

Conference Report 112-331

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lowing States to continue to fund these types of projects at their discretion.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

(INCLUDING TRANSFER AND RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

The bill rescinds \$50,000,000 from specific unobligated balances. Modified bill language has been included to provide specific wage rate requirements for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving funds.

Oil Spill Transfer Authority.—The bill includes modified transfer authority language that allows the Agency to meet its obligations to pay contractors responding to inland oil spills. The conferees have included this language for fiscal year 2012 only. The conferees strongly urge EPA, in conjunction with the Office of Management and Budget, to propose a more appropriate legislative fix if the Administration is unable to process routine transfers from the Oil Spill Trust Fund in a timely fashion. The conferees support the approach discussed in the House report to be a more permanent solution.

TITLE III—RELATED AGENCIES

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREST SERVICE

FOREST AND RANGELAND RESEARCH

The bill provides \$295,773,000 for Forest and Rangeland Research. The conferees also provide the following directions:

The agreement does not specify allocations for individual research facilities. The conferees encourage the Forest Products Laboratory, as part of the Department of Agriculture's effort to promote and use wood products as a green building material, to invest in wood products life cycle assessment research to improve our understanding of the environmental and economic implications of using wood in building construction.

The Forest Service is commended for its localized needs research and is directed to expand this research in support of project development on national forests. The Forest Service should prioritize research related to White Nose Syndrome as well as inventory and monitoring of bat resources on Forest Service lands. The Service is expected to continue ongoing urban natural resources stewardship research and should produce a joint report with the Department of Energy on the role that this work can play in helping reduce the urban heat island effect, as well as reduce the energy demand to cool buildings.

STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY

The bill provides \$253,331,000 for State and Private Forestry. The conferees also provide the following directions:

Within six months of enactment of this Act, the Forest Service is directed to develop a process in consultation with State foresters

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that considers State Assessments and Strategies in the annual budget for Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act (CFAA) programs, and to develop a process allowing State foresters flexibility, with appropriate accountability, to reallocate a percentage of authorizations for CFAA programs to address State priorities consistent with the State Assessments and Strategies.

Forest Legacy.—The bill provides \$53,388,000 for the Forest Legacy program. This includes \$6,628,000 for program administration, \$2,500,000 for new State startups, and \$44,260,000 for forest legacy projects. The Service should fund projects in priority order according to their competitively selected national priority list for fiscal year 2012.

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM

The bill provides \$1,556,628,000 for the National Forest System. The agreement includes a proof of concept pilot for Integrated Resource Restoration (IRR). The conferees also provide the following directions:

Land Management Planning.—The bill provides \$40,000,000 for land management planning. The agreement does not approve the consolidation of this line item with the Inventory and Monitoring line item. The Planning Rule should provide for a cost-effective and timely process for forest plan revisions.

Inventory and Monitoring.—The bill provides \$161,980,000 for inventory and monitoring. The Forest Service is encouraged to allocate more funding towards monitoring of grazing allotments and work with State agencies, universities, professional societies and other USDA agencies, such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, to efficiently and effectively increase allotment monitoring.

Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness.—The bill provides \$281,627,000 for recreation, heritage and wilderness programs. In place of House direction on the travel management rule, the Forest Service is encouraged to revise travel management plans where significant issues have arisen and resolve the Maintenance Level-3 road problem in Region 5. The agreement does not provide direction on the Wyoming Wilderness Act.

Grazing Management.—The bill provides \$55,445,000 for the grazing management program. The conferees are concerned that the best science should be used in making decisions concerning grazing on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands. Currently, North Dakota State University is conducting research that should benefit the agency in making these determinations. The agency is strongly encouraged to work cooperatively with the university and utilize its research to the extent practicable, to better inform its grazing management decisions.

Forest Products.—The bill provides \$336,049,000 for the forest products program. The Forest Service is directed to improve the health and resilience of national forests and through these efforts, work to achieve three billion board feet of timber sold. The conferees note that over the last ten years, the timber supply in Region 10 has been constrained to less than 10 percent of the allowable sale quantity in the current land management plan. The Forest Service is encouraged to prepare and offer, within three years, the four 10-year timber sales as previously indicated.

cific priorities and needs consistent with the State Assessments and Strategies.

Accordingly, the Committee directs the Forest Service to develop a process in consultation with State Foresters that provides for the consideration and incorporation of appropriate findings and recommendations in State Assessments and Strategies into the annual budget preparation process for Cooperative Forestry Assistance programs. Further, the Committee directs the Forest Service to develop a process in coordination with State Foresters to respond to state-specific priorities identified in the State Assessments and Strategies by allowing state foresters flexibility, with appropriate accountability, to combine a percentage of the appropriations among programs authorized in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act. Further, the Committee directs the Forest Service, in coordination with state foresters, to develop a process that supports an effective competitive grant procedure to address national and regional priorities. The Committee expects the Forest Service to report on the respective processes and recommendations within six months of enactment of this Act. The Committee notes that the Forest Service must still comply with the reprogramming requirements in this report.

Report
Requirement

Forest Health Management.—The Committee recommends \$97,564,000 for forest health management, \$7,994,000 below the fiscal year 2011 enacted level and \$1,991,000 below the budget request. The forest health program should continue to stress strategic funding allocations, and should continue the slow-the-spread, suppression and eradication efforts for gypsy moth and bark beetle work in the West.

Urban and Community Forestry.—The Committee recommends \$29,042,000 for urban and community forestry, \$2,998,000 below the fiscal year 2011 enacted level and \$3,335,000 below the budget request. The Committee notes the importance of this program to numerous urban areas and lauds the goal of increasing urban tree canopies which ultimately reduces energy costs and improves water quality.

International Forestry.—The Committee recommends \$5,000,000 for International Forestry, \$4,492,000 below the fiscal year 2011 enacted level and \$5,000,000 above the budget request. The Committee is supportive of International Forestry and does not support the budget request proposal to terminate this program. The budget request states that funding for this program would continue and be pulled from other line items, such as line items under the National Forest System. The Committee strongly disagrees with this and directs the Forest Service to use line items for their intended purpose.

International Forestry enables forestry experts for the Federal government to participate in negotiations for trade agreements and assist with forestry work abroad. This program plays a large role in protecting the U.S. forest products industry by improving the sustainability and legality of timber management overseas thereby reducing the amount of underpriced timber on the world market. Much of the funding for these activities is provided by other departments or agencies, including the Department of State, the United States Trade Representative and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Forest Service has the responsibility of