestry.
Eligibility requirements	Assistance is available only to countries that receive USAID support.
FS appropriations account/BLI	SPF International Forestry.
Funding authority	No specified authorization level.
FY2021 funding	\$15.4 million.
FY2022 Administration request	\$15.4 million.
Statutory authority	International forestry activities are authorized in two places: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 5, 1990: the International Forestry Cooperation Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-513 Title VI), as amended by the Hawaii Tropical Forest Recovery Act of 1992 (P.L. 102-574, passed on October 29, 1992), 16 U.S.C. §4501 et seq. • November 28, 1990: the 1990 farm bill (§2405) authorized the Office of International Forestry and the Institute of Tropical Forestry and specified that the FS should request funding for International Forestry through a specific budget line item, 7 U.S.C. §§6701 et seq.
Authorization expires	The authorization for the Office of International Forestry (7 U.S.C. §6704) to receive funding expired at the end of FY2018. Other International Forestry programs are permanently authorized.
Program website	https://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/international-programs

Landscape Scale Restoration Program (LSR)

Program purpose and description	<p>LSR was originally established to support innovative regional or national forest restoration projects that cross multiple landownership boundaries. The 2018 farm bill statutorily codified the program to encourage collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes. The 2018 farm bill also provided congressional direction on program eligibility, criteria, and establishment. Projects with multiple ownerships are prioritized, but projects must include nonindustrial private forestland as well as state- or locally owned forestland.</p> <p>Projects may include activities authorized by other programs, including FSP, FHP-Cooperative Lands, UCF, and SFA; but not VFA, FLP, or FHP-Federal Lands.</p>
Activities	<p>Provides 50% cost-share grants for cross-boundary projects that address regionally or nationally significant issues or landscapes as identified in State Forest Action Plans. Funding is provided through a two-step competitive process: proposals are first evaluated at a regional level and then at the national level. Each region (Northeast, South, and West) develops regionally specific evaluation criteria that must be consistent with national standards.</p>
Eligibility requirements	<p>Prior to the 2018 farm bill, state forestry agencies and the District of Columbia were eligible to receive funding and authorized to pass the funding to partners. Tribes, nonprofit organizations, local governments, and land grant colleges or universities were eligible to sponsor or participate as a partner in a project. The 2018 farm bill specifies that proposals must be submitted through state foresters or other appropriate state agencies.</p>
FS appropriations account/BLI	SPF Landscape Scale Restoration.
Funding authority	Up to \$20 million annually, through FY2023.
FY2021 funding	\$14.0 million.
FY2022 Administration request	\$21.0 million.
Statutory authority	Authorized in the 2018 farm bill (§8102(a)), 16 U.S.C. §2109a. Prior to the 2018 farm bill, the program operated under a broad authority provided in the 2008 farm bill (§8007).
Authorization expires	Permanent authority.
Program website	https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/landscape-scale-restoration

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program (UCF)

Program purpose and description	UCF was created to establish, manage, and protect trees, forests, green spaces, and related natural resources in and adjacent to cities and towns.
Activities	<p>Provides financial, technical, and related assistance to conduct tree inventories; prepare management plans; plant and care for trees; carry out disaster planning, mitigation, response, and recovery; support workforce development; and host community activities, such as youth summer camps.</p> <p>Also provides 50% cost-share grants to address strategic issues and opportunities identified by the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC). The NUCFAC consists of 15 members as appointed by the Secretary.</p>
Eligibility Requirements	No eligibility requirements specified in law. Therefore, states and territories, tribes, nongovernmental organizations, private nonprofit organizations, or individuals are eligible to apply for funding.
FS appropriations account/BLI	SPF Cooperative Forestry.
Funding authority	No specified authorization level.
FY2021 funding	\$31.9 million.
FY2022 Administration request	\$31.9 million.
Statutory authority	Authorized in CFAA and amended by 1990 farm bill (§§1215, 1219), 16 U.S.C. §2105.
Authorization expires	Permanent authorization.
Program website	https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/urban-forests/ucf

Wood Technology and Innovation Programs

Program purpose and description	This includes several FS authorities and programs to provide financial and technical assistance to develop, promote, and market innovative uses of wood products in an effort to remove hazardous fuels and other wood residues (e.g., biomass) from National Forest System (NFS) lands, reduce the costs of forest management on public and private forestlands, and promote economic and environmental health of forest-dependent communities, among other purposes.
Activities	<p>The Wood Innovation Grant Program, a part of the broader Rural Revitalization Technologies (RRT) program, provides cost-share grants to stimulate or expand wood energy and wood products markets through projects that use wood, expand wood energy markets, and promote wood as a construction material in commercial buildings.</p> <p>The Hardwood Technology Transfer and Applied Research (HTTAR) program conducts technology transfer and development, training, and applied research in the management, processing, and utilization of hardwoods, including through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements. The program operates through the Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC), the Institute of Hardwood Technology Transfer and Applied Research (IHTTAR), and Forest Products Laboratory.</p> <p>The Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovation (CWE/WI) program provides competitive cost-share grants to install community wood energy systems or build innovative wood product facilities.</p>
Eligibility requirements	State, local, and tribal governments, communities, nongovernmental organizations, institutes of higher education, school districts, communities, and special purpose districts.
FS appropriations account/BLI	Funds are allocated from other FS accounts and programs, including NFS Hazardous Fuels.
Funding authority	<p>Funding is authorized through different programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rural Revitalization Technologies (RRT) program is authorized to receive up to \$5 million annually, through FY2023. HTTAR has no specified authorization level. HTTAR is authorized to generate revenue; this revenue may be deposited into the Hardwood Technology Transfer and Applied Research Fund and is available until expended. The CWE/WI is authorized to receive up to \$25 million annually, through FY2023. Not more than 25% of funds may be used for grants for innovative wood product facilities, unless the Secretary receives insufficient proposals for community wood energy systems.
FY2021 funding	\$24.8 million.
FY2022 Administration request	\$36.2 million.
Statutory authority	<p>This group of programs relies on several different authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RRT was established in the 1990 farm bill (§2371), 7 U.S.C. §6601. The Wood Innovation Grant Program was established in the 2018 farm bill (§8643), 7 U.S.C. § 7655d, and authorizes FS to annually make grants in accordance with a funding opportunity offered under the broad authority of RRT. The HTTAR program was authorized and WERC was established in P.L. 105-277 (§343) and P.L. 106-113 (§332), 16 U.S.C. §1650. The CWE/WI Program was established in the 2008 farm bill (§9013) and the 2018 farm bill (§8644), 7 U.S.C. §8113.
Authorization expires	RRT and the Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovation program expire in FY2023. HTTAR is permanently authorized.
Program website	https://www.fs.fed.us/science-technology/energy-forest-products/wood-innovations-grants

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA) authorized and appropriated funding for a variety of FS forestry assistance, research, and federal land management activities and programs.¹⁸

- IIJA authorized \$3.97 billion for FS across the five-year period from FY2022 to FY2026, at least \$1.39 billion of which was authorized specifically for forestry assistance activities.¹⁹ These provisions are summarized in the following section.
- IIJA appropriated \$5.44 billion for FS across the five-year period from FY2022 through FY2026, at least \$1.53 billion of which was appropriated specifically for FS’s State and Private Forestry account for implementing forestry assistance activities.²⁰ These appropriations are summarized in the “IIJA Appropriations” section, below, with additional detail on specific FY2022 appropriations provided in the “Funding” section.

IIJA Authorizations

This section summarizes the program and funding authorizations in IIJA related to FS forestry assistance activities.

- **Section 40803—Wildfire Risk Reduction** authorized \$2.31 billion over five years (FY2022 through FY2026) for the Secretary of Agriculture—acting through the Chief of the FS—and directed the allocation of those funds across several activities, including improving wildfire response readiness, improving technological capacities, preparing wildfire risk maps, funding research, reducing fuels, and conducting post-fire recovery and restoration.²¹ At least three of the specified activities included an assistance component.²²
- **Section 40804—Ecosystem Restoration** authorized \$1.23 billion over five years (FY2022 through FY2026) for the Secretary of Agriculture—acting through the Chief of the FS—and directed the allocation of those funds across several activities related to conducting forest restoration activities on federal and nonfederal land.²³ At least five of the specified activities included an assistance component.²⁴

¹⁸ P.L. 117-58. The law also established forestry assistance programs in the Department of the Interior. Although outside of the scope of this report, these provisions are identified in footnotes for informational purposes.

¹⁹ Additional funds may be identified as authorized for forestry assistance-related activities as more information becomes available and the FS begins to implement the provisions.

²⁰ Additional funds may be identified as appropriated for forestry assistance-related activities as more information becomes available and the FS begins to implement the provisions.

²¹ P.L. 117-58 §40803(a). This section also authorized funding for the Department of the Interior for establishing a pilot program to provide financial assistance to local governments for the acquisition of equipment to modify vehicles into fire engines.

²² Additional assistance programs may be identified as more information becomes available and the FS begins to implement the provisions.

²³ P.L. 117-58 §40804(a). This section also authorized funding for the Department of the Interior for establishing a grant program for implementing cross-boundary ecosystem restoration programs.

²⁴ Additional assistance programs may be identified as more information becomes available and the FS begins to implement the provisions.

- Section 40808—Joint Chiefs Landscape Scale Restoration Partnership (JCLRP) Program** authorized \$180 million over two years (FY2022 and FY2023) for the Secretary of Agriculture—acting through the Chief of the FS and the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)—for conducting landscape restoration activities to mitigate wildfire risk, protect water quality and quantity, and improve wildlife habitat on eligible private, tribal, state, and federal lands. The law allocated at least 40% of the authorized funds to FS, at least 40% to NRCS, and 20% may be allocated for program administration or other related purposes.

In some cases, Congress authorized funding for specific activities that do not directly correspond to existing programs. In addition, the law provided varying levels of additional congressional direction or details on implementation across provisions. In some cases, the law directed the FS to provide assistance, with no additional direction. In other cases, the law provided additional direction pertaining to either the type of assistance (e.g., financial), instrument (e.g., grants, loans), or other implementation requirements (e.g., eligible recipients, matching requirements). In still other cases, the law directed FS to perform certain activities on federal and nonfederal land, but did not specify that the activity on nonfederal land was an assistance program per se. Such programs are included herein as assistance programs, until and unless program implementation details become available and suggest otherwise. Due to these reasons, it remains unclear how the IJA’s provisions will be implemented by FS, including whether they will be implemented as new programs or as part of existing programs. As such, they are included in this section but not as stand-alone programs in the “Forest Service Assistance Programs” section of this report.

Table 3 describes the provisions of relevant sections of the IJA.

Table 3. Forest Service Assistance Authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58)

Section	Authorized Funding (millions) ^a	Assistance Type	Assistance Purpose	Eligible Recipients	Additional Congressional Direction
Section 40803: Wildfire Risk Reduction					
(c)(4)	\$30	Unspecified financial assistance	Establish and operate reverse-911 operations	States, Indian tribes, localities	None

Section	Authorized Funding (millions) ^a	Assistance Type	Assistance Purpose	Eligible Recipients	Additional Congressional Direction
(c)(12) and (f)	\$500	Grants	Establish Community Wildfire Defense Grants (CWDGs) to develop or revise community wildfire protection plans (CWPPs) or implement CWPP projects	At-risk communities (defined at 16 U.S.C. 6511), including Indian tribes	<p>Specifies the following criteria to the CWDG awards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants to develop or revise CWPPs may be up to \$250,000 and require at least a 10% nonfederal cost-share. Grants to implement CWPP projects may be up to \$10 million and require at least a 25% nonfederal cost-share. <p>Directs the FS to prioritize projects in communities that are at high or very high wildfire hazard potential or low-income, or have experienced a severe disaster. Authorizes cost-share waivers for underserved communities and specifies that funding is not available to communities without specified wildfire-related building ordinances and located within the continental United States.^b</p>
(c)(17)	\$8	Unspecified financial assistance	Provide feedstock and fund operations of firewood banks	Firewood banks	None
40804: Ecosystem Restoration					
(b)(3) and (d)(3)	\$400	Financial assistance, including loans or loan guarantees	Establish, expand, retrofit, or otherwise improve facilities that use byproducts from specified ecosystem restoration projects	Wood processing facilities	Specifies that financial assistance is available for entities with wood processing facilities established or planning to be established in close proximity to units of federal land and Indian forest and rangeland classified as in very high or high need of vegetation removal for forest health purposes, and which the presence of the facility would or does substantially decrease the cost of restoration projects on federal land.
(b)(5)	\$50	Grants	Establish rental programs for temporary water crossing structures used in timber harvesting	States, Indian tribes	None

Section	Authorized Funding (millions) ^a	Assistance Type	Assistance Purpose	Eligible Recipients	Additional Congressional Direction
(b)(6)	\$100	Grants	Eradication of invasive species on nonfederal and federal land	None specified	In addition to the grants, specifies that the funding authorized in this section is available for activities related to the detection, prevention, and eradication of invasive species, including research and detection at points of entry. ^c
(b)(9)	\$130	Unspecified assistance	Establish a national revegetation effort on federal and nonfederal land	None specified	Also directs the FS to implement the National Seed Strategy for Rehabilitation and Restoration. ^d
(b)(10) and (f)	\$80	Unspecified assistance	Establish an aquatic landscape scale restoration program on federal and nonfederal lands	None specified	Directs FS, in coordination with the Department of the Interior, to solicit collaboratively developed proposals for funding of up to \$5 million for 5-year projects to restore fish passage or water quality on federal and nonfederal land and to prioritize for selection proposals that would result in the most miles of stream restoration for the lowest amount of federal funding.

40808: Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Program (JCLRP)

a-h	\$180 (for FY2022 and FY2023 only) ^e	Unspecified assistance	Assist landowners to implement eligible activities to reduce wildfire risk, protect water quality or supply, or improve habitat for at-risk species	Landowners (for activities on state, tribal, and private land)	Formalizes the JCLRP, a joint program administered by the FS and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and authorizes FS to conduct eligible activities on NFS land and NRCS to conduct eligible activities on private and tribal land.
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Source: CRS.

Notes: This table includes provisions of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, P.L. 117-58) that authorize assistance to nonfederal entities (e.g. states, individuals, nonprofit organizations) that is to be administered by the Forest Service (FS). The authorities listed also may apply to other agencies, as noted.

- Unless otherwise noted, funding is authorized from FY2022 through FY2026.
- This section of the IIJA does not include a definition of *low-income* or *underserved*.
- The IIJA also makes \$100 million available to the Department of the Interior for these purposes.
- For more information, see USDA Supporting the National Native Seed Strategy, Press Release, August 4, 2021, available at <https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2017/03/13/usda-supporting-national-native-seed-strategy>. See also the Bureau of Land Management's National Seed Strategy website available at <https://www.blm.gov/programs/natural-resources/native-plant-communities/national-seed-strategy>.
- The IIJA authorized \$180 million combined for FY2022 and FY2023 for FS and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). IIJA specified that not less than 40% of the funds shall be allocated to the FS,

not less than 40% shall be allocated to NRCS, and the remaining 20% is to be available for program administration and other purposes, as determined by the Chiefs of the FS and NRCS.

IIJA Appropriations

The IIJA appropriated \$1.53 billion total for the five-year period from FY2022 through FY2026 to the FS's State and Private Forestry (SPF) account, the primary account through which FS receives funding for assistance programs. This figure likely represents a minimum amount of funding provided for assistance purposes, since it is possible that IIJA appropriations provided to other FS accounts also will be used for assistance purposes. Congress directed the SPF funding to be provided in equal amounts of \$305.4 million annually across those five years and further allocated some of the funding toward new and existing assistance programs:

- \$718.0 million total (\$143.6 million annually) for implementing IIJA Sections 40803 and 40804.
- \$500.0 million total (\$100.0 million annually) for implementing the Community Wildfire Defense Grant program established in IIJA Section 40803(c)(12) and (f).
- \$88.0 million total (\$17.6 million annually) for the State Fire Assistance program (see “Cooperative Fire Protection: State Fire Assistance (SFA)” for more information).
- \$20.0 million total (\$4.0 million annually) for the Volunteer Fire Assistance program (see “Cooperative Fire Protection: Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)” for more information).
- Up to 3% (\$45.8 million in total, \$9.2 million annually) for salaries, expenses, and administration.
- Up to 0.5% (\$7.6 million in total, \$1.5 million annually) for oversight purposes.

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