

Paper and Printing Cost Reduction Efforts

The following request was included in the explanatory statement regarding the House amendment to Senate Amendment on H.R. 1625: *The Committees urge the Department of the Interior, EPA, Forest Service, and Indian Health Service to work with the Office of Management and Budget to reduce printing and reproduction costs and direct each agency to report to the Committees within 90 days of enactment of this Act on steps being undertaken to achieve this goal and how much each agency expects to save by implementing these measures.*

Senate Reports 114-70 and 114-82: *The Committees continue to be concerned about the Service's printing costs. The Service is directed to provide updated information within 60 days of enactment of this Act. The Service should provide a justification for its costs, explain why they have not been reduced, and significantly reduce printing expenditures.*

The following are the Forest Service's total expenditures for printing and reproduction costs for the past 4 fiscal years. Expenditures do not include costs for forest visitor maps, Smokey Bear, and Woodsy Owl products, which are covered by user fees. Current expenditures for fiscal year (FY) 2018 are \$1.9 million and are on track to be significantly reduced overall for the fiscal year ending on September 30. However, the Agency generally has an increase in printing costs towards the end of the fiscal year, so additional measures are needed to ensure the decrease is met.

	<i>FY 14</i>	<i>FY 15</i>	<i>FY 16</i>	<i>FY 17</i>
<i>Forest Planning</i>	142,088	303,172	224,711	512,193
<i>Maps¹</i>	721,968	390,899	598,649	443,522
<i>Research</i>	600,473	467,322	555,012	312,300
<i>Other²</i>	3,412,760	2,900,738	3,495,199	3,766,993
<i>Total</i>	4,877,289	4,062,131	4,873,571	5,035,008

During the past few years, the Forest Service has taken several steps to reduce printing costs. Despite these efforts, the Agency has not reduced its expenditures on printing and reproduction by 34 percent as directed in the 2018 House and Senate Appropriations bill reports. Costs were not reduced because the Agency prints numerous items to meet the needs of the public, which are required by law. In most of these cases, converting to a digital copy is not practical. Specific items the Agency printed include the following:

- Numerous items required for effective management of National Forest System lands. Because printing large quantities is more cost effective to the Government than printing minimal copies each year, the Forest Service had larger print costs associated with administrative items. These items include the Law Enforcement Incident Report forms, National Visitor Use Monitoring forms, and Recreation Fee envelopes and tags.
- Small quantities of extremely large forest planning documents, as well as documents supporting National Environmental Policy Act requirements.

¹ Maps include other map products, such as motor vehicle use maps.

² Includes Forest Service administrative items such as Law Enforcement Incident Report forms, National Visitor Use Monitoring forms, and Recreation Fee envelopes and tags; informational brochures and publications, signs, and exhibits about national forests and Forest Service programs; Agency and program strategic plans and accomplishment reports; training materials; and fire briefing and information materials

- Forest Visitor and Motor Vehicle Use Maps. The Agency has enhanced its ability to update map information in a digital environment, resulting in more frequently printing copies of updated maps, but at a higher cost per copy due to smaller print quantities. Although the Agency can be reimbursed for the forest visitor maps, the initial printing is reflected in the Agency's cost of printing with the Government Publishing Office (GPO).
- Additional recreational and informational brochures, signs, and exhibits to meet the demands of increased visitation at some forests.
- Copies of large assessments and other scientific documents to meet the demands of the research community.

In addition, many units are now taking full advantage of the GPO's Simplified Purchase Award program to acquire promotional items and design services for maps, signs, and other informative materials. These items and services are recorded as "printing" under accounting codes.

Due to the Agency's difficulties in reducing printing and reproduction costs, in a letter dated July 2, 2018, the Chief of the Forest Service instructed field units to make the following adjustments to printing and reproduction practices:

- *Submit all nonstandard, RUSH printing to the Chief's Office for approval.* Rush printing costs are twice the cost of standard printing.
- *Cease copying documents larger than 50 pages in quantities larger than 50. If copies are required, plan ahead and print copies at a substantial reduction in cost.* Using copying services is often more than twice as expensive as sending the document for off-set printing. The Agency spent \$1.1 million on copying services in FY 2017.
- *Cease the development and production of accomplishment and related reports, as well as new printed products to disseminate information available in existing products, e.g., maps.* Units should explore other communication tools (e.g., social media) as methods for providing this information to the public in a timely manner. Forest Service employees should not be duplicating existing, approved products, thereby doubling the cost of providing information to the public.
- *Significantly reduce the printing of forest planning and related documents.* In FY 2017, the Agency spent approximately \$500,000 on providing hard copies of forest planning, National Environmental Policy Act, Environmental Impact Statement, and related documents available to the public. Except where required by court decree, units should make these materials available online, and consider other distribution methods to ensure the public has access, e.g., providing minimal copies to the local library.
- *Significantly reduce the printing of motor vehicle use maps.* Forest Service units should continue to make these maps available online and through the Avenza mobile app, as well as consider other distribution methods to ensure the public has access. Agency employees should also encourage the public to use the Interactive Visitor Map. Copies of the motor vehicle use maps should only be printed on demand as needed, and where it makes sense economically. The Forest Service should continue to identify and use more efficient methods for printing map products.
- *Scrutinize and significantly reduce the printing of ALL Research and Development (R&D) publications.* As directed in the FY 2018 Omnibus Bill, R&D should stop publishing paper copies for public distribution of science and research accomplishment reports and redirect these funds to priority research projects. The Forest Service will significantly reduce the printing of general technical reports and discontinue printing newsletters, pamphlets, and other publications. The Agency spent \$312,294 printing R&D documents in FY 2017.

- *Significantly reduce the purchase of specialty items, such as water bottles, key chains, bookmarks, etc.* Many units are purchasing these items through GPO, and the charges are showing up as printing dollars (silkscreen printing).
- *Submit printing reports to the Washington Office, Office of Communication as outlined in FSM 1635.1. Reports must be submitted for FY 2018 by November 15, 2018.* As required in Agency direction, the Forest Service will monitor Agency expenditures on printing

The Agency expects that these actions will decrease printing costs by approximately 1.5 million in FY 2019. The Forest Service expects to realize significant reductions in annual printing costs with the implementation of the paperwork reduction efforts outlined in the direction from the Chief.

In addition to the annual report required in Agency direction, the Forest Service will establish a monthly report that monitors Agency expenditures on printing and duplication.

The Forest Service will also provide instructions to its purchase card holders to help them more accurately code expenditures for printing and duplicating services.

The Forest Service will also revise the publications management handbook, and provide additional direction for publishing electronic documents and best practices for printing and reproduction services, such as:

- Offering e-pubs or electronic only publishing either online or on CD/DVD.
- Reducing any unnecessary multicolor printing.
- Publishing only abstract pages, title pages, or executive summaries with links to Web sites on large documents.
- Eliminating the practice of printing and distributing promotional publications to those on generic mailing lists.
- Establishing additional map printing contracts for various map products.
- Expanding the number of GPO Express card holders to reduce administrative charges and shipping costs.
- Increasing the use of the GPO small purchase program for printing to better access competitive, local vendors and save on shipping costs.
- Finally, the Forest Service will expand its use of social media and other digital avenues to distribute information that was historically available via a print medium.