



WESTERN FORESTRY LEADERSHIP COALITION FISCAL YEAR 2013 U.S. FOREST SERVICE BUDGET REVIEW

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This document provides information to WFLC members on the recently-released USDA Forest Service (USFS) Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 President's Budget proposal and will be posted on the WFLC website at http://wflccenter.org/infomaterials/issue_briefs.php. For more information on these budget and forestry issues, please contact Brent Keith. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of programs that the WFLC is tracking relative to the federal budgeting process and we will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available.

Budget Summary

On February 13, 2012 President Obama released the expanded budget for federal FY 2013, including a proposed budget for the USFS of **\$4.86 billion, a \$15.5 million increase from FY 2012 enacted** levels. The USFS budget overview and justification are posted at <http://www.fs.fed.us/aboutus/budget/>. Highlighted within the budget is a focus on the theme of restoration. Specifically, the FY 2013 budget prioritizes restoration at a broad landscape scale and seeks to address land management challenges through engaging a broad set of partner organizations and increasing the rate of restoration through active management. In a recent publication, *Increasing the Pace of Restoration and Job Creation on Our National Forests*, the USFS highlights the policies and initiatives the agency is pursuing to accomplish the goal of expanded forest restoration. Available at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/publications/restoration/restoration.pdf>.

State & Private Forestry

The State & Private Forestry programs (S&PF) budget request is down \$2.2 million from the FY 2012 enacted level, from \$252.9 million in FY 2012 to \$250.7 million for FY 2013. Notable changes to the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) priority programs from the FY 2012 enacted levels include the following:

- Cooperative Fire Protection programs (State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance): the President's Budget would consolidate these two programs under the Wildland Fire Management (WFM) appropriation, thus they are effectively zeroed out in the S&PF appropriation. Additional information on proposed cuts to these programs is included in this document under the WFM section.
- Forest Health Management: the President's Budget would consolidate Forest Health into two budget line items (BLIs) under S&PF, one for Federal Lands and one for Cooperative Lands. Previously, separately funded BLIs existed for Federal Lands and Cooperative Lands Forest Health under both the S&PF and the WFM appropriations for a total of four BLIs.
 - Overall funding for both Federal and Cooperative Lands Forest Health is roughly flat with a \$265,000 increase over FY 2012 enacted levels.
- Landscape Scale Restoration: the President's budget proposes establishing a new BLI that would formalize the S&PF Redesign process by allowing states to fund landscape-scale projects across the S&PF authorities. While State Fire Assistance would no longer be funded in the S&PF appropriation under the President's Budget request, the request retains authority for State Fire Assistance projects in the competitive process and reserve \$2.5 million from State Fire Assistance to support such projects.

- The President's Budget proposes \$18 million for the Landscape Scale Restoration BLI in FY 2013. In FY 2012 S&PF program areas allocated \$19.2 million through the competitive process.
- Under the President's Budget, funds would be allocated on a competitive basis, guided by the priorities outlined in the States' Forest Action Plans. Projects would be focused in priority areas as identified by the Forest Action Plans and implementation would be coordinated with State and Territorial forestry agency partners.
- Forest Resources Information and Analysis (FIA): the President's Budget proposes consolidating FIA within the Forest and Rangeland Research appropriation. Thus, the President's Budget effectively zeros out FIA under the S&PF appropriation. Additional information on proposed cuts to FIA is included in this document under the Forest and Rangeland Research section.
- Forest Stewardship: the President's Budget proposes a \$4 million (14%) reduction to the program from the FY 2012 enacted level to \$24.78 million in FY 2013.
- Forest Legacy Program: the President's Budget proposes a \$6.7 million increase to the program from the FY 2012 enacted level to \$60 million in FY 2013. The USFS Budget Justification focuses on the importance of the Forest Legacy Program in supporting the America's Great Outdoors initiative.
- Urban and Community Forestry: the President's Budget proposes a \$3.29 million (10%) reduction to the program from FY 2012 enacted levels.

Forest and Rangeland Research

The President's Budget proposes \$292.8 million for Forest and Rangeland Research in FY 2013. This represents a \$2.5 million reduction from FY 2012 enacted levels.

- FIA: the President's Budget proposes \$66.8 million for FIA funded from a single BLI within Research. When compared with overall enacted funding in FY 2012, from both Research and S&PF, this represents a reduction of 2.5 million to the FIA program in FY 2013.

Wildland Fire Management

The President's Budget proposes \$1.97 billion for Wildland Fire Management (WFM) in FY 2013. This request is down \$3.07 million from the FY 2012 enacted level.

- Preparedness: the President's Budget request includes a reduction of \$2.93 million for the Preparedness Budget. The request includes \$24 million to fund the cost of modernizing the large airtanker fleet, which is expected to be guided by the recently released strategy to replace large airtankers for wildfire efforts. See USFS News Release at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/2012/releases/02/airtankers.shtml>.
- Suppression: the President's Budget request includes an increase of \$78.14 million for the Suppression budget. This request, when combined with the FLAME Reserve account, fully funds the 10-year average of suppression costs.
- FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund: the President's Budget request includes nearly flat funding for the FLAME Reserve at \$315.0 million.
- Hazardous Fuels: the President's Budget request includes a \$75 million (24%) reduction to Hazardous Fuels. However, the request would shift \$76 million from the Hazardous Fuels BLI to the Integrated Resource Restoration BLI. This follows a \$22 million reduction in Hazardous Fuels funding from FY 2011 to FY 2012.

- **State Fire Assistance (SFA):** the President's Budget request includes a total of \$72.7 million for SFA in FY 2013. As discussed above, the President's Budget consolidates SFA to be funded solely under the WFM appropriation. In past years, SFA has been funded by BLIs under both the S&PF to the WFM appropriations. When previous year S&PF and WFM appropriations are combined, the request represents a reduction of \$13.28 million from FY 2012. This follows an \$11 million reduction in SFA funding from FY 2011 to FY 2012 enacted levels.
- **Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA):** the President's Budget request includes a total of \$11.7 million for VFA in FY 2013. As discussed above, the President's Budget consolidates VFA, which has been partially funded under S&PF, to the WFM appropriation. When previous year S&PF and WFM appropriations are combined, the request represents a reduction of \$1.3 million from FY 2012 enacted levels. This reduction follows a \$2.5 million reduction to VFA from FY 2011 to FY 2012.

National Forest System

The National Forest System (NFS) budget request is up \$69.45 million from the FY 2012 enacted level. However, the increase is largely a result of shifting funds from other appropriations into NFS.

- **Integrated Resource Restoration (IRR):** the President's Budget continues the FY 2012 pilot and would fully implement IRR in FY 2013.
- **Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR):** the President's Budget would fully fund the CFLR program at \$40 million in FY 2013. The request is roughly flat from funding in FY 2012.
- The President's Budget proposes to consolidate the Land Management Planning and the Inventory and Monitoring line items into one Land Management Planning, Assessment and Monitoring BLI. This combination is designed to provide the agency with flexibility to implement the requirements of the new Planning Rule. The request represents a \$12.88 million reduction from the two previous BLIs for a requested level of \$188.77 for the new BLI.

Other Budget highlights

- President's Budget assumes a 5-year reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools Act and requests \$294 million for the same. The request would result in a reduction of \$28 million from FY 2012 enacted levels.
- The proposal seeks permanent authority to enter into stewardship contracts. Current authority for Stewardship Contracting expires in September 2013.
- Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Management
 - DOI FLAME Reserve Fund: the President's Budget requests \$92 million for the DOI FLAME account in FY 2013, roughly flat funding from FY 2012.

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