



BUDGET The United States
Department of the Interior

JUSTIFICATIONS

and Performance Information
Fiscal Year 2027

U.S. WILDLAND FIRE SERVICE

NOTICE: These budget justifications are prepared for the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittees.



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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction.....	1
Mission.....	3
Budget Overview	3
Table 1: Summary Table	4
Organization Chart.....	6
Justification of Legislative Proposals	7
Good Accounting Obligation in Government Act Report.....	7
Account and Activity/Subactivity Details.....	9
Table 2: Summary of Requirements Table.....	9
Table 3: Justification of Fixed Costs.....	13
Activity: Preparedness	15
Program Changes.....	15
Program Overview.....	16
Program Activities	17
Table 4: Federal Preparedness and Suppression Resources	18
Table 5: Tribal Wildland Fire Preparedness and Suppression Resources	19
Activity: Suppression Operations	21
Program Changes.....	21
Program Overview.....	22
Program Activities	23
Activity: Fuels Management.....	25
Program Changes.....	25
Program Overview.....	26
Program Activities	26
Activity: Other Operations.....	27
Program Changes.....	30
Program Overview.....	33
Program Activities	34
Activity: Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund.....	37
Program Changes.....	37
Program Overview.....	38
Other Exhibits & Appendices	39

Appropriations Language.....	39
Wildland Fire Service Operations Account.....	39
Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund Account.....	45
General Provisions	47
Table 6: Employee Count by Grade.....	51
Compliance with Section 403	54
Table 7: External Administrative Costs: Working Capital Fund.....	54
Table 8: External Administrative Costs: Bureau Administrative Costs	55
Appendix A: List of Key Tables.....	57
Appendix B: Reference, Key Acronyms.....	58

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The United States is currently facing an alarming wildfire crisis, marked by increasingly frequent, extreme, and destructive fires. Wildfires are now costing the U.S. hundreds of billions of dollars annually. They are increasing the demands on wildland fire personnel across the country. They are damaging infrastructure, disrupting agriculture, driving up food prices, and threatening lives and livelihoods. Beyond the threat to diverse landscapes across the country, wildfires also pose a risk to our national security, public health, energy, and water supplies. Protecting American lives and homes and the country's security and economic prosperity from wildfires is a top priority for the Trump Administration.

In 2025, 77,850 wildfires burned more than 5.1 million acres, endangering lives, destroying infrastructure, and disrupting local economies.¹ Last year began with unprecedented and dangerous wildfire conditions as a series of powerful Santa Ana wind events combined with critically dry fuels across Southern California in January, igniting more than a dozen fast-moving fires.² The two largest incidents, the Palisades and Eaton Fires, burned nearly 38,000 acres and resulted in more than 30 civilian fatalities and the destruction of 16,000 structures. These events underscored wildfire impacts in densely populated urban areas to an extent not seen before.

The trend of increasingly severe and frequent fires has continued, as demonstrated by the 2025 Lee Fire in northwestern Colorado. Ignited by lightning on Bureau of Land Management lands near Meeker during a period of extreme heat and dry conditions, the fire spread rapidly across sagebrush rangelands, ultimately burning more than 130,000 acres and becoming the fourth-largest wildfire in Colorado history and one of the largest fires in the United States during the 2025 fire year. Rapid growth prompted evacuations for nearby communities and emergency declarations as firefighting resources were mobilized.

The Lee Fire occurred alongside other lightning-caused fires in the region, including the nearby Elk Fire, illustrating how multiple large incidents can ignite at once and quickly strain firefighting resources. The fire burned extensive rangeland used for livestock grazing, damaged ranch infrastructure, and threatened energy and transportation infrastructure in the Piceance Basin, an important natural gas production region. Incidents like the Lee Fire highlight the growing scale and complexity of wildfire risk across western working landscapes, where large fires can simultaneously threaten communities, disrupt regional economies, and stretch national wildfire response capacity.

Catastrophic wildfires like these demonstrate the need to rethink how Federal wildland fire management is structured. On June 12, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order (EO) 14308, *Empowering Commonsense Wildfire Prevention and Response*, which directs Federal agencies to streamline wildland fire management. In support of the President's directive, the Department of the Interior (Interior) Secretary Doug Burgum signed Secretary's Order (SO) 3443, *Elevating and Unifying DOI's Wildland Fire Management Program*, on September 10, 2025. SO 3443 directs Interior to unify its

¹ [National Interagency Coordination Center Wildland Fire Summary and Statistics Annual Report 2025](#), page 8

² [National Interagency Coordination Center Wildland Fire Summary and Statistics Annual Report 2025](#), page 2

wildland fire management under a single, cohesive service while also strengthening coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS).

On January 12, 2026, Secretary Burgum issued SO 3448, *Establishment of the U.S. Wildland Fire Service*, which created within Interior the U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS). The Secretary appointed a new leader, the Director of the USWFS, to oversee its implementation with a vision of unifying the wildland fire management programs across Interior's bureaus and offices. The USWFS is streamlining wildfire prevention, response, and recovery under a unified organization rather than continuing to divide those responsibilities between the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Office of Aviation Services (OAS), Office of Wildland Fire (OWF), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). This unification of Interior's wildland fire management represents a bold step forward in ensuring we are better prepared and equipped to meet the challenges of managing wildland fire while protecting lives, communities, vital infrastructure, and our public and Tribal lands.

The President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget proposes a further strategic unification of the wildland fire programs of USDA FS and Interior. The budget proposes for USDA FS's wildland fire resources and operations to be unified into Interior's USWFS. This consolidation will reform and further unify Federal wildland fire resources and operations while implementing consistent standards to drive performance, including among senior leaders.

Under the expanded USWFS, command and appropriations of all existing wildland fire activities of Interior and USDA FS will be consolidated to streamline Federal suppression response, risk mitigation, burned area recovery, and coordination with non-Federal partners to combat the wildfire crisis. These changes will support faster coordination due to fewer jurisdictional barriers. The consolidated USWFS will oversee wildland fire management, risk reduction, and burned area recovery on nearly 700 million acres of public lands, including the more than 500 million acres managed by Interior³ and 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands managed by USDA FS.⁴

Through this unified structure, USWFS will employ all Federal wildland fire personnel responsible for lands administered by both Interior and USDA FS. It will manage all Federal wildfire response policies, with an elevated focus on innovation and deployment of new technology across Federal lands. In addition, USWFS will procure and maintain Federal wildland fire resources, leveraging a consolidated procurement process that enables an optimal mix of assets based on national needs and opportunities to negotiate better deals and purchase at scale.

This modernization of Federal wildland fire management will improve coordination with State, local and Tribal partners who are critical to the country's wildfire response by streamlining coordination and reducing the number of agreements required between these essential partners and Federal agencies. It will ensure faster deployment of firefighting and hazardous fuels management crews, particularly for smaller and more isolated public lands, allowing for faster wildfire response and more timely risk reduction projects. By collapsing redundant agency organizations, the unified service will also centralize

³ The Interior-managed lands include 57 million acres in trust for Tribal Nations.

⁴ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/newsroom/by-the-numbers>

management of aircraft, vehicles, and other essential resources for firefighting operations, unifying oversight to allow for faster prioritization, clearer lines of authority, and increased operational efficiency.

The unified USWFS will serve as a cohesive and efficient organization for managing and preventing wildfires, streamlining operations, and optimizing resource allocation, including risk evaluation across Federal lands to inform resource allocation for hazardous fuels reduction. These reforms will enable the Federal Government to better meet the growing complexity and year-round demands of wildfire suppression, fuels management, and recovery efforts across the country, safeguarding lives, property, and natural and cultural resources from wildfires.

Mission

The USWFS is elevating and unifying Federal wildland fire management to strengthen coordination with partners, improve operational efficiency and effectiveness, and support a more integrated national approach to wildfire preparedness and response. In alignment with EO 14308 and SOs 3443 and 3448, the USWFS is improving collaboration and coordination with land management bureaus, Tribal Nations, States, local communities, and private industry to ensure aggressive fuels management, effective and nimble wildfire response, and thoughtful post-fire recovery. In addition, the USWFS is taking bold action to streamline procurement and payments, reduce administrative burden, and modernize and integrate wildfire-related research, technology, and intelligence.

Budget Overview

The 2027 budget request for the proposed Wildland Fire Service Operations account is \$3.96 billion, and the request for the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund account is \$2.95 billion, for a total of \$6.91 billion. The 2027 budget builds on the recent unification of Interior's wildland fire resources and operations and the establishment of USWFS within the Office of the Secretary on January 12, 2026. The 2027 budget proposes a further strategic unification of the wildland fire programs of USDA FS and Interior. USDA FS's wildland fire resources and operations will be consolidated into the USWFS.

Following this unification, the USWFS will employ all Federal WFM personnel working on lands administered by Interior and USDA FS, including wildland firefighters, wildfire risk mitigation planners, and support personnel. The USWFS will continue funding Tribal Nations' WFM personnel. The Wildland Fire Service Operations account will fund an estimated 15,827 direct and reimbursable Federal full-time equivalents (FTEs) and 640 Tribal FTEs. USWFS also will procure and maintain all wildland fire resources and manage Federal wildland fire response policies. The Budget also proposes new appropriations language to allow the transfer of funds for activities related to Federal wildland fire missions, within and between Interior and USDA FS, to implement an orderly unification within USWFS.

Table 1: Summary Table

2027 President’s Budget
 U.S. Wildland Fire Service
 (Dollars in Thousands)

	2025 Actual ¹		2026 Enacted ^{1,2,3}		2027 Request ^{3,4}		Change From 2026 Enacted	
Budget Authority	Budget Authority	FTE ⁵	Budget Authority	FTE ⁵	Budget Authority	FTE ⁵	Budget Authority	FTE ⁵
Current, Wildland Fire Service Operations (14X1125)²	1,147,171	36	1,147,171	2,480	3,961,953	15,620	+2,814,782	+13,140
Net Other Transfers	5,659	0	0	0	0	0	+0	+0
Subtotal, Current Budget Authority with Transfers but without Supplemental Funding (14X1125)	1,152,830	36	1,147,171	2,480	3,961,953	15,620	+2,814,782	+13,140
<i>Supplemental - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58)⁶</i>	262,600	2	262,600	158	0	207	-262,600	+49
<i>Supplemental – Transfer to Office of Inspector General (Public Law 117-58)⁶</i>	-1,313	0	-1,313	0	0	0	+1,313	+0
Total, Budget Authority, Wildland Fire Service Operations, with Transfers and Supplemental Funding⁶	1,414,117	38	1,408,458	2,638	3,961,953	15,827	+2,553,495	+13,189
Current, Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund (14X0130)	360,000	0	370,000	0	2,950,000	0	+2,580,000	+0
Total, Budget Authority, USWFS, without Transfers or Supplemental Funding	1,507,171	36	1,517,171	2,480	6,911,953	15,620	+5,394,782	+13,140
Total, Budget Authority, USWFS, with Transfers and Supplemental Funding	1,774,117	38	1,778,458	2,638	6,911,953	15,827	+5,133,495	+13,189

Executive Summary

¹ The 2025 Actual and 2026 Enacted amounts show funding for the Department of the Interior’s (Interior) current Wildland Fire Management (WFM) and Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund accounts. On January 12, 2026, Interior established the U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS) as a new office in the Office of the Secretary (OS) and unified its wildland fire resources and operations.

² The 2026 Enacted level for the Wildland Fire Management (WFM) account includes \$763,514,000 from unobligated balances of funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58) that Congress repurposed for use for Interior’s WFM in Section 444 of Division C in P.L.119-74. The repurposed funding includes (a) \$125,000,000 originally appropriated for the Environmental Protection Agency for State and Tribal Assistance Grants, (b) \$353,514,000 originally appropriated for Interior’s Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement for the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, and (c) \$285,000,000 originally appropriated for Interior for Methane Reduction Infrastructure. These funds will be used for Preparedness, Fuels Management, and Other Operations. The remainder of the 2026 Enacted level (\$383,657,000) is base funding directly appropriated for Suppression Operations.

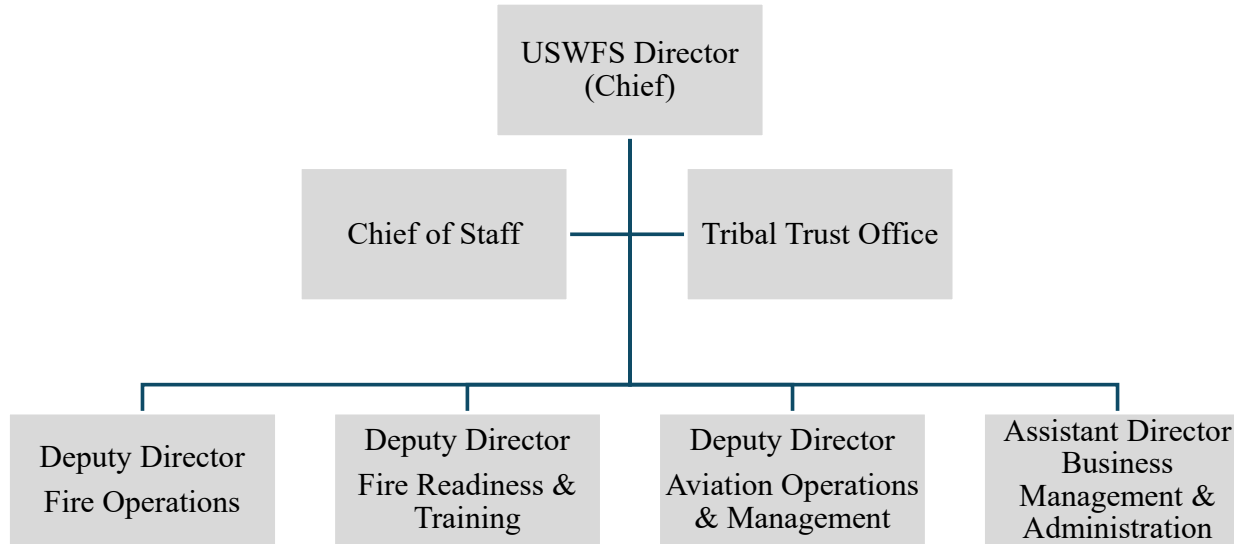
³ In establishing USWFS as a new office in OS in January 2026, Interior also realigned the Office of Aviation Services (OAS) organizationally under the USWFS. Some OAS personnel are funded through the Department’s Working Capital Fund (WCF), and others are funded through appropriations for the OS-Departmental Operations (OS-DO). OAS personnel will continue to be funded in these ways for FY 2026. The 2027 budget requests funding for the OAS personnel funded through appropriations under the Wildland Fire Service Operations account in the Preparedness program activity rather than the OS-DO account. Some OAS personnel will continue to be funded through the WCF.

⁴ The 2027 Request column shows amounts for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS’s wildland fire program into Interior’s USWFS. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting wildland fire management from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

⁵ For 2025, the table shows total current Federal Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employee levels only for the former Office of Wildland Fire (OWF), which coordinated the wildland fire program for Interior prior to 2026 unification. For 2025, other program FTE are reported under BIA, BLM, FWS, and NPS for a Department total of 4,489 FTE, including direct and reimbursable. For 2026, the table shows total current FTE levels for the USWFS after realignment, which began in January 2026, including both direct and reimbursable FTE. For 2026, other program FTE are reported under BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS, and OAS for a Department total of 4,493, including direct and reimbursable FTE. For 2027, the table shows all program FTE, including both direct and reimbursable, for the USWFS following unification with USDA FS. Other tables in this document show direct, allocated Federal FTE and estimated Tribal FTE, excluding reimbursable FTE.

⁶ Supplemental funding reflects statutory amounts made available in the fiscal year, not estimated allocations or obligations.

Organization Chart



Note: This organization chart reflects the unification of Interior’s wildland fire resources and operations through internal realignment, which began in January 2026. The organization chart may be modified following the proposed strategic unification of USDA FS’s and Interior’s wildland fire programs in the expanded USWFS.

Justification of Legislative Proposals

To support the unification of USDA FS's and Interior's wildland fire resources and operations and to improve the country's wildland fire management, the 2027 budget proposes legislation, including appropriations language, to provide additional authorities for implementation. These authorities include the transfer of budgetary resources to and from Interior's USWFS and USDA FS to facilitate the transition to the unified USWFS and foster collaborative land management within Interior and between the two Departments. In addition, the 2027 budget proposes to expand hazardous fuels mitigation authorities, including the use of targeted grazing, to address significant imminent wildland fire threats.

The 2027 USWFS budget fully funds the costs of permanent pay increases for Federal and Tribal wildland firefighters across the United States and provides incident response premium pay, both of which were enacted in FY 2025. The 2027 budget also requests permanent extension of the premium pay cap waiver for wildland fire personnel. As wildfires grow larger and more destructive—threatening communities, livelihoods, and infrastructure—wildland fire personnel face growing demands. Improved firefighter pay is helping to address this challenge by enabling the Federal Government and Tribes to better compete with private employers and to hire and retain top employees in this critical field.

For the appropriations language, see the “Other Exhibits & Appendices” section of this document. In addition, the Administration is developing proposed authorizing language to fully implement the USWFS. The Department looks forward to working with Congress and sharing additional details to enact both the authorization and appropriations for a reformed Federal approach to wildland fire management.

Good Accounting Obligation in Government Act Report



A wildland firefighter completes burn operations on the Turkey Feather Fire on the Gila National Forest in New Mexico. Photo by DOI.

The Good Accounting Obligation in Government Act (GAO-IG Act, P.L. 115-414), enacted January 3, 2019, requires that Agencies report the status of each open audit recommendation issued more than one year prior to the submission of the Agency's annual budget justification to Congress. The Act requires Agencies to include the current target completion date, implementation status, and any discrepancies on closure determinations. DOI leadership takes audit follow-up very seriously and considers our external auditors, to include the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and Office of Inspector General, valued partners in not only improving DOI's management and compliance obligations but also enhancing its programmatic and administrative operations. As stewards of taxpayer resources, DOI applies cost-benefit analysis and enterprise risk management principles in recommendation implementation decisions.

DOI's GAO-IG Act Report is available at the following link: <https://www.doi.gov/cj>.

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Account Details

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Account and Activity/Subactivity Details

Table 2: Summary of Requirements Table

**Summary of Requirements
U.S. Wildland Fire Service
Appropriations: Wildland Fire Service Operations and
Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund**

(Dollars in Thousands)

Treasury Account/Activity/Subactivity	2025 Actual ^{1,5}		2026 Enacted ^{1,2,3,5}		2027 Request ^{3,4,5}					
	Budget Authority	FTE	Budget Authority	FTE	Fixed Costs (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	FTE Changes (+/-)	Budget Authority	FTE	Change from 2026 Enacted
Wildland Fire Service Operations										
Preparedness	512,364	32	526,064	1,406	-605	+1,044,074	+10,617	1,569,533	12,023	+1,043,469
Suppression Operations	383,657	-	383,657	268	-	+1,011,000	+487	1,394,657	755	+1,011,000
Fuels Management	228,150	4	214,450	609	-	+620,013	+1,867	834,463	2,476	+620,013
Other Operations: Burned Area Rehabilitation	10,000	-	10,000	58	-	-	+29	10,000	87	-
Other Operations: Facilities Construction and Maintenance	10,000	-	10,000	2	-	+17,000	+1	27,000	3	+17,000
Other Operations: Joint Fire Science Program ⁶	3,000	-	3,000	3	-	-3,000	-3	-	-	-3,000
Other Operations: Intelligence and Technology ⁶	-	-	-	-	-	+123,500	+37	123,500	37	+123,500
Other Operations: Grants and Partnerships ⁷	-	-	-	-	-	+2,800	-	2,800	-	+2,800
Subtotal, Other Operations	23,000	36	23,000	63	-	+140,300	+64	163,300	127	+140,300
Total, Wildland Fire Service Operations (without Transfers or Supplemental Funding)	1,147,171	36	1,147,171	2,346	-605	+2,815,387	+13,035	3,961,953	15,381	+2,814,782
<i>Net Other Transfers</i>	<i>5,659</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
Total, Wildland Fire Service Operations (with Transfers but not Supplemental Funding)	1,152,830	36	1,147,171	2,346	-605	+2,815,387	+13,035	3,961,953	15,381	+2,814,782

Account Details

Treasury Account/Activity/Subactivity	2025 Actual ^{1,5}		2026 Enacted ^{1,2,3,5}		2027 Request ^{3,4,5}					
	Budget Authority	FTE	Budget Authority	FTE	Fixed Costs (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	FTE Changes (+/-)	Budget Authority	FTE	Change from 2026 Enacted
<i>Supplemental - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58)⁸</i>	262,600	2	262,600	158	-	-262,600	+49		207	-262,600
<i>Supplemental - Transfer to Office of Inspector General (Public Law 117-58)⁸</i>	-1,313	-	-1,313	-	-	+1,313	-	-	-	+1,313
Total, Wildland Fire Service Operations (with Transfers and Supplemental Funding)	1,414,117	38	1,408,458	2,504	-605	+2,554,100	+13,084	3,961,953	15,588	+2,553,495
Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund										
Suppression Operations	360,000	-	370,000	-	-	+2,580,000	-	2,950,000	-	+2,580,000
Total, Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund	360,000	-	370,000	-	-	+2,580,000	-	2,950,000	-	+2,580,000
TOTAL, U.S. Wildland Fire Service (without Transfers or Supplemental Funding)	1,507,171	36	1,517,171	2,346	-605	+5,395,387	+13,035	6,911,953	15,381	+5,394,782
TOTAL, U.S. Wildland Fire Service (with Transfers and Supplemental Funding)	1,774,117	38	1,778,458	2,504	-605	+5,134,100	+13,084	6,911,953	15,588	+5,133,495

¹ The 2025 Actual and 2026 Enacted amounts show funding for the Department of the Interior’s (Interior) current Wildland Fire Management (WFM) and Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund accounts. On January 12, 2026, Interior established the U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS) as a new office in the Office of the Secretary (OS) and began unifying its wildland fire resources and operations.

² The 2026 Enacted level for the Wildland Fire Management (WFM) account includes \$763,514,000 from unobligated balances of funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58) that Congress repurposed for use for Interior’s WFM in Section 444 of Division C in P.L.119-74. The repurposed funding includes (a) \$125,000,000 originally appropriated for the Environmental Protection Agency for State and Tribal Assistance Grants, (b) \$353,514,000 originally appropriated for Interior’s Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement for the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, and (c) \$285,000,000 originally appropriated for Interior for Methane Reduction Infrastructure. These funds will be used for Preparedness, Fuels Management, and Other Operations. The remainder of the 2026 Enacted level (\$383,657,000) is base funding directly appropriated for Suppression Operations.

Account Details

³ In establishing USWFS as a new office in OS in January 2026, Interior also realigned the Office of Aviation Services (OAS) organizationally under the USWFS. Some OAS personnel are funded through the Department's Working Capital Fund (WCF), and others are funded through appropriations for the OS-Departmental Operations (OS-DO). OAS personnel will continue to be funded in these ways for FY 2026. The 2027 budget requests funding for the OAS personnel funded through appropriations under the Wildland Fire Service Operations account in the Preparedness program activity rather than the OS-DO account. Some OAS personnel will continue to be funded through the WCF.

⁴ The 2027 Request column shows amounts for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS's wildland fire program into Interior's USWFS. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting wildland fire management from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

⁵ This table shows only direct, allocated Federal FTE. This differs from Table 1, which also includes reimbursable FTE. For 2025, the table shows current Federal FTE employee levels only for the former OWF, which coordinated the wildland fire program for Interior prior to 2026 unification. For 2025, other program FTE are reported under BIA, BLM, FWS, and NPS for a Department total of 4,268 direct FTE. For 2026, the table shows direct FTE levels for the USWFS after realignment. For 2026, other program FTE are reported under BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS, and OAS for a Department total of 4,268 direct FTE. For 2027, the table shows all direct FTE for the USWFS following unification with USDA FS. Other tables in this document show direct, allocated Federal FTE and estimated Tribal FTE.

⁶ The 2027 budget proposes to roll funding for the Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) into the proposed new Intelligence and Technology subactivity of the Other Operations activity. The new subactivity includes funding for wildland fire research, intelligence, and technology.

⁷ The 2027 budget proposes to establish a new Grants and Partnerships subactivity of the Other Operations activity. The new subactivity includes funding for rural fire assistance.

⁸ Supplemental funding reflects statutory amounts made available in the fiscal year, not estimated allocations or obligations.

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Table 3: Justification of Fixed Costs

**U.S. Wildland Fire Service
Wildland Fire Service Operations**
Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

Fixed Cost Element	2026 Enacted Change	2026 Enacted to 2027 Request Change	Description
Change in Number of Paid Days	0	0	Total paid days for FY 2027 is 261 (2088 hours), which is the same number of days as FY 2026. This information is consistent with the published OMB Circular A-11.
Pay Raise	8,260	+4,126	The President’s Budget for 2027 includes one quarter (October-December 2026) of the 1.0% pay raise for 2026 and 0.0% pay raise for 2027. Pay raises are consistent with the published OMB Circular A-11.
FERS Employer Contribution	0	-4,774	The estimates reflect adjustments to the employer contribution for FERS and Law Enforcement FERS for FY 2027. This information is consistent with the published OMB Circular A-11.
Departmental Working Capital Fund (WCF)	-4	-14	The estimates reflect decisions of the Working Capital Fund Consortium on the FY 2027 Working Capital Fund Central Bill.
Workers' Compensation Payments	0	0	The amounts reflect final chargeback costs of compensating injured employees and dependents of employees who suffer accidental death while on duty. This amount reflects the final Workers Compensation bill for FY 2027 payable to the Department of Labor, Federal Employees Compensation Fund, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8147(b), as amended by Public Law 94-273.
Unemployment Compensation Payments	0	0	The amounts reflect projected changes in the costs of unemployment compensation claims to be paid to the Department of Labor, Federal Employees Compensation Account, in the Unemployment Trust Fund, pursuant to Public Law 96-499. The estimates reflect an applied annual inflation factor of 3.0% to the 5-year average of actuals between 2020-2024.
GSA and Non-GSA Rents	6	+57	The estimates reflect the FY 2027 President's Budget Exhibit 54s as submitted. The amounts reflect changes in the costs payable to General Services Administration (GSA) and others for office and non-office space as estimated by GSA, as well as the rental costs of other currently occupied space. These estimates reflect Udall Building rent, Security, Federal Reserve Parking, and Operations and Maintenance, distributed by bureau and office, based upon OFAS provided Udall Building occupancy levels. Costs of mandatory office relocations, i.e. relocations in cases where due to external events there is no alternative but to vacate the currently occupied space, are also included.
Baseline Adjustments for O&M Increases	0	0	This adjustment captures the associated increase to baseline operations and maintenance requirements resulting from movement out of GSA or direct-leased (commercial) space into Bureau-owned space. During these transitions, bureaus often encounter an increase to baseline O&M costs not otherwise captured in fixed costs. This category of funding properly adjusts the baseline fixed cost amount to maintain steady-State funding for these requirements.
Total, Fixed Costs	8,262	-605	



Wildland fire personnel hike to the Willow Fire on the Modoc National Forest in California.

Photo by DOI.

Preparedness

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Activity: Preparedness

Activity: Preparedness

	2025 Actual ¹	2026 Enacted ^{1,2,3}	2027 Request ^{3,4}
Dollars (in Thousands)	512,364	526,064	1,569,533
Federal FTE ⁵	32	1,406	12,023
Tribal FTE	360	360	360

¹ The 2025 Actual and 2026 Enacted amounts show funding for Interior’s current Wildland Fire Management (WFM) account. On January 12, 2026, Interior established the USWFS as a new OS office and began unifying its wildland fire resources and operations.

² The 2026 Enacted level is from unobligated balances of funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58) that Congress repurposed for use by Interior for WFM in Section 444 of Division C in P.L.119-74.

³ In establishing USWFS as a new office in OS in January 2026, Interior also realigned the Office of Aviation Services (OAS) organizationally under the USWFS. Some OAS personnel are funded through the Department’s WCF, and others are funded through appropriations for OS-DO. OAS personnel will continue to be funded in these ways for FY 2026. The 2027 budget requests funding for the OAS personnel funded through appropriations under the Wildland Fire Service Operations account in the Preparedness program activity rather than the OS-DO account. Some OAS personnel will continue to be funded through the WCF.

⁴ The 2027 Request column shows amounts for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS’s wildland fire program into Interior’s USWFS. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting wildland fire management from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

⁵ Direct, allocated Federal FTE funded by regular appropriations, consistent with the display in Table 2. Including all program FTE, the totals would be 2,395 for both 2025 and 2026.

Program Changes

The 2027 budget request provides \$1,569,533,000 for Preparedness, a total program change of +\$1,044,074,000 above the 2026 Enacted level. The request provides funding for 12,023 Federal FTE (+10,617 above the 2026 Enacted level) and 360 Tribal FTE (the same as the 2026 Enacted level).

Summary of 2027 Program Changes for Preparedness

Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

Program Changes	2027 Request Change	FTE ¹ Change
<i>Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs</i>	+1,044,074	+10,617
TOTAL Program Changes	+1,044,074	+10,617

¹ Direct, allocated Federal FTE funded by regular appropriations

The 2027 budget supports USWFS firefighting capabilities and maintains readiness to achieve a high initial attack success rate for wildland fire response. The Preparedness activity provides for an integrated and coordinated framework for wildfire response by funding core Federal and Tribal firefighting resources and assets to protect public health, critical infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and communities from the detrimental effects of wildfires. Major resources supported by this program activity include firefighters, support personnel, training, engines, and other heavy equipment.

Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire programs (+\$1,044,074,000/+10,617 Federal FTE/+0 Tribal FTE) – The request reflects the unification of USDA FS’s preparedness personnel and other resources into the USWFS in Interior. Under the expanded USWFS, command and appropriations of all existing preparedness resources of Interior and USDA FS will be consolidated to streamline Federal response to wildfires, including the ability to leverage a consolidated procurement process that enables an optimal mix of assets based on national needs and opportunities to negotiate better deals and purchase at scale. This unification of Federal wildland fire resources and operations also will improve coordination with non-Federal partners to combat the wildfire crisis. The requested amount includes resources previously included in USDA FS’s Wildland Fire Management and Forest Service Operations accounts.

Program Overview

The Preparedness activity comprises the firefighting resources and assets to protect public health, natural and cultural resources, critical infrastructure, and communities from the detrimental effects of wildfires. Interior and its Federal, State, Tribal, local, non-profit, and private sector partners manage a wildfire response framework for efficient wildfire risk mitigation and response locally, regionally, and nationally. As conditions change throughout the year and wildfire activity increases in specific locations, Interior and its partners strategically move firefighting resources, including equipment and people, to locations where the risks are highest and additional resources are needed.

Most importantly, the Preparedness activity funds wildland firefighters. It also supports firefighting assets such as contracted aviation services, engines, and equipment, along with other services that provide the capacity to fight wildfires safely and effectively. Interior shares these resources at all levels of government across the country. Through national interagency coordination and collaboration, assets are available at the national, regional, Tribal, or local level depending on need. Maximizing the mobility of resources increases efficiency by lowering costs and reducing the potential for duplicating the deployment of valuable firefighting assets.

Through the USWFS, which will be expanded through the proposed interagency unification of Interior’s and USDA FS’s wildland fire programs, Interior is increasing efficiencies, procurement processing, and partnerships to maintain core capabilities. Increasing partnerships and collaboration is helping to reduce administrative and operational redundancy through the use of combined positions and shared contracts. Cooperative protection agreements with other Federal agencies, States, self-governing Tribal Nations, and local communities—along with contracts with private firms—provide protection, facilitate the sharing of resources, and streamline work. These agreements promote safe and rapid response, help minimize overall protection costs for all parties, and foster relationships essential to the development of a cohesive and coordinated response to manage wildfires. This coordination is especially important when wildfires burn across land ownerships, jurisdictions, and administrative boundaries.

Program Activities

Through funding for the Preparedness and Fuels Management activities, the 2027 budget fully supports the costs of the permanent pay increases for Federal and Tribal wildland firefighters across the United States. These pay increases, including incident response premium pay for all personnel mobilized to respond to a wildfire incident, were enacted in FY 2025 under the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (Public Law 119–4). The 2027 budget also requests permanent extension of the premium pay cap waiver for wildland fire personnel. For more information on this proposal, see the “Other Exhibits & Appendices” section of this document.

As wildfires grow larger and more destructive—threatening communities, livelihoods, and infrastructure—wildland fire personnel face growing demands. This improved firefighter pay is helping to address this challenge by enabling the Federal government and Tribes to compete with private employers and to hire and retain top employees in this critical field.

Table 4 (see next page) summarizes the combined Preparedness and Suppression Operations resources of Interior and USDA FS, which will be part of the expanded USWFS. The estimates for 2027 are based on 2025 actual and 2026 planned levels for the two departments, which are equivalent.



A USDA FS fire engine on the edge of the Monroe Canyon Fire in Utah.

Photo by USDA FS.

Table 4: Federal Preparedness and Suppression Resources**Federal Wildland Fire Preparedness and Suppression Resources**

Resource	FY 2025 Actual and FY 2026 Planned USDA FS ¹	FY 2025 Actual and FY 2026 Planned Interior USWFS ¹	FY 2027 Request Interior USWFS ²
Federal Wildland Fire Personnel:³			
Smoke Jumpers	330	180	510
Hot Shots	1,690	61	1,751
Other Firefighters and Support Personnel	9,850	5,476	15,326
TOTAL Federal Personnel³	11,870	5,717	17,587
Federal Engines and Heavy Equipment:			
Engines	900	665	1,565
Heavy Equipment	210	97	307
TOTAL Engines and Heavy Equipment	1,110	762	1,872
Federal Aviation Resources:			
Helicopters:			
<i>Type 1 Helicopters</i>	33	1	34
<i>Type 2 Helicopters</i>	31	9	40
<i>Type 3 Helicopters</i>	58	31	89
Subtotal, Helicopters	122	41	163
Air Tankers:			
<i>Next Generation Air Tankers</i>	29	0	29
<i>Single Engine Air Tankers</i>	0	35	35
Subtotal, Airtankers	29	35	64
Water Scoopers	10	6	16
Smokejumper Planes	20	8	28
Aerial Supervision Module/Lead Planes	17	5	22
Air Tactical Units	78	12	90
Utility Aircraft	0	4	4
InfraRed Mapping	8	0	8
Large Passenger Transport	2	0	2
Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS) ⁴	130	63	193
TOTAL Federal Aviation Resources⁵	416	174	590

¹ Amounts reflect both the Actual FY 2025 and Planned FY 2026 levels, which are equivalent.

² The 2027 Request column shows the estimated number of Preparedness and Suppression resources for the USWFS, which is the sum of the 2025 Actual and 2026 Planned resources of USDA FS and Interior wildland fire management.

³ The personnel levels in this table are headcount, not FTE, and they include not only permanent personnel but also the planned seasonal and temporary personnel.

⁴ Of the USDA FS UAS resources, 25 can be operationalized simultaneously, based on pilot availability.

⁵ Aviation resources are funded through a combination of appropriations for Preparedness and Suppression Operations. The majority of aviation resources are contracted.

Table 4 provides a summary of the Preparedness and Suppression resources of Tribal Nations. The estimates for 2025-2027 are based on actual 2024 levels, which is the most recent data available.

Table 5: Tribal Wildland Fire Preparedness and Suppression Resources

**Tribal Wildland Fire Preparedness and Suppression Resources
FY 2024 Actual (and estimated for FYs 2025-2027)¹**

Resource	Number
Personnel ²	939
Engines	50
Other Heavy Equipment	18

¹ Amounts reflect the FY 2024 Actual and FY 2025-2027 Planned levels, which are equivalent.

² Total personnel, not FTE. Some of these personnel also contribute to fuels management.



Navajo Region fire crew hikes to the Decker Fire in Colorado.

Photo by DOI.

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Suppression Operations

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Activity: Suppression Operations

Activity: Suppression Operations

	2025 Actual ¹	2026 Enacted ¹	2027 Request ²
Dollars (in Thousands)	383,657	383,657	1,394,657
Federal FTE ³	-	268	755

¹ The 2025 Actual and 2026 Enacted amounts show funding for Interior’s current Wildland Fire Management account. On January 12, 2026, Interior established the USWFS as a new OS office and began unifying its wildland fire resources and operations.

² The 2027 Request column shows amounts for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS’s wildland fire program into Interior’s USWFS.

³ Direct, allocated Federal FTE funded by regular appropriations, consistent with the display in Table 2. Including all program FTE, the totals would be 460 for both 2025 and 2026.

Program Changes

The 2027 budget request provides \$1,394,657,000 for Suppression Operations in the Wildland Fire Service Operations account, a total program change of +\$1,011,000,000 above the 2026 Enacted level. The request provides funding for 755 Federal FTE (+487 above the 2026 Enacted level). The 2027 budget request is equal to the combined levels for Interior and USDA FS Suppression Operations in the operating accounts as authorized Division O of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141).

Summary of 2027 Program Changes for Suppression Operations

Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

Program Changes	2027 Request Change	FTE ¹ Change
<i>Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs</i>	+1,011,000	+487
TOTAL Program Changes	+1,011,000	+487

¹ Direct, allocated Federal FTE

The 2027 budget supports Suppression Operations to provide incident management personnel, aviation and operational assets (including contracted), logistical services, and supplies and equipment. It also supports the employment of temporary emergency firefighters. In addition to suppressing wildfires that threaten lives and communities, personnel implement emergency stabilization projects following wildfires to minimize threats to life or property, protect water quality, and reduce the risks of floods, landslides, and erosion on or near burned landscapes.

Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire programs (+\$1,011,000,000/+487 Federal FTE) – The request reflects the unification of USDA FS’s suppression resources into the USWFS in Interior. Under the expanded USWFS, command and appropriations of all existing suppression resources of Interior and USDA FS will be consolidated to streamline Federal response to wildfires, including the ability to leverage a consolidated procurement process that enables an optimal mix of assets based on national needs and opportunities to negotiate better deals and purchase at scale. This unification of Federal wildland fire resources and operations also will improve coordination with non-Federal partners to respond more effectively and efficiently to wildfires. The requested amount includes resources previously included in USDA FS’s Wildland Fire Management account.

Program Overview

When wildfires occur, Interior uses Suppression Operations funds to support the direct response to manage these incidents to protect life, property, infrastructure, and natural and cultural resources. The Suppression Operations activity funds an extensive range of resources, including:

- Incident management personnel and support functions;
- Aviation and operational assets (including owned and contracted);
- Logistical services, supplies, and equipment;
- Temporary emergency firefighters; and
- Personnel costs beyond those that are covered by the Preparedness activity (e.g., incident response premium pay for all personnel mobilized on a wildfire incident).

Wildfire response actions are guided by objectives identified in departmental and bureau management plans, including wildfire management plans, and resource priorities. Responses may include the following:

- Suppressing wildfires that threaten lives, communities, and values at risk;
- Managing wildfires to accomplish resource benefit, when it is determined to be safe and appropriate;
- Implementing emergency stabilization projects that minimize threats to life or property; protect water quality; and reduce the risks of floods, landslides, and erosion; and
- Using wildfire severity funding, provided by the Suppression Operations appropriation, to increase Preparedness response capabilities during extraordinary situations. This includes activities such as pre-positioning resources in areas of anticipated fire activity, providing aerial reconnaissance and standby aircraft availability. These funds are a subactivity of suppression operations, and they help to ensure that Interior can effectively prepare for and manage wildfire response even in periods of prolonged high wildfire activity and danger.

In addition to this funding for Suppression Operations in the Wildland Fire Service Operations account, the 2027 budget request makes available another \$2,950,000,000 through the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund account. Interior may access this reserve funding if the costs of wildfire suppression operations exceed the resources available for Suppression Operations in the Wildland Fire Service Operations account. In combination, Suppression Operations funding in the operations account and Reserve Fund resources help to ensure that sufficient funds are available for suppression needs at all times. For more information, see the “Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund” section of this justification.

Program Activities

The 2027 budget request for Suppression Operations supports wildfire suppression and response throughout the United States. It provides funding for Federal and Tribal personnel, including seasonal and temporary workers who provide increased response capacity. It also funds a significant portion of the USWFS’s aviation resources, including contracted aircraft. For more information on Preparedness and Suppression Operations resources, see Tables 3 and 4 in the “Preparedness” section of this justification.

The request for Suppression Operations also fully supports the costs of permanent pay reforms enacted in 2025 through Public Law 119-4. In particular, most of the costs of the new incident response premium pay for all personnel mobilized on an incident will be paid with Suppression funding.⁵ The 2027 budget fully funds these costs. The 2027 budget also requests permanent extension of the premium pay cap waiver for wildland fire personnel. For more information on this proposal, see the “Other Exhibits & Appendices” section of this document.

⁵ The USWFS pays the costs of incident response premium pay for prescribed fires with Fuels Management, not Suppression Operations, funding.



Wildland firefighters work the fireline in Washington.

Photo by DOI.

Fuels Management

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Activity: Fuels Management

Activity: Fuels Management

	2025 Actual ¹	2026 Enacted ²	2027 Request ³
Dollars (in Thousands)	228,150	214,450	834,463
Federal FTE ⁴	4	609	2,476
Tribal FTE	280	280	280

¹ The 2025 Actual and 2026 Enacted amounts show funding for Interior’s current Wildland Fire Management (WFM) account. On January 12, 2026, Interior established the USWFS as a new OS office and began unifying its wildland fire resources and operations.

² The 2026 Enacted level is from unobligated balances of funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58) that Congress repurposed for use by Interior for WFM in Section 444 of Division C in P.L.119-74.

³ The 2027 Request column shows amounts for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS’s wildland fire program into Interior’s USWFS. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting wildland fire management from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

⁴ Direct, allocated Federal FTE funded by regular appropriations, consistent with the display in Table 2. Including all program FTE, the totals would be 1,040 for both 2025 and 2026.

Program Changes

The 2027 budget request provides \$834,463,000 for Fuels Management in the Wildland Fire Service Operations account, a total program change of +\$620,013,000 above the 2026 Enacted level. The request provides funding for 2,476 Federal FTE (+1,867 above the 2026 Enacted level) and 280 Tribal FTE (the same as the 2026 Enacted level).

Summary of 2027 Program Changes for Fuels Management

Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

Program Changes	2027 Request Change	FTE ¹ Change
<i>Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs</i>	+620,013	+1,867
TOTAL Program Changes	+620,013	+1,867

¹ Direct, allocated Federal FTE

The 2027 budget supports Fuels Management to mitigate the risks of catastrophic wildfires and create fire-resilient landscapes through fuels management projects on lands administered by Interior and USDA FS and on some non-Federal lands. Interior and its partners manage vegetation to reduce the intensity, severity, and negative effects of wildfire.

Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire programs (+\$620,013,000/+1,867 Federal FTE/+0 Tribal FTE) – The request reflects the unification of USDA FS’s fuels management resources into the USWFS in Interior. The consolidated USWFS will oversee wildland fire management, risk reduction, and burned area recovery on nearly 700 million acres of public lands, including the more than 500 million acres managed by Interior and 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands managed by USDA FS. Under the expanded USWFS, command and appropriations of all existing fuels management resources of Interior and USDA FS will be consolidated to streamline wildfire risk mitigation. This unification of Federal wildland fire resources and operations also will improve coordination with non-Federal partners to mitigate the risk and impacts of wildfire. The requested amount includes resources previously included USDA FS’s Wildland Fire Management, Natural Forest System, and Forest Service Operations accounts.

Program Overview

The strategic management of burnable vegetation—known in the wildland fire management community as “fuels”—is an effective approach to reduce the likelihood of negative impacts from wildfires to highly valued resources and assets. Interior’s USWFS carries out fuels management in collaboration with multiple partners, including other Federal agencies, Tribal Nations, States, counties, local organizations, and private landowners. Fuels specialists plan, implement, and monitor fuels management projects to mitigate the likelihood and impacts of wildfires and achieve priority land management objectives. This work occurs year-round, encompassing a diversity of geographic locations, vegetation types, and treatment methods.

Specialists use a variety of active management practices, including prescribed fire (e.g., broadcast burning and pile burning), mechanical methods (e.g., thinning excess trees, mowing brush and grass, and non-commercial mastication), and other methods (e.g., chemical, biological, and grazing). Fuels management is coordinated with resource managers and among stakeholders to mitigate wildfire risks and ensure projects comply with regulations. Local partnerships support community-led actions to understand, plan, and implement effective wildfire mitigation efforts in communities across the country.

Program Activities

Through funding for the Fuels Management and Preparedness activities, the 2027 budget fully supports the costs of permanent pay increases for Federal and Tribal wildland firefighters across the United States. These pay increases, including incident response premium pay for all personnel mobilized to respond to a wildfire incident, were enacted in FY 2025 under the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (Public Law 119–4). In addition to the permanent pay increases, the USWFS pays the costs of the new incident response premium pay for all personnel mobilized on prescribed fires with Fuels Management funding. The 2027 budget also requests

permanent extension of the premium pay cap waiver for wildland fire personnel. For more information on this proposal, see the “Other Exhibits & Appendices” section of this document.

The 2027 budget will support conducting fuels management activities on an estimated 4.7 million acres. It also will fund risk assessments, monitoring, contract preparation, and administrative actions necessary to mitigate the risks and impacts of wildfires. This work will improve the resiliency of communities, infrastructure, and ecosystems to wildfires by increasing their abilities to withstand a wildfire and recover quickly.

The 2027 budget request also proposes appropriations language that will increase USWFS’s flexibility to engage in cross-boundary fuels management and burned area rehabilitation, including with non-Federal partners. In addition, the 2027 budget proposes a new general provision to expand hazardous fuels mitigation authorities, including the use of targeted grazing, to address significant imminent wildland fire threats. For more information on these proposals, see the Appropriations Language subsection in the “Other Exhibits & Appendices” section of this justification.



A firefighter uses a driptorch to burn off reeds and grass to improve habitat for fish and wildlife during a prescribed fire in Nevada. Photo by DOI.

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Other Operations

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Activity: Other Operations

Activity: Other Operations

Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

Subactivities	2025 Actual¹	2026 Enacted²	2027 Request³
Burned Area Rehabilitation	10,000	10,000	10,000
Facilities Construction and Maintenance	10,000	10,000	27,000
Joint Fire Science Program ⁴	3,000	3,000	-
Intelligence and Technology ⁴	-	-	123,500
Grants and Partnerships ⁵	-	-	2,800
Total, Other Operations	23,000	23,000	163,300

¹ The 2025 Actual and 2026 Enacted amounts show funding for Interior’s current Wildland Fire Management (WFM) account. On January 12, 2026, Interior established the USWFS as a new OS office and began unifying its wildland fire resources and operations.

² The 2026 Enacted level is from unobligated balances of funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58) that Congress repurposed for use by Interior for WFM in Section 444 of Division C in P.L.119-74.

³ The 2027 Request column shows amounts for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS’s wildland fire program into Interior’s USWFS. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting wildland fire from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

⁴ The 2027 budget proposes to roll funding for the Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) into the proposed new Intelligence and Technology subactivity. The new subactivity includes funding for wildland fire research, intelligence, and technology.

⁵ The 2027 budget proposes to establish a new Grants and Partnerships subactivity. The new subactivity includes funding for rural fire assistance.

Activity: Other Operations

Federal FTE¹

Subactivities	2025 Actual²	2026 Enacted²	2027 Request³
Burned Area Rehabilitation	-	58	87
Facilities Construction and Maintenance	-	2	3
Joint Fire Science Program ⁴	-	3	-
Intelligence and Technology ⁴	-	-	37
Grants and Partnerships	-	-	-
Total, Other Operations	-	63	127

¹ Direct, allocated Federal FTE

² Direct, allocated Federal FTE funded by regular appropriations, consistent with the display in Table 2. Including all program FTE, the total for Other Operations would be 37 for 2025 and 95 for 2026.

³ The 2027 Request column shows estimated FTE for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS’s wildland fire program into Interior’s USWFS. The Administration may transfer additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting wildland fire from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

⁴ The 2027 budget proposes to roll funding for JFSP into the proposed new Intelligence and Technology subactivity. The new subactivity includes funding for wildland fire research, intelligence, and technology.

Program Changes

The 2027 budget request provides \$163,300,000 for Other Operations in the Wildland Fire Service Operations account, a total program change of +\$140,300,000 above the 2026 Enacted level. The request provides funding for 127 Federal FTE (+64 above the 2026 Enacted level).

Summary of 2027 Program Changes for Other Operations

Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

Program Changes	2027 Request Change	FTE¹ Change
<i>BAR: Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs</i>	+0,000	+29
<i>Facilities: Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs</i>	+17,000	+1
<i>JFSP: Realign under the new Intelligence and Technology Subactivity</i>	-3,000	-3
<i>Intelligence and Technology: Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs</i>	+103,500	+17
<i>Intelligence and Technology: Establish a Wildland Fire Intelligence Center</i>	+20,000	+20
<i>Grants and Partnerships: Establish a new Subactivity for the USWFS</i>	+2,800	+0
TOTAL Program Changes	+140,300	+64

¹ Direct, allocated Federal FTE funded by regular appropriations

The budget request for Other Operations comprises four subactivities:

1. **Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR)** – This subactivity is part of the Wildland Fire Management account for 2025 and 2026, and the 2027 budget request proposes to retain it in the new Wildland Fire Service Operations account.
2. **Facilities Construction and Maintenance** – This subactivity is part of the Wildland Fire Management account for 2025 and 2026, and the 2027 budget request proposes to retain it in the new Wildland Fire Service Operations account.
3. **Intelligence and Technology** – This subactivity is new in the 2027 budget request for the new Wildland Fire Service Operations account. It includes funding for the Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP), in addition to other research and science activities, and information technology (IT). (The existing subactivity for JFSP for 2025 and 2026 will be realigned for 2027.)
4. **Grants and Partnerships** – This subactivity is new in the 2027 budget for the new Wildland Fire Service Operations account. It includes funding for the Rural Fire Assistance program.

The request reflects the unification of USDA FS’s JFSP and wildfire-related IT resources into Interior’s USWFS. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting other wildland fire management operations from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

BAR: Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs (+\$0,000,000/+29 Federal FTE)

– The request reflects the unification of burned area rehabilitation resources of USDA FS and Interior’s USWFS. The expanded USWFS will oversee all Federal wildland fire management post-fire rehabilitation.

Facilities: Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs (+\$17,000,000/+0 Federal FTE) –

The request reflects the initial unification of some of USDA FS’s facilities resources into the USWFS in Interior. The expanded USWFS will oversee all Federal wildland fire management facilities currently managed separately by USDA FS and Interior. The facilities portfolio will be determined following a strategic review of the two departments’ facilities to determine the approach to asset management based on programmatic needs. The Administration may transfer additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting the wildland fire facilities portfolio from USDA FS to Interior in the future. The requested amount includes resources previously included in USDA FS’s Forest Service Operations and Capital Improvement and Maintenance accounts.

JFSP: Realign under the new Intelligence and Technology Subactivity (-\$3,000,000/-5

Federal FTE) – The request reflects the realignment of JFSP under the new Intelligence and Technology Subactivity (see below). The requested amount includes resources previously included in USDA FS’s Forest and Rangeland Research account.

Intelligence and Technology: Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs

(+\$103,500,000/+17 Federal FTE) – The request proposes a new subactivity to better align and strategically harness the benefits of wildland fire intelligence and technology. The new subactivity includes funding for JFSP (previously its own subactivity), in addition to other

research and science activities, and IT. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting wildland fire from USDA FS to Interior in the future. The requested amount includes resources previously included in USDA FS's Forest Service Operations and Wildland Fire Management accounts.

Intelligence and Technology: Establish a Wildland Fire Intelligence Center

(+\$20,000,000/+20 Federal FTE) – The request provides an increase of \$20.0 million in the new Intelligence and Technology subactivity to establish a Wildland Fire Intelligence Center (Center). The Center will strengthen interagency and interdisciplinary coordination across the country's wildland fire system, support implementation of EO 14308, and serve as a central hub for delivering integrated fire intelligence services, building upon and integrating with Interior's existing wildland fire intelligence function. Within the \$20 million, the request includes \$5.0 million for 20 new Federal FTE to form a multidisciplinary design team with expertise in technological organization design, big data systems, data management and analytics, systems engineering expertise including technology transfer processes, and all aspects of the fire environment including fire weather, fire danger, fire behavior, and predictive services.

Within the \$20 million, the request includes \$15.0 million for critical investments for high performance computing (HPC) capacity and initial operating infrastructure. The request will provide the computational backbone needed to build a scalable and integrated architecture for wildland fire intelligence, moving beyond the current model of fragmented technology investments that limit performance and interoperability.

The initial phase of investment will allow Interior to advance beyond the conceptual stage and begin formal development of the Center's design and core infrastructure. It will support configuration of the underlying IT systems, establishment of data architecture, and integration of both existing platforms and new tools, including Artificial Intelligence applications, necessary to deliver real-time, mission-critical capabilities and guided by the EO 14308 Wildfire Technology Roadmap. Once the Center is operational, it will serve as the primary Federal location for assessing and predicting the wildland fire environment, integrating historical and real-time data, detection and tracking technologies, predictive services, fire modeling, and interagency operational information. It will unify wildland fire IT efforts under a cohesive framework that reduces duplication, enhances interoperability, and ensures long-term support for essential systems.

In addition, the Center will ultimately incorporate the full scope of wildland fire research, acting as the central node to test, validate, and transition both new and existing science and technologies into operational use. It also will connect disparate research programs, operational systems, and technology development efforts, creating a single structure to evaluate and scale innovations, whether agency-developed or sourced from industry or academia. This investment will significantly strengthen interagency coordination and provide Tribal, State, and local partners with access to timely, actionable intelligence to improve preparedness, response, and risk-informed decision-making.

The Center will advance key priorities such as technology modernization, interagency coordination, and integration of science into fire management. The Center will deliver on the

vision through a centralized, scalable capability for real-time fire intelligence and the effective operational use of both existing and emerging research and tools.

Grants and Partnerships: Establish a new Subactivity for the USWFS (+\$2,800,000/+0 Federal FTE) – The request establishes a new subactivity for the USWFS for grants and partnerships and provides an increase of \$2.8 million for targeted rural fire assistance. The Rural Fire Assistance program supports enhanced fire protection capabilities of key rural and volunteer fire departments through training, equipment purchases, and fire prevention work on a cost-shared basis. Prior to FY 2027, this program received funding through the Preparedness activity.

Program Overview

Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR): The BAR subactivity supports longer-term efforts to repair or improve burned landscapes that are unlikely to recover without human assistance. Immediate threats after a wildfire—such as floods, debris flows, and landslides—are treated using emergency stabilization funds from the Suppression Operations activity. BAR picks up where emergency stabilization projects leave off. Under the fully unified USWFS, Interior will conduct burned area rehabilitation on nearly 700 million acres of public lands, including the more than 500 million acres managed by Interior and 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands managed by USDA FS. Working with partners from Tribal Nations, States, counties, and local governments, Interior’s USWFS carries out non-emergency rehabilitation actions that may take up to five years to complete.

BAR treatments help prevent further degradation of watersheds and landscapes affected by wildfire. Through these projects, USWFS or partners may re-seed or plant trees and other desired vegetation to mitigate the risk of catastrophic landslides, prevent the establishment of invasive species, maintain soil productivity, and initiate the recovery of critical wildlife habitat. Other activities may also include the repair of minor assets such as signs damaged by wildfire, rehabilitation of Tribal Nation trust resources, and monitoring treatment effectiveness and success.

Program managers evaluate and prioritize rehabilitation projects at the local and national levels. Restoration necessary more than five years after a wildfire falls under the land management agency’s program goals for long-term management.

Facilities Construction and Maintenance (Facilities): The Facilities subactivity provides funding for safe and modern facilities that are essential to achieving the wildland fire management mission to protect lives, property, and resources from wildfire. Key areas of emphasis include the following:

- Providing housing for firefighters and other wildland fire personnel;
- Replacing building systems and components that have exceeded their useful lives;
- Installing facilities that improve the wildfire response capability required to keep wildfires small and reduce threats to communities, structures, municipal watersheds, other infrastructure, and wildlife habitat; and

- Providing facilities that are sufficient to maintain readiness and provide full support for wildland fire management activities.

Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP): JFSP, which Interior and the USDA FS currently fund and administer together, provides funding for wildland fire research to inform policies and decisions at local, regional, and national levels. JFSP competitively funds wildland fire research projects and delivery to answer emerging questions and fill knowledge gaps about managing wildland fire, fuels, and ecosystems impacted by wildfire. The 2027 budget request realigns JFSP under the new Intelligence and Technology subactivity. For more information on that subactivity, see below.

Intelligence and Technology: The new Intelligence and Technology subactivity supports wildland fire IT, research, and science, including JFSP. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting Intelligence and Technology from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

Grants and Partnerships: The Grants and Partnerships subactivity supports targeted rural fire assistance through the Rural Fire Assistance program, which supports enhanced fire protection capabilities of key rural and volunteer fire departments through training, equipment purchases, and fire prevention work on a cost-shared basis. The 2027 budget funding level reflects the fact that States and localities have a central role in funding wildfire preparedness and are best positioned to execute this core function without unnecessary Federal constraints. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting Grants and Partnerships from USDA to Interior in the future.

Program Activities

BAR: The 2027 budget request provides \$10.0 million for BAR projects, which are undertaken to restore and enhance ecosystem health and enable landscapes to be more resilient to wildfires. Without timely rehabilitation actions to restore burned acres to their desired condition, post-wildfire damages become more complex and costly to treat. The request will fund BAR on an estimated 100,000 burned acres.

The 2027 budget request also proposes appropriations language that will increase USWFS's flexibility to engage in cross-boundary burned area rehabilitation and fuels management, including with non-Federal partners. For more information on this proposal, see the Appropriations Language subsection in the "Other Exhibits & Appendices" section of this justification.

Facilities: The request provides \$27.0 million for constructing and maintaining facilities that support the wildland fire management mission. In addition to this new funding, USWFS will use unobligated balances of prior-year appropriations for this purpose. Further, USWFS may use other funding appropriated to the Department for construction and maintenance to support wildland fire management.

JFSP: The 2027 budget request realigns JFSP under the new Intelligence and Technology subactivity. Therefore, the budget requests no funding for the JFSP subactivity. For more information, see the section on the Intelligence and Technology subactivity.

Intelligence and Technology: The request provides \$123.5 million for this new subactivity. This funding will support wildland fire IT, research, and science, including establishing a Wildland Fire Intelligence

Center and funding to continue JFSP. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting Intelligence and Technology from USDA FS to Interior in the future. For more information on the new Intelligence Center, see the “Program Changes” section above.

Grants and Partnerships: The 2027 budget request provides \$2.8 million for this new subactivity. This funding will support targeted rural fire assistance. The Administration may consider transferring additional operational capacity and budgetary resources supporting Grants and Partnerships from USDA FS to Interior in the future.

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Suppression Reserve Fund

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Activity: Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund

Activity: Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund

	2025 Actual	2026 Enacted	2027 Request¹
Dollars (in Thousands)	360,000	370,000	2,950,000
<i>Federal FTE²</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

¹ The 2027 Request column shows amounts for the proposed interagency consolidation of USDA FS's wildland fire program into Interior's USWFS.

² Direct, allocated Federal FTE

Program Changes

The 2027 budget request provides \$2,950,000,000 for the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund (Reserve Fund) account, a total program change of +\$2,580,000,000 above the 2026 Enacted level.

Summary of 2027 Program Changes for Suppression Operations Reserve Fund

Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

	2027 Request Change	FTE¹ Change
Program Changes		
<i>Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire Programs</i>	+2,580,000	+0
TOTAL Program Changes	+2,580,000	+0

¹ Direct, allocated Federal FTE

Unify Interior and USDA FS Wildland Fire programs (+\$2,580,000,000/+0 Federal FTE) –
The request reflects the unification of USDA FS’s suppression resources into the USWFS in Interior, including the additional new budget authority made available through the Reserve Fund.

Program Overview

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141) amended the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act and established the Reserve Fund through a discretionary spending cap adjustment. This change was in recognition of the fact that funding in the wildland fire operating accounts of Interior and USDA FS for Suppression Operations consistently falls short of what is needed to fully fund operational needs (see also the “Suppression Operations” section of this justification). Under this law, Interior and USDA may access a total of \$2.95 billion in additional funding for wildfire suppression for FY 2027.

The 2027 budget request proposes to unify the two departments’ Reserve Funds in Interior’s USWFS. It also proposes new appropriations language to allow the transfer of funds for activities related to Federal wildland fire missions, within and between Interior and USDA FS, to implement an orderly unification within USWFS.

Before Interior’s USWFS may access this reserve funding in a given fiscal year, the Secretary must notify the House and Senate Appropriations Committees that, within 30 days of the notification, Interior will have obligated all resources available for Suppression Operations in the wildland fire operating account. Unobligated balances in the Reserve Fund carry forward from one year to the next.

The Section 104 reporting requirement in Division O, Title I of Public Law 115-141, as amended, requires Interior to prepare an annual report to Congress on wildfire suppression spending in fiscal years when it obligates Reserve Fund resources that have been transferred to the operating account. The report is due no later than 180 days after the end of such fiscal year. As amended by Public Law 119-74, the report now is to include an accounting of spending in the first two quarters of the succeeding fiscal year that is attributable to suppression operations in the report year.

The Reserve Fund is authorized through FY 2027.

Other Exhibits & Appendices

Appropriations Language

Wildland Fire Service Operations Account

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR U.S. WILDLAND FIRE SERVICE

Wildland Fire Service Operations

(Legislative proposal, not subject to PAYGO)
(Including Transfers of Funds)

Contingent upon the enactment of legislation unifying the wildland fire programs of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, for necessary expenses of the existing United States Wildland Fire Service within the Department of the Interior; \$3,961,953,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$1,394,657,000 shall be available for wildfire suppression operations, and is provided to meet the terms of section 4004(b)(5)(B) of S. Con. Res. 14 (117th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2022: Provided, That persons hired pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1469 may be furnished subsistence and lodging without cost from funds available from this appropriation: Provided further, That notwithstanding 42 U.S.C. 1856d, sums received by a bureau or office of the Department of the Interior for fire protection rendered pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1856 et seq., for protection of United States property, may be credited to the appropriation from which funds were expended to provide that protection, and are available without fiscal year limitation: Provided further, That the Secretary may enter into procurement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, for fuels management and burned area rehabilitation activities, and for training and monitoring associated with such activities on Federal land, or on non-Federal land when such activities benefit resources on Federal land or Federally-recognized Tribal land: Provided further, That the costs of implementing any cooperative agreement between the Federal Government and any non-Federal entity may be shared, as mutually agreed on by the affected parties: Provided further, That notwithstanding requirements of the Competition in Contracting Act (41 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.), the Secretary, for purposes of fuels management activities, may obtain maximum practicable competition among: (1) local private, nonprofit, or cooperative entities; (2) Youth Conservation Corps crews, Public Lands Corps, or related partnerships with State, local, or nonprofit youth groups; (3) small or micro-businesses; or (4) other entities that will hire or train locally a significant percentage, defined as 50 percent or more, of the project workforce to complete such contracts: Provided further, That in implementing this section, the Secretary shall develop written guidance to field units to ensure accountability and consistent application of the authorities provided herein: Provided further, That funds appropriated under this heading may be used to reimburse the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service for the costs of carrying out their responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) to consult and conference, as required by section 7 of such Act, in connection with wildland fire management activities: Provided further, That the Secretary may use the funds appropriated in this Act to enter into leases of real property with local governments, at or below fair market value, to construct

capitalized improvements for fire facilities on such leased properties, including but not limited to fire guard stations, retardant stations, and other initial attack and fire support facilities, and to make advance payments for any such lease or for construction activity associated with the lease: Provided further, That the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture may authorize the transfer of funds appropriated for any wildland fire purpose between the Departments and may transfer funds available to their respective Departments and agencies for activities related to Federal wildland fire missions among and between the Departments and agencies affected by the establishment and implementation of the United States Wildland Fire Service: Provided further, That funds provided for wildfire suppression shall be available for support of Federal emergency response actions: Provided further, That funds appropriated under this heading shall be available for assistance to or through the Departments of State or Defense in connection with forest and rangeland research, technical information, and assistance in foreign countries, and, with the concurrence of the appropriate Secretary, shall be available to support forestry, wildland fire management, and related natural resource activities outside the United States and its territories and possessions, including technical assistance, education and training, and cooperation with United States and international organizations: Provided further, That any moneys received by the United States as a result of the compromise or settlement of any claim whether sounding in tort, contract, or any other cause of action involving present or potential damage to lands managed by the Departments of the Interior or Agriculture resulting from wildland fires shall be credited to this account and shall be available until expended.

Appropriations Language Citations

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. WILDLAND FIRE SERVICE**

Appropriation: Wildland Fire Service Operations (Including Transfers of Funds)

- 1. Contingent upon the enactment of legislation unifying the wildland fire programs of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, for necessary expenses of the existing United States Wildland Fire Service within the Department of the Interior, \$3,961,953,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$1,394,657,000 shall be available for wildfire suppression operations, and is provided to meet the terms of section 4004(b)(5)(B) of S. Con. Res. 14 (117th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2022:***

This language provides funding for the U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS) contingent upon the enactment of legislation unifying the wildland fire programs of Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The total appropriation is \$3,961,953,000, of which \$1,394,657,000 is for wildfire suppression operations. The language further provides that this funding is available until it is expended.

- 2. Provided further, That persons hired pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1469 may be furnished subsistence and lodging without cost from funds available from this appropriation:***

This language allows USWFS to feed and house firefighters hired pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1469 with this appropriation.

- 3. Provided further, That notwithstanding 42 U.S.C. 1856d, sums received by a bureau or office of the Department of the Interior for fire protection rendered pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1856 et seq., for protection of United States property, may be credited to the appropriation from which funds were expended to provide that protection, and are available without fiscal year limitation:***

This language allows Interior to retain funds it receives as reimbursement for wildfire protection services provided to other entities, rather than having to submit them to the U.S. Treasury, and makes these collected amounts available for Interior's use until expended.

- 4. Provided further, That the Secretary may enter into procurement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, for fuels management and burned area rehabilitation activities, and for training and monitoring associated with such activities on Federal land, or on non-Federal land when such activities benefit resources on Federal land or Federally-recognized Tribal land:***

This proviso authorizes Interior to enter into procurement mechanisms (i.e., contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements) for fuels management and burned area rehabilitation activities, and training and monitoring for such activities, to be conducted on Federal land or on non-Federal land when such activities benefit resources on Federal or Federally-recognized Tribal land. The Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriation Act, 2026 (Public Law 119-74), continues the proviso that is limited to fuels management on non-Federal land that is adjacent to Federal land. The 2027 budget proposes to modify the current authority to include

not only fuels management but also burned area rehabilitation. Further, the budget proposes to expand the language so that benefits of the activities may accrue to federally-recognized Tribal land, not just Federal land. Finally, the budget proposes to remove the requirement that eligible non-Federal activities must be on land that is adjacent to Federal land. These proposed changes are intended to increase Interior's flexibility to engage in cross-boundary fuels management and rehabilitation with non-Federal partners for work that benefits multiple jurisdictions.

- 5. Provided further, That the costs of implementing any cooperative agreement between the Federal Government and any non-Federal entity may be shared, as mutually agreed on by the affected parties:***

The language allows USWFS to enter into cost-shared cooperative agreements.

- 6. Provided further, That notwithstanding requirements of the Competition in Contracting Act (41 U.S.C. 3301 et seq., the Secretary, for purposes of fuels management activities, may obtain maximum practicable competition among: (1) local private, nonprofit, or cooperative entities; (2) Youth Conservation Corps crews, Public Lands Corps, or related partnerships with State, local, or nonprofit youth groups; (3) small or micro-businesses; or (4) other entities that will hire or train locally a significant percentage, defined as 50 percent or more, of the project workforce to complete such contracts:***

This language authorizes the Secretary to use contracting arrangements with local private, nonprofit, or cooperative entities, Youth Conservation Corps crews, small or micro-business, or other entities that will hire or train a significant percentage of the workforce locally. The proviso defines "significant" as 50 percent or more.

- 7. Provided further, That in implementing this section, the Secretary shall develop written guidance to field units to ensure accountability and consistent application of the authorities provided herein:***

This language directs the Secretary to formulate and distribute guidance for field staff to use these contracts.

- 8. Provided further, That funds appropriated under this heading may be used to reimburse the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service for the costs of carrying out their responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) to consult and conference, as required by section 7 of such Act, in connection with wildland fire management activities:***

This language allows USWFS to use these appropriated funds to reimburse the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service for consultation services necessary for compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

- 9. Provided further, That the Secretary may use the funds appropriated in this Act to enter into leases of real property with local governments, at or below fair market value, to construct capitalized improvements for fire facilities on such leased properties, including but not limited to fire guard stations, retardant stations, and other initial attack and fire support facilities, and to make advance payments for any such lease or for construction activity associated with the lease:***

This language authorizes USWFS to enter into leases with local governments for properties necessary to provide wildland firefighting facilities and to provide payment in advance for any construction activities, if necessary.

- 10. Provided further, That the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture may authorize the transfer of funds appropriated for any wildland fire purpose between the Departments and may transfer funds available to their respective Departments and agencies for activities related to Federal wildland fire missions among and between the Departments and agencies affected by the establishment and implementation of the United States Wildland Fire Service:***

This language provides that the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture may authorize the transfer of funds for any wildland fire purpose between the departments and, further, may transfer funds made available to each respective department for wildland fire within and between the departments and agencies affected by the establishment and implementation of the USWFS.

- 11. Provided further, That funds provided for wildfire suppression shall be available for support of Federal emergency response actions:***

This language allows Interior wildland fire personnel and services to be used in support of Federal emergency responses.

- 12. Provided further, That funds appropriated under this heading shall be available for assistance to or through the Departments of State or Defense in connection with forest and rangeland research, technical information, and assistance in foreign countries, and, with the concurrence of the appropriate Secretary, shall be available to support forestry, wildland fire management, and related natural resource activities outside the United States and its territories and possessions, including technical assistance, education and training, and cooperation with United States and international organizations:***

This proviso allows Interior's USWFS personnel and services to be used to assist foreign countries with the concurrence of the Secretaries of State or War, in support of forestry, wildland fire management, and related natural resource activities, including technical assistance, education, training and cooperation outside the United States. The Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriation Act, 2026 (Public Law 119-74), continues this proviso for the Department of State. The 2027 budget request proposes to add the Department of War to this proviso because of its increasing engagement in wildland fire management and operations internationally.

- 13. Provided further, That any moneys received by the United States as a result of the compromise or settlement of any claim whether sounding in tort, contract, or any other cause of action involving present or potential damage to lands managed by the Departments of the Interior or Agriculture resulting from wildland fires shall be credited to this account and shall be available until expended.***

This language provides that any funding the United States receives resulting from the compromise or settlement of a claim involving present or potential damage to Interior-administered or USDA-

administered land resulting from wildland fires may be credited to the Wildland Fire Service Operations account and remain available until it is expended.

Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund Account

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. WILDLAND FIRE SERVICE**

Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund
(Legislative proposal, not subject to PAYGO)
(Including Transfers of Funds)

Contingent upon the enactment of legislation unifying the wildland fire programs of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, in addition to the amounts provided under the heading “Wildland Fire Service Operations”, \$2,950,000,000, to remain available until transferred, and is provided to meet the terms of section 4004(b)(5)(B) of S. Con. Res. 14 (117th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2022: Provided, That such amounts may be transferred to and merged with amounts made available under the heading “Wildland Fire Service Operations” for wildfire suppression operations in the fiscal year in which such amounts are transferred: Provided further, That the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture may transfer funds made available to their respective Departments and agencies for activities related to Federal wildland fire missions among and between the Departments and agencies affected by the establishment and implementation of the United States Wildland Fire Service.

Appropriations Language Citations

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. WILDLAND FIRE SERVICE**

Appropriation: Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund (Including Transfers of Funds)

- 1. Contingent upon the enactment of legislation unifying the wildland fire programs of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, in addition to the amounts provided under the heading “Wildland Fire Service Operations”, \$2,950,000,000, to remain available until transferred, and is provided to meet the terms of section 4004(b)(5)(B) of S. Con. Res. 14 (117th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2022:*

Contingent on enactment of legislation unifying the wildland fire programs of Interior and USDA, this proviso makes available funding for wildfire suppression operations costs in addition to funding provided under the new Wildland Fire Service Operations appropriation. The language further provides that such funding is available until transferred and that \$2,950,000,000 is the amount of this additional new budget authority for FY 2027.

- 2. Provided, That such amounts may be transferred to and merged with amounts made available under the heading “Wildland Fire Service Operations” for wildfire suppression operations in the fiscal year in which such amounts are transferred:*

This language provides that the amount of additional new budget authority for wildfire suppression operations may be transferred to and merged with suppression operations funding provided in the same fiscal year through the Wildland Fire Service Operations account.

- 3. Provided further, That the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture may transfer funds made available to their respective Departments and agencies for activities related to Federal wildland fire missions among and between the Departments and agencies affected by the establishment and implementation of the United States Wildland Fire Service.:*

This language provides that the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture may transfer funds made available to each respective department for activities related to Federal wildland fire missions among and between the departments and agencies affected by the establishment and implementation of the USWFS.

General Provisions

TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Firefighter Pay Cap

SEC. 425. Section 1701 of division B of the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act (5 U.S.C. 5547 note), as amended, is further amended in subsections (a), (b), and (c) by striking “2021 or 2022 or 2023 or 2024” each place it appears and inserting “calendar years 2021 through 2026 and each calendar year thereafter”.

Expansion of Hazardous Fuels Mitigation Authorities

SEC. 434. (a) During the period covered by this Act, the Secretary of the Interior may utilize applicable emergency procedures under section 46.150 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, section 402.05 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, and section 800.12 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, or superseding regulations for such sections, for actions involving hazardous fuels mitigation, including the use of targeted grazing, to address significant imminent wildland fire threats posed by high fuel loads, as well as wildland fire threats to highly-valued ecosystems and critical oil and gas infrastructure. The use of such procedures is hereby ratified and deemed consistent with the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108) and section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536), as applicable.

(b) The Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.), as amended, shall be applied—

(1) in section 603(c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by substituting “10,000” for “3,000”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by substituting the following: “in the wildland urban interface;”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)

(I) by substituting the following: “(B) outside the wildland-urban interface that are of high hazard;”; and

(II) by inserting after subparagraph (B), as substituted, the following:

“(C) within existing fuels reduction areas;

“(D) within Sage Grouse habitat;

“(E) within USFWS designated critical habitat;

“(F) within Giant Sequoia and Redwood ecosystems or areas adjacent to these ecosystems;

“(G) within surface drinking water watersheds, including Tribal water supplies and systems;

“(H) adjacent to or within 1 mile of energy infrastructure; or

“(I) impacted by insect and disease outbreaks.”;

(2) in section 605(c)(1), by substituting “10,000” for “3,000”; and

(3) in section 606(g)(1), by substituting “10,000” for “4,500”.

(c) Section 40806(d)(1) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b(d)(1)) shall be applied by substituting “10,000” for “3,000”.

Transfer of Funds, Wildland Fire

(Legislative proposal, not subject to PAYGO)

SEC. 436. Contingent upon the enactment of legislation consolidating the wildland fire programs of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, in order to implement an orderly transition to the U.S. Wildland Fire Service, may transfer funds among and between appropriations of the Departments and agencies affected by the reorganization.

General Provision Citations

TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS
General Provision: Firefighter Pay Cap

SEC. 425. Section 1701 of division B of the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act (5 U.S.C. 5547 note), as amended, is further amended in subsections (a), (b), and (c) by striking “2021 or 2022 or 2023 or 2024” each place it appears and inserting “calendar years 2021 through 2026 and each calendar year thereafter.”

This general provision amends the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act to extend the waiver of the premium pay cap limitation for wildland fire personnel permanently. The waiver authority has helped to ensure that Interior and USDA FS can mobilize all needed personnel to support wildfire suppression by removing the potential disincentive effect of the premium pay limitation.

General Provision: Expansion of Hazardous Fuels Mitigation Authorities

SEC. 434. (a) During the period covered by this Act, the Secretary of the Interior may utilize applicable emergency procedures under section 46.150 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, section 402.05 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, and section 800.12 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, or superseding regulations for such sections, for actions involving hazardous fuels mitigation, including the use of targeted grazing, to address significant imminent wildland fire threats posed by high fuel loads, as well as wildland fire threats to highly-valued ecosystems and critical oil and gas infrastructure. The use of such procedures is hereby ratified and deemed consistent with the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108) and section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536), as applicable.

This general provision subsection allows Interior to use emergency authorities to further increase hazardous fuels mitigation (including grazing) on high-hazard lands, certain highly-valued ecosystems (e.g., critical habitat), and areas around critical oil and gas infrastructure—consistent with recent actions by USDA FS. This would decrease administrative work required to implement projects in these areas, leading to an increase in fuels management work in these targeted areas commensurate with the higher values at risk in these areas. It also would increase the speed of implementation.

(b) The Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.), as amended, shall be applied—

(1) in section 603(c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by substituting “10,000” for “3,000”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by substituting the following: “in the wildland urban interface;”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)

(I) by substituting the following: “(B) outside the wildland-urban interface that are of high hazard;”; and

(II) by inserting after subparagraph (B), as substituted, the following:

“(C) within existing fuels reduction areas;

“(D) within Sage Grouse habitat;

“(E) within USFWS designated critical habitat;

“(F) within Giant Sequoia and Redwood ecosystems or areas adjacent to these ecosystems;”

“(G) within surface drinking water watersheds, including Tribal water supplies and systems;

“(H) adjacent to or within 1 mile of energy infrastructure; or

“(I) impacted by insect and disease outbreaks.”;

(2) in section 605(c)(1), by substituting “10,000” for “3,000”; and

(3) in section 606(g)(1), by substituting “10,000” for “4,500”.

(c) Section 40806(d)(1) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b(d)(1)) shall be applied by substituting “10,000” for “3,000”.

This general provision subsection increases the number of acres of Interior-administered and USDA-administered lands that are categorically excluded from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

**General Provision: Transfer of Funds, Wildland Fire
(Legislative proposal, not subject to PAYGO)**

SEC. 436. Contingent upon the enactment of legislation consolidating the wildland fire programs of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, in order to implement an orderly transition to the U.S. Wildland Fire Service, may transfer funds among and between the Departments and agencies affected by the reorganization.

This general provision authorizes the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer funds among and between the two departments and agencies—contingent upon the enactment of legislation consolidating the wildland fire programs of Interior and USDA—to implement an orderly transition to the USWFS.

Table 6: Employee Count by Grade

U.S. Wildland Fire Service Employee Count by Grade <i>(Total Employment, not FTE)</i>			
Employee Count by Grade	2025 Actual Estimate ¹	2026 Enacted Estimate ²	2027 Request Estimate ³
SES	3	3	4
Subtotal, SES	3	3	4
SL - 00	1	-	-
ST - 00	-	-	-
Subtotal, SL and ST	1	-	-
GS/GM -15	8	12	12
GS/GM -14	10	29	29
GS/GM -13	9	62	91
GS -12	1	134	160
GS -11	3	186	191
GS -10	-	6	7
GS - 9	-	123	132
GS - 8	-	26	27
GS - 7	-	160	162
GS - 6	-	42	45
GS - 5	-	63	65
GS - 4	-	32	32
GS - 3	-	3	3
GS - 2	-	-	-
GS - 1	-	-	-
Subtotal, GS/GM	31	878	956

GW -15	-	6	17
GW -14	3	43	74
GW -13	-	172	402
GW -12	-	287	673
GW -11	-	369	1,137
GW -10	-	113	223
GW - 9	-	317	1,283
GW - 8	-	430	1,877
GW - 7	-	476	2,296
GW - 6	-	348	1,551
GW - 5	-	435	1,969
GW - 4	-	166	1,761
GW - 3	-	34	240
GW - 2	-	1	1
GW - 1	-	-	-
Subtotal, GW	3	3,197	13,504
Other Planned and/or Seasonal FF Personnel		1,467	2,707
Other Pay Schedule Systems	-	172	416
Total Employment (Actuals and Estimates)	38	5,717	17,587

¹ Consistent with past budget justifications for Interior’s wildland fire program, 2025 Actual displays the personnel count for only the former Interior Office of Wildland Fire. The Wildland Fire Management appropriation funds thousands of firefighters and support personnel whose numbers are not reflected in the 2025 Actual column because they have been included in the 2025 column of the “Employee Count by Grade” exhibit in the BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS, and Department Offices budget justifications, consistent with past practice. For 2026 and 2027, those Interior employees are displayed above as part of the USWFS following the realignment of current Interior wildland fire personnel from these other bureaus and offices into the USWFS during 2026 and the proposed unification of USDA FS wildland fire personnel into Interior’s USWFS for 2027.

² 2026 Enacted Estimate displays the estimated personnel count for the USWFS, which was established as a new office in the Office of the Secretary on January 12, 2026. The 2026 levels reflect personnel realigned from BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS, OWF, and the Office of Aviation Services (OAS) in FY 2026. For 2025 and previous years, except for OWF, these personnel counts were reflected in the BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS, and DO (for OAS) budget justifications. The 2026 level also includes an estimated number of seasonal personnel, but not by grade.

³ The 2027 Request Estimate displays the estimated personnel count for the USWFS. Consistent with the 2027 Request, the levels reflect the unification of wildland fire resources and operations of Interior and USDA FS. The 2027 level also includes an estimated number of seasonal personnel, but not by grade.



A single-engine airtanker fills its tank in Florida.

Photo by DOI.

Compliance with Section 403

This exhibit fulfills the statutory reporting requirements directed in Section 403 of Division C of the Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026 (P.L. 119-74) as shown below.

DISCLOSURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

SEC. 403. The amount and basis of estimated overhead charges, deductions, reserves, or holdbacks, including working capital fund charges, from programs, projects, activities and subactivities to support government-wide, departmental, agency, or bureau administrative functions or headquarters, regional, or central operations shall be presented in annual budget justifications and subject to approval by the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Changes to such estimates shall be presented to the Committees on Appropriations for approval.

Table 7: External Administrative Costs: Working Capital Fund

Working Capital Fund						
<i>Dollars in Thousands (\$000)</i>						
Activity	2026 Enacted¹ (Estimate)			2027 Request^{1,2} (Estimate)		
	Central	Direct	TOTAL	Central	Direct	TOTAL³
OS Shared Services	42	0	42	33	0	33
<i>OS-OWF</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>33</i>
OS Activities	825	2	827	825	2	827
IT Shared Services	255	604	859	219	375	594
<i>OS-OWF</i>	<i>255</i>	<i>604</i>	<i>859</i>	<i>219</i>	<i>375</i>	<i>594</i>
Interior Business Center	0	460	460	0	466	466
TOTAL, WCF Billing	1,122	1,066	2,188	1,077	843	1,919

¹ The amounts in this table show estimated costs only for the Department of the Interior’s former OWF. This table does not include costs associated with BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS, or OAS prior to the realignment under the USWFS in FY 2026.

² The 2027 Request column also does not reflect all funding requested for the new USWFS. Total resource needs will be determined as Working Capital Fund requirements are finalized for the USWFS following the interagency unification of USDA FS’s wildland fire resources and operations into Interior’s USWFS.

³ The 2027 Request total billing amount is one lower than the sum of the components due to rounding.

Table 7 displays payments by OWF to Interior’s Working Capital Fund (WCF) to support the Wildland Fire Management (WFM) program. The OS Shared Services amounts include payments for centrally-billed administrative services, including property services, security services, building management, and

unified services. Similar business function unification for the WFM bureaus is reflected in the individual bureau 2027 budget justifications and is not displayed here. These internal overhead charges will be incorporated into the USWFS operations program, as appropriate, as operational details are finalized. Finally, Table 7 includes amounts paid by OWF for shared information technology (IT) services, including desktop services, licenses, and unified messaging.

Table 8: External Administrative Costs: Bureau Administrative Costs

Bureau Administrative Costs¹
Dollars in Thousands (\$000)

Cost Description	2026 Enacted¹ (Estimate)	2027 Request^{1,2} (Estimate)
National Program Support	66,018	45,097
<i>BIA</i>	<i>797</i>	<i>797</i>
<i>BLM</i>	<i>60,800</i>	<i>40,000</i>
<i>FWS</i>	<i>1,366</i>	<i>1,300</i>
<i>NPS</i>	<i>3,055</i>	<i>3,000</i>
Regional/State Program Support²	26,680	27,000
<i>BIA</i>	<i>11,904</i>	<i>12,000</i>
<i>BLM</i>	<i>14,776</i>	<i>15,000</i>
Holdbacks, Reserves, and Deductions	0	0
TOTAL, Bureau Administrative Costs	92,698	72,097

¹ The amounts in this table show costs for the Department of the Interior’s current Wildland Fire Management account only.

² The 2027 Request column shows requested funding associated with Interior’s current wildland fire management program. It does not reflect all funding requested for the proposed USWFS. Total resource needs will be determined as requirements are finalized for the USWFS following the interagency unification of USDA FS’s wildland fire resources and operations into Interior’s USWFS.

Table 8 displays WFM program funding used to pay bureau overhead charges assessed against the amounts requested elsewhere in the budget justification. These include funding for support by headquarters and regional operations and oversight, including regional and headquarters “cross-charging.” These internal overhead charges will be incorporated into the USWFS operations program, as appropriate, as operational details are finalized.

- **National Program Support** – The assessments by bureau are as follows:
 - **BIA:** \$797,000 in each year for bureau human resources support and for the BIA WCF (including administrative and contract support);

- **BLM:** BLM: \$60,800,000 in 2026, including for BLM Headquarters (\$2,500,000), the BLM National Operations Center (\$3,500,000), Bureau-wide WCF Assessments (\$12,023,000) and the Interior Consolidated Business Functions assessment (\$40,000,000). For 2027, the Consolidated Business Functions bill, which covers HR, Communications, Contracting, IT, Finance, and some Training employees, will be paid by the USWFS rather than BLM, and that flat amount is listed within the 2027 estimate on the BLM line item.
- **FWS:** \$1,365,935 in 2026 for the FWS non-resource management user payment, which pays for administrative services consumed by non-resource management programs. This pays a share of the bureau's communications services, workers' compensation costs, Washington and regional office administrative costs, and unemployment compensation. Assessments are based on FTE usage. The 2027 level is an estimate of what the USWFS may need to pay FWS for some services; and
- **NPS:** \$3,055,000 in 2026 for central support provided nationally in the bureau. The level for 2027 is an estimate of what the USWFS may need to pay NPS for some services.
- **Regional/State Program Support** – The assessments by bureau are as follows (neither FWS nor NPS has anything to report for this category of assessments):
- **BIA:** \$11,904,000 for 2026 and an estimated \$12,000,000 for 2027 for State, district, and field office administrative support and for payment of the indirect costs of Tribal Nations for their WFM programs and activities; and
- **BLM:** \$14,776,000 for 2026 and an estimated for \$15,000,000 for the payment of State-level indirect costs, including administrative support at the State, district, and field office level, procurement, human resources, and IT services.

Appendix A: List of Key Tables

TABLE NUMBER	TITLE	PAGE
1	Summary Table	4-5
2	Summary of Requirements	9-11
3	Justification of Fixed Costs	13
4	Federal Wildland Fire Preparedness and Suppression Resources	18-19
5	Tribal Wildland Fire Preparedness and Suppression Resources	19
6	Employee Count by Grade	51-52
7	External Administrative Costs: Working Capital Fund (Section 403 Compliance)	54
8	External Administrative Costs: Bureau Administrative Costs (Section 403 Compliance)	55

Appendix B: Reference, Key Acronyms

Key Acronyms

BAR	Burned Area Rehabilitation
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
DOI	Department of the Interior
FS	U.S. Forest Service (of the U.S. Department of Agriculture)
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent (employees; except where noted, refers to Federal personnel)
FWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FY	Fiscal Year (time span from October of one year through September of the next; the Federal fiscal year begins three months before the corresponding calendar year)
JFSP	Joint Fire Science Program
NPS	National Park Service
OWF	Office of Wildland Fire
P.L.	Public Law (U.S. Federal law)
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USWFS	U.S. Wildland Fire Service
WFM	Wildland Fire Management