



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

DOI WILDLAND FIRE PROGRAM POLICY MEMORANDUM No. 2022-004

To: Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, National Park Service
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
Director, U.S. Geological Survey

From: Jeffery Rupert, Director – Office of Wildland Fire

Subject: Guidance for Full-Year Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Allocations and Execution for the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Public Law 117-103)

Due Date: Does not apply

Effective Date: Immediately

Expiration Date: Remains in effect unless rescinded or modified

Purpose: This Policy Memorandum (PM) provides direction regarding budget allocations and execution for the Department of the Interior's Wildland Fire Management (WFM) program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, based on the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, Public Law (P.L.) 117-103. This PM does not provide direction regarding budget allocations and execution for funding provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (or Bipartisan Infrastructure Law [BIL]), P.L. 117-58. BIL funding allocations will be the subject of subsequent PMs.

Background: [P.L. 117-103](#) was enacted March 15, 2022. Division G, Title I authorizes appropriations totaling \$1,026,097,000 for Interior's WFM account and \$330,000,000 for Interior's Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund through September 30, 2022. Division GG, Title VI raises the premium pay cap for the pay of certain wildland fire employees for services performed during calendar year 2022 for Interior and the Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The [Joint Explanatory Statement](#) for P.L. 117-103:

- Fuels Management: Directs Interior to provide a briefing to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations¹ within 60 days of enactment (i.e., May 14, 2022) on the proposed distribution of hazardous fuels funding to its component bureaus, the allocation methodology, and how Interior takes into account areas with special designations, such as the Oregon and California Grant Lands;
- Fuels Management: Directs Interior to report at the end of each fiscal year the number of acres treated by prescribed fire, mechanical fuels reduction, and thinning activities, as well as the acres treated in wildland-urban interface and the costs associated with such activities; and
- Firefighting Aviation: Urges the USDA Forest Service and Interior to continue working with relevant stakeholders to evaluate ways to address impediments to the use of long-term contracts and other contracting strategies or approaches for wildland fire suppression activities.

[House Report 117-83](#), which carries the same weight as the joint explanatory statement, contains several requirements of relevance to Interior's WFM program. For the requirements that are not specific to Interior, the WFM program will work with the USDA Forest Service in the development of the Forest Service's responses.

- Firefighters' Pay: Directs the USDA Forest Service (not Interior) to report to the House Committee on Appropriations² within 90 days of enactment (i.e., June 13, 2022) on any barriers, including pay limitations for premium pay, and potential solutions that exist to increasing firefighter pay for firefighters paid through Wildland Fire Management or other Forest Service sources; and further directs the Forest Service to focus on pay discrepancies between Federal and State firefighter pay and barriers to parity;
- Permanent Workforce: Directs the USDA Forest Service (not Interior) to create a report within 60 days of enactment (i.e., May 14, 2022) on the resources, policies, personnel or structural changes, and other investments necessary to support an expanded full-time, year-round firefighting workforce;

¹ Where the joint explanatory statement refers to the Committees or the Committees on Appropriations, the reference is to the House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies and the Senate Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies.

² In cases where the House report directs the submission of a report, the report is to be submitted to both the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations.

- **Fire Surveillance:** Directs the USDA Forest Service (not Interior) to assess fire prone areas that are not adequately observed by fire surveillance cameras and to consider acquiring additional camera systems and Remote Automated Weather Station networks and deploying them, where possible and appropriate, on existing radio communications towers; and
- **Joint Fire Science:** Urges the Joint Fire Science Program to ensure that a broad network of academic researchers is considered for funding and that the program addresses the range of research needs to enhance wildland fire resiliency and to address barriers to wildfire management; and encourages the program to enhance its attention to understanding how invasive species affect fuels, fire behavior, and fire regimes and exploring how indigenous practices may be beneficial to wildfire prevention, response, and resilience.

For other requirements of interest, see [House Report 117-83](#).

Coordination: The Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) consulted Interior's WFM bureaus in developing this PM.

Scope: This PM applies to budget allocations and execution for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the National Park Service (NPS), OWF, and any other Interior bureaus or offices that receive WFM funding from P.L. 117-103. This PM supplements guidance in previous FY 2022 budget allocation PMs: No. 2022-001, No. 2022-002, and No. 2022-003.

Existing Policy Affected: DOI Wildland Fire Program PM No. 2022-001, No. 2022-002, and No. 2022-003.

Authority: Departmental Manual (DM) Part 620 Wildland Fire Management

Time Frame: This PM applies to funding made available by P.L. 117-103, which covers the period from October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022.

Policy:

Budget Allocations: See Table 1 (below) for allocation amounts from P.L. 117-103 for the full FY 2022, by bureau or office. OWF notifies bureaus of Treasury transaction numbers once transfers of funding have been completed.

Table 1:
Allocations of FY 2022 Funding for
Wildland Fire Management
P.L. 117-103 – Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022
Dollars in thousands

Activity or Subactivity	BIA	BLM	FWS	NPS	OWF	Parent	Total
Preparedness	72,845	209,663	31,073	44,389	11,597	976	370,543
Suppression	108,735	101,500	7,243	32,126	883	133,170	383,657
Fuels Management	51,001	105,323	31,127	31,340	6,370	1,839	227,000
Burned Area Rehabilitation	5,565	12,148	1,709	3,045	3	0	22,470
Facilities Construction and Maintenance	3,139	10,806	4,165	317	0	0	18,427
Joint Fire Science Program	0	4,000	0	0	0	0	4,000
TOTAL	241,285	443,440	75,317	111,217	18,853	135,985	1,026,097

Preparedness: P.L. 117-103 provides \$370,543,000 for Preparedness, which is \$23,438,000 (6.8 percent) above the FY 2021 level. This PM allocates all of this funding. Of the total appropriation, \$8,438,000 is designated for fixed cost increases, and \$15,000,000 is for workforce reform. The amount for fixed cost increases is allocated to each bureau proportionally based on its share of the total FY 2021 Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) personnel reported. The amount for workforce reform allocated to each bureau proportionally based on its share of the total FY 2021 Federal and Tribal FTE reported.

Suppression Operations: P.L. 117-103 provides \$383,657,000 for Suppression Operations in the WFM account. The allocations for Suppression Operations in Table 1 represent a minimum of 40 percent of the enacted level of funding or the funding level requested by the bureau based on funding need. The basis for the minimum 40 percent allocation is the percent share each bureau has of the ten-year rolling average.

The remaining funding is in the WFM Parent account. OWF will allocate the remaining funding based on seasonal activity and bureau funding requirements. Please request additional allocations as the need arises.

Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund: In addition to the funding for Suppression Operations in the WFM account, P.L. 117-103 provides \$330,000,000 in additional budget authority, to remain available until transferred, in the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund. Interior will request transfers of funding from the Reserve Fund as the need arises. The Reserve Fund balance is currently \$567 million, including both the full-year FY 2022 appropriation and the current unobligated balance from FY 2021 (\$237 million).

Emergency Stabilization and Severity: Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Severity authority levels are capped at ten percent of the ten-year rolling suppression expenditure average for Interior. See Table 2 (below).

Table 2:
FY 2022 Funding Authority
Emergency Stabilization and Severity
Dollars in thousands

Purpose	BIA	BLM	FWS	NPS	Reserve	Total
Emergency Stabilization (ES) (Based on Percentages)	\$9,688	\$28,466	\$3,607	\$4,242	\$0	\$46,003
Severity	\$5,913	\$18,317	\$3,450	\$4,320	\$14,003	\$46,003

The distribution of ES authority is based on the rolling ten-year average percentage of acres burned, by bureau nationally, excluding Alaska. The percentages for FY 2022 are:

- BIA: 21.06 percent;
- BLM: 61.88 percent;
- FWS: 7.84 percent; and
- NPS: 9.22 percent.

Severity authority is capped at \$32 million, with the balance held in reserve. The distribution of Severity authority is based on each bureau's base percentage split of the annual Preparedness appropriation. The percentages are as follows:

- BIA: 18.48 percent;
- BLM: 57.24 percent;
- FWS: 10.78 percent; and
- NPS: 13.50 percent.

Regardless of the source of funding, obligations count against the funding authority caps. Recoveries of prior obligations do not increase the amount of obligation authority available in a given year. In the event that a bureau anticipates that it will exceed its ES or Severity authority,

OWF will coordinate and approve the redistribution of ES and/or Severity authority among bureaus, as warranted and following consultation with the WFM bureaus. Any recommended increases to the ES or Severity caps are subject to approval by the Director, OWF, in collaboration with the WFM bureau directors.

Fuels Management: P.L. 117-103 provides \$227,000,000 for Fuels Management, which is \$7,036,000 (3.2 percent) above the FY 2021 level. This PM allocates all of this funding. Of the total appropriation, \$4,380,000 is designated for fixed cost increases. It is allocated to each bureau proportionally based on the bureau's share of the total FY 2021 FTE personnel reported. Another \$1,000,000 is designated as an increase for Reserved Treaty Rights Lands (RTRL), so the total funding for FY 2022 from P.L. 117-103 for RTRL is \$11,000,000.

The direct program allocations reflect the consensus methodology for workforce transformation, direct program, and "new base funding" for Fuels Management for FY 2021 (see DOI Wildland Fire Program PM 2021-003). For FY 2022, the workforce transformation and new base funding amounts are combined into the direct program line, and the consensus combined percentage allocations for FY 2021 are applied to the total direct base funding. Those updated allocation percentages are as follows:

- BIA: 19.65 percent;
- BLM: 50.43 percent;
- FWS: 15.09 percent; and
- NPS: 14.83 percent.

In the context of initial BIL coordination, consistent with guidance provided in DOI Wildland Fire Program PM No. 2020-004 ("Department of the Interior's Fuels Management Program Priorities and Reporting Requirements"), WFM bureaus were to have provided by March 7, 2022, an updated spend plan for Fuels Management funding—including projects funded by regular (full-year Continuing Resolution estimated level), disaster supplemental, and estimated BIL appropriations, using the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS), and regional approval dates, to reflect an estimated full-year FY 2022 allocation to the bureau.

By May 13, 2022, please update information in NFPORS, as necessary, to reflect your bureau's final full-year FY 2022 allocation under P.L. 117-103, as shown in Table 1 (above), rather than the full-year Continuing Resolution estimated level.

Additionally, by October 15, 2022, please report/record in NFPORS annual accomplishments with Fuels Management funds, consistent with DOI Wildland Fire Program PM No. 2020-004.

Burned Area Rehabilitation: P.L. 117-103 provides \$22,470,000 for Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR), which is \$2,000,000 (9.8 percent) above the FY 2021 level. This PM allocates all of this funding.

By May 13, 2022, please update information in NFPORS or the Vegetation Management Action Portal (VAMP) to reflect your bureau's final full-year FY 2022 allocation under P.L. 117-103, as shown in Table 1 (above). OWF will transfer each bureau's allocation of BAR funding as BAR projects needing funding are identified and added to NFPORS or VMAP.

Additionally, by October 15, 2022, please report/record in NFPORS annual accomplishments completed with BAR funds, consistent with DOI Wildland Fire Program PM No. 2020-009.

Facilities Construction and Maintenance: P.L. 117-103 provides \$18,427,000 for Facilities, which is the same as the FY 2021 level. This PM allocates all of this funding, consistent with the project list in the 2022 budget request. Project-level descriptions can be found in the "Wildland Fire Five Year Construction/Deferred Maintenance Plan Summary," as coordinated through Interior's Wildland Fire Facilities Group and approved by the WFM bureau directors. (See also "Carryover and Recoveries," below.)

Joint Fire Science Program: P.L. 117-103 provides \$4,000,000 for the Joint Fire Science Program, which is \$1,000,000 (33.3 percent) above the FY 2021 level. This PM allocates all of this funding.

Carryover and Recoveries: OWF encourages WFM bureaus to obligate prior-year funding, including carryover and recoveries, with priority focus on funds from before FY 2020. Bureaus are approved to execute carryover funds in FY 2022 in accordance with the carryover spend plans submitted to OWF at the beginning of the fiscal year. Bureaus should target obligations of prior-year funding by the end of the third quarter of FY 2022 (i.e., the end of June 2022). Please pay special attention to unobligated balances of funding for Facilities Construction and Maintenance and obligate the funding, consistent with plans, as soon as is practicable. Further guidance regarding the carryover of funding from FY 2022 to FY 2023 is forthcoming.

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cc: Interior WFM Executives
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