



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

DOI WILDLAND FIRE PROGRAM POLICY MEMORANDUM No. 2023-001

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 Initial Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Allocations and Spend Plans for Fuels Management, Burned Area Rehabilitation, and Carryover Funding (Public Law 117-180)

Due Date: October 31, 2022 (for spend plans for carryover from FY 2022)
November 15, 2022 (for updated Burned Area Rehabilitation spend plans and for the return of unobligated balances from FY 2019 or earlier)

Effective Date: Immediately

Expiration Date: Remains in effect unless rescinded or modified

Purpose: This Policy Memorandum (PM) provides direction regarding initial budget allocations for Department of the Interior (DOI) Wildland Fire Management (WFM) programs and activities for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 based on Public Law (P.L.) 117-180, the Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023. In addition, this PM provides direction for WFM bureaus and offices to submit updated spend plans for FY 2023 for Fuels Management and Burned Area Rehabilitation and spend plans for carryover funding from FY 2022. Finally, this PM provides direction to return any carryover balances of funding from FY 2019 or earlier for which there are not specific obligation plans by October 31, 2022.

Background: P.L. 117-180—enacted September 30, 2022—authorizes continuing appropriations for FY 2023 from October 1 through December 16, 2022.

Coordination: The Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) consulted bureaus and offices participating in Interior’s WFM program 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 bureaus or offices that receive funding from the allocations covered by this PM.

Existing Policy Affected: DOI Wildland Fire Program PM No. 2020-004 (“Department of the Interior’s Fuels Management Program Priorities and Reporting Requirements”)

Authority: Departmental Manual (DM) Part 620 Wildland Fire Management and P.L. 117-180

Time Frame: This PM applies to requirements of and funding made available by P.L. 117-180, the Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023. This funding is for the period of October 1, 2022, through December 16, 2022 (the first Continuing Resolution for FY 2023). The period covers 77 days, which is 21.10 percent of FY 2023.

Policy:

Budget Allocations: WFM bureaus and offices must follow the Continuing Resolution (CR) terms and provisions outlined in the September 30, 2022, memorandum from the Department of the Interior’s Director of Budget, “Guidance for FY 2023 Funds Execution Under H.R. 6833, the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2023” (see Attachment 1 and its attachments: 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3).

Under the terms of the CR, WFM bureaus and offices must manage funding consistent with FY 2022 enacted appropriations and may not assume enactment of funding levels requested in the FY 2023 President’s budget, in H.R. 8294 (which the House of Representatives passed July 20, 2022), or in the Chairman’s mark of the FY 2023 Senate appropriations bill for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies (released July 28, 2022)—including bill and report language. WFM bureaus and offices should manage prudently during the CR period to maintain ongoing activities in a manner that does not “impinge on final funding prerogatives,” per direction in the POB memorandum.

In planning funds execution for the full fiscal year, WFM bureaus and offices should execute the amounts provided by the CR but keep in mind the possibilities that there may eventually be reductions from the FY 2022 full-year enacted levels or that Congress may not provide the President’s budget request funding levels for some or all WFM activities. OWF is not holding funds in the WFM Parent account to cover such potential reductions.

Allocation amounts for the CR portion of P.L. 117-180 are provided in Table 1 (see below). Funding provided by the CR is only available until December 16, 2022. Accordingly, all WFM bureaus and offices should closely monitor program expenditures under the CR and return any projected unallocated funds to OWF timely for re-allocation to other bureaus and offices for the implementation of high-priority work.

Table 1
Allocations of Funding for
Wildland Fire Management
from Public Law 117-180
the Continuing Appropriations and
Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023
(First Continuing Resolution of FY 2023)
Dollars in thousands/ A

Activity or Subactivity	BIA	BLM	FWS	NPS	OWF	WFM Parent Account	TOTAL
Preparedness	8,000	40,000	4,000	5,000	2,500	18,685	78,185
Suppression	6,000	22,000	2,000	5,000	200	45,751	80,951
Fuels Management	5,000	13,000	5,000	4,000	250	20,647	47,897
Burned Area Rehabilitation	100	1,000	50	50	0	3,541	4,741
Joint Fire Science Program	0	100	0	0	0	744	844
Facilities Construction and Maintenance/ B	0	0	0	0	0	3,888	3,888
TOTAL	19,100	76,100	11,050	14,050	2,950	93,256	216,506

A/ Allocations are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars for presentation in this table.

B/ No funding is being allocated for Facilities Construction and Maintenance. The CR funding for this subactivity is in the WFM Parent account.

Budget Guidance: Please contact OWF if you anticipate priority needs through December 16, 2022, that cannot be met using the funds allocated in Table 1 and other available funding.

In addition to the requirements in the POB memo (Attachment 1) and attachments (1.1, 1.2, and 1.3), the following budget guidance and direction applies:

- Suppression Operations: The CR provides more than \$80,951,000 for Suppression Operations in the WFM account. In accordance with policy and past practice, during the CR, OWF is allocating to the WFM bureaus approximately 40 percent of the ten-year average of suppression expenditures and retaining in the WFM Parent account the remainder of the CR amount for Suppression Operations. The CR allocation is in addition to funding carried over from FY 2022. The basis for the CR allocation is the percent share that each bureau has of

the ten-year rolling average of suppression spending. If your bureau or office requires more funding than is available in your allocation for Suppression Operations, please contact OWF.

- 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
Funding Authority Limits for
Emergency Stabilization and Severity
pursuant to the Continuing Appropriations and
Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023
(P.L. 117-180)

Dollars in thousands/ A

Purpose	BIA	BLM	FWS	NPS	WFM Parent Account	TOTAL
Emergency Stabilization	12,712	31,010	2,672	3,088	0	49,482
Severity	5,913	18,317	3,450	4,320	17,482	49,482

A/ Allocations are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars for presentation in this table.

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 2023 are as follows:

- BIA: 25.69 percent,
- BLM: 62.67 percent,
- FWS: 5.40 percent, and
- NPS: 6.24 percent.

Severity authority is capped at \$32 million, with the balance held in reserve in the WFM Parent account. 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 one or more bureau(s) 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 bureau/office directors. 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: The CR provides \$47,897,000 for Fuels Management. WFM bureaus should use the CR allocation, carryover funding, and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding to implement projects identified in the latest version of their FY 2023 Fuels Management Spend Plan.
 - Under the CR, Fuels Management activities undertaken within the WFM program are considered ongoing activities, and they are not prohibited during the CR period. WFM bureaus and offices should ensure adequate funding for staff and necessary program activities. Furthermore, they should leverage opportunities to use allocations to actively implement fuels treatments.
 - **By October 31, 2022**, bureaus and offices should complete a detailed Fuels carryover spend plan for regular, BIL, and disaster relief appropriations in the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS) using:
 - Planned Initiation Fiscal Year reflective of the Fiscal Year of carryover funds,
 - Bureau Approval Date, and
 - “DR311” in the Treatment/Activity Name for Disaster Relief funded projects.Bureaus should provide a summary from their detailed NFPORS Carryover Spend Plan using the template in Attachment 2.
 - Under DOI Wildland Fire Program PM No. 2020-004, tabular data in NFPORS must be reported at least quarterly. However, this PM (2023-001) amends the requirement in PM 2020-004 to require that tabular data reporting occurs within 30 days of treatment/activity completion.
- Burned Area Rehabilitation: The CR provides \$4,741,170 for Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR). WFM bureaus should use the CR allocation, carryover funding, and BIL funding for projects identified in the latest version of their FY 2023 BAR Spend Plan.
 - Under the CR, BAR activities undertaken within the WFM program are considered ongoing activities, and they are not prohibited during the CR period. WFM bureaus should fund BAR projects identified in NFPORS.
 - **By October 31, 2022**, bureaus should complete their BAR carryover spend plan for regular, BIL, and disaster relief appropriations in NFPORS using:
 - Planned Initiation Fiscal Year reflective of the Fiscal Year of carryover funds,
 - Bureau Approval Date, and
 - “DR321” in the Treatment/Activity Name for Disaster Relief funded projects.

Bureaus should provide a summary from their detailed NFPORS Carryover Spend Plan using the template in Attachment 2.

- **By November 15, 2022**, bureaus should submit to OWF the bureau prioritization criteria, as required by 620 DM 7, and complete a full-year BAR spend plan for regular appropriations in NFPORS. The FY 2023 BAR spend plan should be reflected through the FY 2023 Obligation Fiscal Year and Bureau Approval Date. Throughout the fiscal year, OWF will transfer each bureau's allocation of BAR funding as BAR projects needing funding are identified and added to NFPORS.
- This PM establishes the requirement that tabular data reporting in NFPORS occurs within 30 days of treatment/activity completion.
- Joint Fire Science Program: The CR provides \$844,000 for the Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP). Under the terms of the CR, JFSP should expend only the minimum amount of funding that is needed to continue operations.
- Facilities Construction and Maintenance: The CR provides \$3,888,097 for Facilities Construction and Maintenance. However, OWF is allocating no funding for facilities at this time, and no minimum funding is necessary to continue operations. OWF will reserve this funding in the WFM Parent account for any high priority needs that arise during the CR.
- Carryover: In addition to the carryover spend plans for Fuels Management and BAR, **by October 31, 2022**, bureaus and offices should submit to OWF updated carryover spend plans for other activities using the template in Attachment 2. OWF will work with bureaus and offices to review all carryover balances of funding from FY 2019 or earlier. For those amounts that remain unobligated and for which a bureau or office does not have firm plans to obligate the funding for approved purposes, OWF requests that bureaus return those funds to the WFM Parent account by **November 15, 2022**. Returned funds will then be available to be reallocated for other, high-priority program needs.

Contacts: For more information, you may contact the following people regarding:

- Budget Allocations: Stephen Elmore or Kimberly Salwasser
- Fuels Management: Kristy Swartz
- Burned Area Rehabilitation: Kristy Swartz

cc: Interior WFM Executives
Interior WFM Directors
Interior WFM Budget Staff

Attachments:

- 1 – Memorandum from the Department of the Interior’s Director of Budget, “Guidance for FY 2023 Funds Execution Under H.R. 6833, the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2023”, including its attachments:
 - 1.1 – Office of Management and Budget Bulletin No. 22-02, “Apportionment of the Continuing Resolution(s) for Fiscal Year 2023”
 - 1.2 – Interior Table for CR through December 16, 2022
 - 1.3 – Text of P.L. 117-180, the Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023
- 2 – Budget Execution and Carryover Spend Plan Template