



## Legislative & Policy Update – March 2024

Published March 27, 2024

The [Council of Western State Foresters](#) (CWSF) Legislative & Policy Update provides information on issues of importance to CWSF. Policy and legislative updates are found on the CWSF webpage [here](#). Please note that the items highlighted in these updates are only a selection of the issues CWSF and the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) are monitoring. Keep an eye out for our monthly newsletter that will provide summaries on other key legislative and programmatic issues. If you have not yet subscribed, you can do so [here](#). For more information, please contact [Neil Simpson](#), Director of Policy.

This month's policy update highlights:

- State Foresters Testify at U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings
- Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Forest Service Appropriations and FY 2025 Budget Request

### Appropriations

On March 8, 2024, Congress passed the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024, which includes funding for the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service). President Biden, on March 23, signed a package of bills funding the remainder of the government for FY 2024.

Like most agencies, the Forest Service budget suffered reductions compared to 2023 funding levels. Nearly all Forest Service programs saw reductions in funding, but the bill does include funding to maintain increases to federal firefighter pay. In addition to FY 24 appropriations, the Forest Service has submitted its [FY 25 Budget Justification](#), which outlines its request for FY 25.

The below table details funding levels from FY 22 through the FY 25 request.

*Please scroll to next page.*

## USDA Forest Service Budget Summary

**Compiled By the Council of Western State Foresters/Western Forestry Leadership Coalition**

This is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all the USDA Forest Service programs and budget line items.  
Prepared March 22, 2024 with data from Forest Service FY 25 Budget Justification and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024

[In Millions]

		FY 22 Enacted	FY 23 Enacted	FY 24 Enacted Consolidated Approp. Act	FY 25 USFS Budget Request
<b>FS Operations</b>	<b>Total Discretionary</b>	<b>\$1,069.09</b>	<b>\$1,152.74</b>	<b>\$1,150.00</b>	<b>\$1,187.07</b>
	salaries & expenses	\$363.00	\$389.41	\$389.00	\$ 399.23
<b>Forest and Rangeland Research</b>	<b>Total Discretionary</b>	<b>\$296.62</b>	<b>\$307.27</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>	<b>\$ 315.62</b>
	<b>Bipartisan Infrastructure Law*</b>	<b>\$2.00</b>	<b>\$2.00</b>	<b>\$2.00</b>	<b>\$ 2.00</b>
	salaries & expenses	\$210.08	\$215.58	\$212.00	\$ 221.43
	Forest Inventory and Analysis	\$22.20	\$32.20	\$31.50	\$ 33.70
<b>State, Private, and Tribal Forestry</b>	<b>Total Discretionary</b>	<b>\$315.20</b>	<b>\$337.76</b>	<b>\$303.31</b>	<b>\$ 305.41</b>
	<b>Bipartisan Infrastructure Law*</b>	<b>\$305.36</b>	<b>\$305.36</b>	<b>\$305.36</b>	<b>\$305.36</b>
	<b>Inflation Reduction Act**</b>	<b>\$2,750.00</b>			
	salaries & expenses	\$57.74	\$65.09	\$52.00	\$ 62.91
	Landscape Scale Restoration	\$14.00	\$17.00	\$14.00	\$ 17.00
	Forest Health Management - Federal Lands	\$16.00	\$17.00	\$16.00	\$ 17.00
	Forest Health Management - Cooperative Lands	\$32.00	\$33.00	\$32.00	\$ 33.00
	State Fire Assistance	\$75.00	\$76.00	\$76.00	\$ 76.00
	Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$20.00	\$21.00	\$21.00	\$ 21.00
	Forest Stewardship	\$12.00	\$12.50	\$12.00	\$ 12.50
	Community Forestry & Open		\$6.00	\$5.50	\$ 6.00
	Forest Legacy Program***	\$88.88	\$77.94	\$92.25	\$ 94.23
	Urban and Community Forestry	\$36.00	\$40.00	\$36.00	\$ 40.00
	Forest Resource info & analysis***	\$29.96	\$30.17	\$19.81	\$ -

		FY 22 Enacted	FY 23 Enacted	FY 24 Enacted Consolidated Approp. Act	FY 25 USFS Budget Request
<b>National Forest System</b>	<b>Total Discretionary</b>	<b>\$1,866.55</b>	<b>\$1,974.39</b>	<b>\$1,863.56</b>	<b>\$2,007.15</b>
	<b>Bipartisan Infrastructure Law*</b>	<b>\$734.80</b>	<b>\$529.80</b>	<b>\$529.80</b>	<b>\$ 529.80</b>
	<b>Inflation Reduction Act**</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>			
	salaries & expenses	\$1.45	\$1,519.08	\$1,459.35	\$1,541.34
	Land Man. Planning, Monitoring	\$17.00	\$17.00	\$14.50	\$ 18.00
	Rec. Heritage and Wilderness	\$47.30	\$55.00	\$45.00	\$ 58.00
	Hazardous Fuels	\$187.39	\$207.00	\$175.45	\$ 207.00
	Forest Products	\$38.00	\$40.00	\$39.00	\$ 41.00
	Veg and Watershed Management	\$32.99	\$32.00	\$30.00	\$ 33.00
	Wildlife and Fish Habitat	\$22.00	\$24.00	\$22.00	\$ 25.00
	CFLRP	\$28.00	\$32.00	\$31.00	\$ 34.00

<b>Capital Improvement and Maintenance</b>	<b>Total Discretionary</b>	<b>\$159.05</b>	<b>\$158.05</b>	<b>\$156.13</b>	<b>\$ 158.00</b>
	<b>Bipartisan Infrastructure law*</b>	<b>\$72.00</b>	<b>\$72.00</b>	<b>\$72.00</b>	<b>\$ 72.00</b>
	Salaries and Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -
	Facilities	\$54.98	\$54.00	\$52.00	\$ 56.50
	Roads	\$70.61	\$73.00	\$73.00	\$ 74.00
	Trails	\$17.59	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$ 21.50
	Legacy Roads and Trails	\$5.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$ 6.00

<b>Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Total Discretionary</b>	<b>\$2,005.11</b>	<b>\$2,116.96</b>	<b>\$2,312.65</b>	<b>\$2,550.44</b>
	<b>Bipartisan Infrastructure Law*</b>	<b>\$552.20</b>	<b>\$36.00</b>	<b>\$36.00</b>	<b>\$ 36.00</b>
	<b>Inflation Reduction Act**</b>	<b>\$1,800.00</b>			
	Salaries and Expenses	\$822.11	\$913.96	\$1,109.65	\$1,334.94
	Preparedness	\$172.00	\$192.00	\$192.00	\$ 204.50
	Suppression	\$1,011.00	\$1,386.00	\$1,011.00	\$1,011.00

<b>Wildland Fire Suppression Reserve Fund</b>		<b>\$2,120.00</b>	<b>\$2,210.00</b>	<b>\$2,300.00</b>	<b>\$2,390.00</b>
---	--	-------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-------------------

\*The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (P.L. 117-58) provided advance appropriations each year from 2022 through 2026.  
 \*\*The Inflation Reduction Act (P.L. 117-169) provided appropriations in FY 2022 and remain available until Sept. 30, 2021.  
 \*\*\*Forest Legacy is funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund.  
 \*\*\*\*Forest Resource Info and Analysis is Congressionally Directed Spending; FY 24 contained 19 separate projects including fuels reduction, urban, and forest action plans.

[\(Download a printable version.\)](#)

### State Foresters travel to Washington, D.C.

Utah State Forester Jamie Barnes and Wyoming State Forester Kelly Norris brought their wildland fire expertise to Washington, D.C., to testify in congressional hearings about the wildfire crisis.

Jamie Barnes, along with four other state and federal officials, testified at the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee hearing titled “A Nation on Fire: Responding to the Increasing Wildfire Threat.” The hearing focused on findings from the [Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission](#) and covered topics ranging from hazardous fuels reduction, public health concerns from wildfire smoke, and post-fire recovery. Jamie highlighted the importance of bringing partners and stakeholders together in a

Shared Stewardship approach to do the “right work, in the right place and at the right scale.” The Utah Shared Stewardship program has treated over 80,000 acres utilizing this approach. View a recording of the hearing, along with all the witnesses’ testimonies and committee members’ statements, on the [committee's website](#).

Kelly Norris, along with representatives from the water utilities, the timber industry, USDA, and the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI), testified at the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Hearing to “Examine the Findings and Recommendations of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission.” Participants discussed the diverse and devastating impacts fire has on our forests and communities and the need to proactively manage our forests for health and wildfire resiliency. Kelly highlighted the importance of cross-boundary management, strong partnerships, and the successful use of Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) in Wyoming. Kelly noted that “states are contributing to the restoration of federal forests at an unprecedented scale.” Wyoming State Forestry Division has partnered with the Forest Service and DOI Bureau of Land Management to treat over 11,000 acres and sell approximately 32 million board feet of timber under GNA. View a recording of the hearing, along with all the witnesses’ testimony and committee members’ statements, on the [committee's website](#).



*Photo: Senator Mitt Romney Staff*



*Photo: Danielle Okst*