

Updated June 3, 2022

Forest Service: FY2022 Appropriations

The Forest Service (FS) is responsible for managing 193 million acres of land in the National Forest System (NFS); conducting forestry research; and providing assistance to state, local, private, and international forest owners. FS is an agency within the Department of Agriculture, but it receives discretionary appropriations through the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

FY2022 Appropriations

Budget Request

The Biden Administration requested \$8.405 billion in total FY2022 discretionary appropriations for FS (**Table 1**). FS also estimated \$1.249 billion in mandatory appropriations and transfers for FS for FY2022. These mandatory appropriations are derived from and used for various sources and purposes, including land acquisition funding under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF; 54 U.S.C. §§200301 et seq.). LWCF funding was discretionary through FY2020 but was made mandatory beginning in FY2021 in the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA; P.L. 116-152; see CRS In Focus IF11636, *The Great American Outdoors Act (P.L. 116-152)*). For FY2022, \$218.2 million in mandatory funding from LWCF was provided to FS. GAOA also authorized a mandatory transfer from the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF) to FS. For FY2022, \$285.0 million in mandatory funding was transferred from the LRF to FS.

FY2022 Enacted Appropriations

Congress appropriated \$10.847 billion in total FY2022 discretionary appropriations for FS (see **Table 1**), reflecting regular enacted funding of \$5.700 billion, \$2.120 billion provided pursuant to the wildfire adjustment, and \$3.026 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations.

Combined, the regular enacted funding and the wildfire adjustment total \$7.820 billion, which reflects an increase of \$396.4 million from FY2021 appropriations. The regular enacted funding and wildfire adjustment were provided in P.L. 117-103 (Division G).

The supplemental appropriations were provided in two laws enacted prior to P.L. 117-103 (see **Table 2**). P.L. 117-43 provided \$1.360 billion in supplemental funding to several FS accounts for expenses related to wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural disasters in previous years. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58) provided \$1.666 billion in FY2022 supplemental funding to several FS accounts for ecosystem restoration and wildfire risk reduction purposes. The law also contained emergency advance appropriations for FS for FY2023-FY2026.

In earlier action, the House-passed H.R. 4502 would have provided \$8.355 billion for FS. A Senate Appropriations Committee majority bill (S. 3034) would have provided \$8.354 billion for FS. Several continuing resolutions provided funding at the FY2021 levels before P.L. 117-103 was enacted on March 15, 2022.

Table 1. Forest Service (FS) Discretionary Appropriations, by Account (\$ in millions)

Account	FY2022						
	FY2021 Enacted	Request	H.R. 4502	S. 3034	Enacted		
					Suppl.	Reg.	Total
Wildland Fire Management (WFM)	\$1,927.2	\$2,097.6	\$2,098.6	\$2,097.6	\$552.2	\$2,005.1	\$2,557.3
Wildfire Adjustment	2,040.0	2,120.0	2,120.0	2,120.0	—	2,120.0	2,120.0
<i>Total, WFM and Wildfire Adjustment</i>	<i>3,967.2</i>	<i>4,217.6</i>	<i>4,218.6</i>	<i>4,217.6</i>	<i>552.2</i>	<i>4,125.1</i>	<i>4,677.3</i>
National Forest System (NFS)	1,786.9	2,369.6	2,234.3	2,214.0	1,444.8	1,866.5	3,311.3
Forest Service Operations (FSO)	1,026.2	1,074.1	1,074.1	1,074.1	105.0	1,069.1	1,174.1
Capital Improvement & Maintenance (CIM)	125.4	133.4	135.3	185.9	542.0	144.0	686.0
State and Private Forestry (SPF)	261.4	298.8	324.9	344.2	355.4	315.2	670.6
Forest and Rangeland Research (FRR)	258.8	313.6	363.8	315.0	27.0	296.6	323.6
Other	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	—	3.7	3.7
Land Acquisition (LA)	-5.6	-5.6	—	—	—	—	—
Total, without Wildfire Adjustment	5,383.8	6,285.1	6,234.7	6,234.5	3,026.4	5,700.3	8,726.6
Total, with Wildfire Adjustment	7,423.8	8,405.1	8,354.7	8,354.5	—	7,820.3	10,846.6

Sources: CRS, with information from the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, P.L. 117-43, P.L. 117-58, and P.L. 117-103.

Notes: Reg. reflects appropriations provided in P.L. 117-103. Suppl. reflects supplemental appropriations provided in P.L. 117-43 and P.L. 117-58; see **Table 2** for more information. Figures reflect rescissions, cancellations, and deferrals. Column totals may not add due to rounding.

Table 2. Forest Service FY2022 Supplemental Appropriations, by Account (\$ in millions)

Account	P.L. 117-43	P.L. 117-58
FSO	\$105.0	—
FRR	25.0	2.0
SPF	50.0	305.4
NFS	710.0	734.8
CIM	470.0	72.0
WFM	—	552.2
Total	1,360.0	1,666.4

Sources: P.L. 117-43 (Division B) and P.L. 117-58 (Division J).

Forest Service Appropriation Accounts

FS has several appropriations accounts, discussed below, generally in order of decreasing funding.

Wildland Fire Management

The largest share of FS appropriations generally goes to the Wildland Fire Management (WFM) account. In addition to salaries and expenses, the WFM appropriation funds two programs: preparedness and suppression. Appropriations for preparedness support efforts that assist with fire prevention and detection, equipment, and training. Appropriations for suppression are used primarily for wildfire response, which includes aviation asset operations, incident support functions, and resources for post-fire analysis and recovery.

Wildfire Adjustment/Wildfire Funding Fix

Starting in FY2020, additional funds for suppression operations are available to FS (and the Department of the Interior) pursuant to the wildfire adjustment, a budgetary mechanism established in P.L. 115-141 (Division O, §102(a)), commonly referred to as the *wildfire funding fix*. This mechanism allows Congress to provide additional funding above a specified baseline for wildfire suppression through an adjustment to the limit on total discretionary spending. The baseline is the 10-year suppression obligation average, as reported in FY2015 (\$1.011 billion for FS). The maximum amount available pursuant to the adjustment was \$2.120 billion for FS in FY2022 and, under the law, will increase annually. The wildfire adjustment is available annually through FY2027.

National Forest System

The National Forest System (NFS) account funds activities related to the management of national forests and grasslands. These activities include planning, recreation, grazing, timber production, watershed protection, wildlife management, and law enforcement, among other activities.

Forest Service Operations

Established in FY2021, the Forest Service Operations (FSO) account funds certain fixed costs and administrative expenses related to facilities maintenance and leasing, information technology, and other agency-wide

organizational services. Prior to FY2021, many of these activities were funded through FS's practice of using cost pools from other accounts.

Capital Improvement and Maintenance

The Capital Improvement and Maintenance (CIM) account funds FS efforts to provide and maintain facilities, roads, trails, and other infrastructure needs across the NFS. It includes funding to address a backlog of deferred maintenance (DM). Starting in FY2021, FS received additional funding to address DM through mandatory transfers from the LRF. P.L. 117-103 and the accompanying explanatory statement (ES) provided for a mandatory transfer from the fund of \$285.0 million for FS DM for FY2022.

State and Private Forestry

The State and Private Forestry (SPF) account funds programs that provide assistance to nonfederal forest owners. In FY2020 and previous years, SPF included funding for the Forest Legacy Program (FLP), a cost-share grant program that received discretionary appropriations from the LWCF. Because the GAOA made the LWCF mandatory spending, Congress did not include discretionary funding for FLP in FY2022, but P.L. 117-103 and the accompanying ES allocated \$88.9 million in mandatory funding from the LWCF for FLP.

Forest and Rangeland Research

The Forest and Rangeland Research (FRR) account funds research and development efforts to provide scientific information and new technologies to support sustainable forest and rangeland management. FRR funds the Forest Inventory and Analysis program, which is a continuous census of forest resources throughout the United States.

Other

"Other" includes several smaller appropriations accounts for the Range Betterment Fund; gifts, donations, and bequests for research; management of national forest lands for subsistence uses; and administration of communication site authorizations. This category also includes funding to complete land acquisitions and exchanges as authorized by specified laws, referred to as *special acts*.

Land Acquisition

Because the authority in the GAOA made funding for FS land acquisition mandatory, Congress did not provide discretionary funding for land acquisition in FY2022. P.L. 117-103 and the accompanying ES provided for an allocation of \$129.3 million in mandatory funding from the LWCF for FS land acquisition activities.

Budgetary Changes

The FS's budgetary structure has changed significantly over the past two fiscal years. These changes may improve congressional oversight moving forward but may make examining funding trends over time more challenging at the account or program level.

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