

DIVISION D – DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT,
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

The following statement is an explanation of the effects of Division D, which provides appropriations for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Forest Service, the Indian Health Service, and related agencies for fiscal year 2020.

The explanatory statement accompanying this Act is approved and indicates congressional intent. Report language contained in House Report 116-100 and Senate Report 116-123 providing specific guidance to agencies regarding the administration of appropriated funds and any corresponding reporting requirements carries the same emphasis as the language included in this explanatory statement and should be complied with unless specifically addressed to the contrary herein. This explanatory statement, while repeating some language for emphasis, is not intended to negate the language referred to above unless expressly provided herein.

In cases where the House report, Senate report, or this explanatory statement direct the submission of a report, such report is to be submitted to both the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations. Where this explanatory statement refers to the Committees or the Committees on Appropriations, unless otherwise noted, this reference is to the House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies and the Senate Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies.

Each department and agency funded in this Act is directed to follow the directions set forth in this Act and the accompanying statement and to not reallocate resources or reorganize activities except as provided herein or otherwise approved by the House and Senate Appropriations Committees through the reprogramming process as referenced in this Act. This explanatory statement addresses only those agencies and accounts for which there is a need for greater explanation than provided in the Act itself. Funding levels for appropriations by account, program, and activity, with comparisons to the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and the fiscal year 2020 budget request, can be found in the table at the end of this division.

Unless expressly stated otherwise, any reference to “this Act” or “at the end of this statement” shall be treated as referring only to the provisions of this division.

Bureau of Land Management, Reorganization.—The Department has not fulfilled its obligation to fully communicate the organizational and financial details of the reorganization and relocation of the Bureau’s Washington, DC headquarters. It has not provided Bureau employees, Congress, agency stakeholders or the general public with adequate information regarding this move. Furthermore, it has not explained how it will sustain its operations and remain an effective land management agency following

research activities are focused on the key areas where the Service's management responsibilities will benefit the most.

STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY

The bill provides \$346,990,000 for State and Private Forestry. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement. Of the funds provided for Federal Lands Forest Health Management, \$3,000,000 is for Service-wide strategic workforce planning efforts.

Landscape Scale Restoration.—The Service is directed to use funds for competitive grants.

Forest Legacy.—The bill provides \$63,990,000 for the Forest Legacy program. This includes \$6,400,000 for program administration and \$57,590,000 for projects. The Service should fund projects in priority order according to the updated, competitively selected national priority list submitted to the Committees.

International Forestry.—The bill includes \$12,000,000 for International Programs, an increase of \$3,000,000 above the fiscal year 2019 enacted level. This increase will be used for the office's programmatic work to include combatting overseas illegal timber harvests and conserving the habitat of U.S. migratory species, including the monarch butterfly.

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM

The bill provides \$1,957,510,000 for the National Forest System. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement. The agreement does not include the direction regarding the Dakota Prairie Grasslands.

Hazardous Fuels.—The bill provides \$445,310,000 for hazardous fuels management activities within the National Forest System account. Included in this amount is \$4,000,000 for the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes.

Four Forests Restoration Initiative.—The Service is directed to submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations, the House Natural Resources Committee, and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, not later than 90 days after the enactment of this Act, detailing efforts to accelerate forest ecosystem restoration under the Four Forest Restoration Initiative.