

Activity: Land Resources
Subactivity: Public Domain Forest Management

	2023 Actual	2024 Annualized CR	2025 President's Budget					
			Fixed Costs	Internal Transfers	Program Changes	2025 President's Budget	Change from 2024 Annualized CR	
Public Domain Forest Mgmt								
<i>\$000</i>	10,814	10,814	+276		-63	11,027	+213	
<i>FTE</i>	68	68			0	68	0	

Other Resources Supporting Public Domain Forest Mgmt.:					
		2023 Actual	2024 Annualized CR	2025 Estimate	Change from 2024 Annualized CR
Forest Ecosystem Health & Recovery	<i>\$000</i>	3,500	3,500	3,500	0
	<i>FTE</i>	10	10	10	0
USFS Forest Pest Control	<i>\$000</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>FTE</i>	0	0	0	0

Notes:

- Forest Ecosystem Health & Recovery amounts are shown as new budget authority derived from the Federal share of receipts from all BLM timber salvage sales, and from BLM forest health restoration treatments funded by this account; 43 USC 1736a appropriates these funds on a permanent basis. Forest Ecosystem Health & Recovery is used on both Public Domain Forestry and Oregon and California Grant Lands. More information on Forest Ecosystem Health & Recovery is found in the Permanent Operating Funds chapter. Amount for Forest Ecosystem Health & Recovery shown net of sequestration and funds previously not available due to sequestration (i.e. "pop-up" budget authority). Actual and estimated obligations, by year for Forest Ecosystem Health & Recovery, are found in President's Budget Appendix under the BLM section.

- USFS Forest Pest Control amounts are shown as estimated transfers. More information on USFS Forest Pest Control is found in the U.S. Forest Service Budget Justifications. USFS Forest Pest Control is used on both Public Domain Forestry and Oregon and California Grant Lands.

Summary of 2025 Program Changes for Public Domain Forest Management.

	(\$000)	FTE
Baseline Capacity – 2024 Fixed Costs	+542	0
Focus on Highest Priorities	-605	0
Total	-63	0

Justification of 2025 Program Changes

The 2025 budget request for Public Domain Forest Management is \$11,027,000 and 68 FTEs, a program change of -\$63,000 and 0 FTE from the 2024 Annualized CR level.

Baseline Capacity – 2024 Fixed Costs (+\$542,000; 0 FTE) – The 2025 budget includes important investments in programs needed to help strengthen America and be more competitive as the world continues to change. These investments include funding needed to maintain a strong, talented workforce and the must-pay requirements needed to continue to fulfill the BLM's mission. The budget includes \$542,000 in Public Domain Forest

Management, which reflects the incremental amount needed to cover the fixed costs associated with mission operations in FY 2024. This request in combination with the FY 2025 fixed costs amounts will allow the BLM to meet must pay requirements without impacting program activities.

Focus on Highest Priorities (-\$605,000; 0 FTE) – The BLM will continue to focus on the highest priorities of the Public Domain Forest Management program, addressing fire risk to communities, infrastructure, and high-risk ecosystems, while meeting statutory obligations for forest management. The decrease in funding will result in slightly fewer acres treated to restore forest structure and composition for fire and climate resilience compared to 2023 levels. At this funding level, the BLM could plant an estimated 150,000 seedlings, about 50,000 fewer than in FY 2023.

Program Overview

The BLM manages approximately 56 million acres of forests and woodlands in the public domain (PD) across 12 Western States, including Alaska. The suppression of natural fire from forest ecosystems has led to overly dense conditions that are susceptible to high severity fire, insect epidemics, and loss of climate resilience in many forest types on BLM-managed lands. To address these challenges, the BLM uses best available science in restoring resilience through various silvicultural treatments to modify structure and composition. In addition to forest treatments to restore resilience, the BLM is identifying forests and woodlands affected by tree mortality due to severe wildfire, insect epidemics, and drought that need reforestation to conserve and restore forest ecosystems and to manage carbon sinks. Foresters use appropriate tree species adapted to local conditions and assess local climate trends to develop reforestation projects. The BLM uses various tools to implement these activities including working with States, counties, and Tribal Nations through Good Neighbor Authority. In FY 2025, the BLM will seek opportunities to strengthen government-to-government relations with Tribal Nations through the Tribal Forest Protection Act. The BLM will also support the BIL and IRA by developing forest restoration projects that meet the objectives of these laws. In addition, the BLM is working toward meeting the 2030 reforestation target set in response to E.O. 14072, *Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies*.

PD Forest Management has four primary performance metrics. *Restoration through sales* consists of acres of forest and woodland treatments that are designed to enhance resilience to disturbances such as fire, insect, disease, and drought, as well as restoring ecosystem functions and habitat. *Forest development* consists of acres of silvicultural activities designed to enhance the productivity and sustainability of forests and woodlands such as reforestation, pre-commercial thinning, insect and disease control, wildfire fuels management, and prescribed burning. *Vegetative permits* provide the public with a wide variety of forest and other vegetative materials for personal and commercial use. The BLM sells over 25,000 permits annually for products such as Christmas trees, fuelwood, pine nuts, mushrooms and other edibles, and native plant materials for restoration. PD Forest Management manages for long-term productivity and sustainable harvest of these products. Permit areas are often developed to also achieve forest health goals such as fire resilience thinning. *Forest inventory* consists of collecting and maintaining an inventory of forest and woodland resources and the status and condition of those resources. In addition to these activities, the BLM supports the cost of conducting NEPA analysis, ESA consultation, and site surveys such as archaeology that are required prior to approving forest management activities.

Under the FY 2025 Budget for PD Forest Management the BLM will work to expand forestry projects that leverage ongoing partnerships, such as the Lower Blackfoot River Stewardship Project near Missoula, Montana. This project was developed in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, which purchased these lands from a private industrial logging company to shift from management for maximum timber production to forest management that more closely reflects natural fire regimes and native plant communities. The Nature Conservancy's transfer of these lands to the BLM for management also restored reserved treaty rights to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. The Tribes were interested in partnering with the BLM on project development given the area's historical importance as a major travel route for buffalo hunting as well as the Tribes' interest in restoring culturally important plants, such as camas and bitterroot. Thinning treatments on this project will restore fire resilient stand structure and improve forage quality for wild ungulates by increasing vigor and density of native bunch grasses, forbs, and shrubs with a focus on plant species and communities of cultural importance to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.



Family harvesting a Christmas tree on public lands in Wyoming.

The PD Forest Management program continues to strive for efficiencies and employ technology to meet the BLM's goals and to improve public access to programs. For example, the BLM has an online permit system (forestproducts.blm.gov) where the public can buy fuelwood and Christmas tree permits 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The BLM has sold over 34,000 permits through the new site and has provided a valuable public service to those that do not live near a BLM office to buy a permit over the counter. This website was also effective in maintaining permit issuance during COVID-induced office closures when public contact was suspended. Permittees are provided the permit and maps at the time of purchase via email.

Stewardship Contracting Special Exhibit

Background

This special exhibit addresses requirements of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (as amended, 16 U.S.C 6591c): The BLM shall report annually to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives on:

1. The status of development, execution, and administration of contracts under subsection (b), which states, "The Chief and the Director, via agreement or contract as appropriate, may enter into stewardship contracting projects with private persons or other public or private entities to perform services to achieve