



## Forest Service: FY2018 Appropriations and FY2019 Request

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, yet it generally receives discretionary appropriations through the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

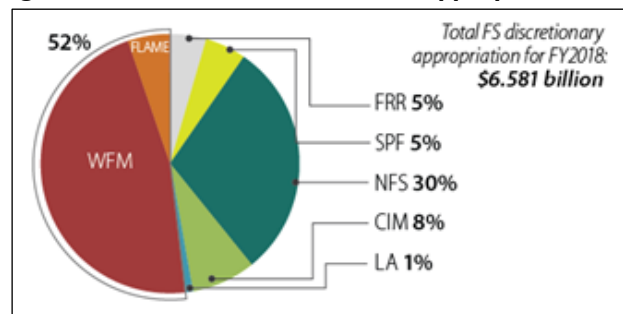
For FY2018, total FS discretionary appropriations were \$6.581 billion. This figure includes \$5.934 billion in regular appropriations provided in the FY2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 115-141) and \$646.3 million in supplemental appropriations provided for disaster response and recovery (P.L. 115-72 and P.L. 115-123) and designated as emergency funding, outside of discretionary spending limits. In total, FY2018 discretionary appropriations were 18% (\$1.0 billion) above the FY2017 appropriations of \$5.596 billion. For FY2019, the Administration requested \$4.658 billion, 29% less than the FY2018-enacted level.

### FY2018 Discretionary Appropriations

FS discretionary appropriations for FY2018 were mostly in seven main accounts (see **Table 1** and **Figure 1**). The largest share—a combined 52% (\$3.407 billion)—went to two accounts: the Wildland Fire Management (WFM) and FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund accounts. The WFM account funds activities related to the preparation for and suppression of wildfires. The FLAME account funds emergency wildfire suppression activities under certain

specified circumstances. The FY2018 WFM and FLAME appropriations are \$231.4 million above the FY2017 levels (\$3.175 billion combined). This includes a combined \$526.5 million (\$184.5 million for WFM and \$342.0 million for FLAME) provided as emergency-designated supplemental funding to repay funds transferred from other FS accounts in FY2017. No other funds were appropriated to the FLAME account in FY2018. One program was not funded in FY2018 (National Fire Plan). Three programs were moved from WFM to other accounts: Hazardous Fuels was funded in the National Forest System (NFS) account, and State Fire Assistance (SFA) and Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) were funded in the State and Private Forestry (SPF) account.

**Figure 1. Share of Total FS FY2018 Appropriations**



**Source:** CRS. Data from P.L. 115-141 Division G; P.L. 115-72; P.L. 115-123.

**Note:** See **Table 1** for account abbreviations.

**Table 1. Forest Service (FS) Discretionary Appropriations, by Account**

| Account                                 | FY2017 Enacted<br>(\$ in millions) | FY2018 Enacted<br>(\$ in millions) | %<br>Change<br>from<br>FY2017 <sup>a</sup> | FY2019<br>Requested<br>(\$ in millions) | %<br>Change<br>from<br>FY2018 |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Forest and Rangeland Research (FRR)     | \$288.5                            | \$297.0                            | 3%   | 258.8                                   | -13%                          |
| State and Private Forestry (SPF)        | 216.9                              | 337.1 [7.5]                        | 55%  | 172.3                                   | -49%                          |
| National Forest System (NFS)            | 1,513.3                            | 1,944.4 [20.7]                     | 28%  | 1,720.0                                 | -12%                          |
| Capital Improvement & Maintenance (CIM) | 348.0                              | 525.6 [91.6]                       | 51%  | 79.7                                    | -85%                          |
| Land Acquisition (LA)                   | 54.4                               | 64.3                               | 18%  | -17.0                                   | -126%                         |
| Wildland Fire Management (WFM)          | 2,833.4                            | 3,064.8 [184.5]                    | 8%   | 2,440.0                                 | -20%                          |
| FLAME                                   | 342.0 [342.0]                      | 342.0 [342.0]                      | —  | 0.0                                     | —                             |
| Other <sup>b</sup>                      | 6.0                                | 5.7                                | -6%  | 4.4                                     | -21%                          |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>5,596.3 [342.0]</b>             | <b>6,580.9 [646.3]</b>             | <b>18%</b>                                 | <b>4,658.2</b>                          | <b>-29%</b>                   |

**Sources:** P.L. 115-31 Division G; P.L. 115-141 Division G; P.L. 115-72; P.L. 115-123; FS FY2019 budget justification.

**Notes:** Figures reflect rescissions of \$18.3 million in FY2017, \$5.9 million in FY2018, and \$109.0 million requested in FY2019. Figures in brackets reflect any supplemental and emergency-designated appropriations provided outside of discretionary spending limits (\$342.0 million in FY2017 and \$646.3 million in FY2018). Column totals may not add due to rounding.

- Some of these figures reflect the shifting of programs between accounts in the FY2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 115-141).
- In addition, FS receives appropriations to other relatively small accounts, including for specified land acquisition activities; the Range Betterment Fund; gifts, donations, and bequests for research; and management of national forest lands for subsistence uses.

The next-largest amount of FY2018 appropriations—30% of the total (\$1.944 billion)—went to the NFS account, including \$20.7 million in emergency-designated supplemental funding. The NFS account funds activities related to the management of the national forests and grasslands, including planning, recreation, grazing, timber production, watershed, wildlife, and law enforcement, among other activities. The FY2018 funding was \$431.1 million above FY2017 levels, mostly due to the transfer of the Hazardous Fuels program to the NFS account in FY2018. The Hazardous Fuels program received \$430.0 million and was the largest program within the NFS account. Funding for the other NFS programs remained relatively constant, with some minor fluctuations.

The remaining accounts each received 8% or less of the total appropriations for FY2018:

- The Capital Improvement and Maintenance (CIM) account funds FS efforts to provide and maintain facilities, roads, trails, and other infrastructure needs across the national forest system. CIM received \$525.6 million in FY2018, including \$91.6 million in emergency-designated supplemental funding. This amount was \$177.6 million above FY2017 funding levels, which included increased funding for most programs, although funding was not provided for legacy road and trail remediation.
- The State and Private Forestry (SPF) account funds programs to provide assistance to nonfederal forest owners to protect forests from wildfires, insects, diseases, and invasive plants. SPF received \$337.1 million in FY2018, including \$7.5 million in emergency-designated supplemental funding. This amount was \$120.2 million above FY2017 levels. Most of the difference in funding is from the addition of the SFA (\$80.0 million) and VFA programs (\$16.0 million), which previously were funded in the WFM account. SPF also includes the Forest Legacy Program (\$61.1 million), a cost-share grant program that has received appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF; 54 U.S.C. §§200301 et seq.).
- 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 received \$297.0 million in FY2018, \$8.5 million more than it received in FY2017.
- The Land Acquisition (LA) account includes funds derived from the LWCF for FS to acquire lands for conservation or ownership consolidation, among other purposes. LA received \$64.3 million in FY2018, \$9.9 million above FY2017 levels.

P.L. 115-141 specified that appropriations to most FS accounts are to remain available through FY2021.

## FY2019 Budget Request

The Trump Administration requested \$4.658 billion in discretionary appropriations for FS in FY2019. This request is slightly below the FY2018 request (\$4.732 billion) and \$1.923 billion below FY2018-enacted discretionary appropriations. The FY2019 request proposed cuts to all FS accounts compared to FY2018 enacted levels (see **Table 1**).

### Wildland Fire Management and FLAME

The Administration's request includes \$2,440.0 million for WFM for FY2019, a decrease of \$624.9 million from FY2018-enacted levels for WFM and FLAME. The budget would fund the Suppression Operations Program at 100% of the rolling 10-year suppression-obligation average but does not include any funding for the FLAME reserve account.

### National Forest System

The request proposed \$1,720.0 million for the NFS account in FY2019, a \$224.4 million decrease from FY2018-enacted levels. Within the NFS account, the Administration requested level funding for the Law Enforcement Operations Program but decreased funding for most other programs, including the Hazardous Fuels program (\$390.0 million requested). The request proposed to eliminate funding for the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program.

### Capital Improvement and Maintenance

The Administration's request included \$79.7 million for CIM, a decrease of \$445.9 million from FY2018-enacted levels. The request would fund the Facilities, Roads, and Trails Programs at reduced levels, including a nearly \$100 million reduction for the Roads Program.

### State and Private Forestry

The Trump Administration requested \$172.3 million for SPF for FY2019, a decrease of \$164.8 million from FY2018-enacted levels. The request would fund, at reduced levels, the Forest Stewardship Program, the Forest Health Management Programs for both federal and cooperative lands, and the SFA and VFA programs. The proposal would eliminate funding for the Landscape Scale Restoration, Forest Legacy, Community Forest and Open Space Conservation, International Forestry, and Urban and Community Forestry programs.

### Forest and Rangeland Research

The request included \$258.8 million for FRR, a decrease of \$38.2 million from FY2018-enacted levels. The request proposed to fund the National Fire Plan in FRR. The National Fire Plan was not funded in FY2018; prior to FY2018, it was funded in the WFM account.

### Land Acquisition

The request included a \$17.0 million net reduction for LA and would eliminate funding for most land acquisition programs.

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