

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

	FY 2025 ACTUAL	FY 2026 ESTIMATE	FY 2027 APPROVED
OPERATING BUDGET			
<i>Full Time Equivalent Positions</i>	235.5	235.5	215.5
Personal Services	2,566,600	2,616,400	2,616,400
Employee Related Expenditures	976,300	976,300	1,074,800
Professional and Outside Services	132,800	132,800	132,800
Travel - In State	404,400	404,400	404,400
Travel - Out of State	17,100	17,100	17,100
Other Operating Expenditures	881,000	2,034,700	2,282,000
Equipment	121,400	121,400	121,400
OPERATING SUBTOTAL	5,099,600	6,303,100	6,648,900
SPECIAL LINE ITEMS			
Environmental County Grants	250,000	250,000	250,000
Federal Debt Repayment	11,180,800 ^{1/}	0	0
Fire Suppression	38,200,000	3,200,000	13,200,000 ^{2/3/}
Hazardous Vegetation Removal	417,900	3,039,300	3,039,300 ^{4/}
Inmate Firefighting Crews	809,900	902,700	921,300
Post-Release Firefighting Crews	1,119,900	1,332,700	1,352,800
Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000 ^{5/}
Northern Arizona Wildland Fire Training Facility	0	4,000,000	0
State Fire Marshal	1,805,300	1,844,400	1,891,700
State Fire School	264,700	291,700	294,000
US Forest Service Land Thinning	1,669,300	1,703,400	1,744,100
Wildfire Mitigation	16,413,300	27,354,900	27,595,000 ^{6/}
AGENCY TOTAL	78,230,700	51,222,200	57,937,100 ^{7/}
FUND SOURCES			
General Fund	37,049,900	47,222,200	57,937,100
<u>Other Appropriated Funds</u>			
Long-Term Water Augmentation Fund	41,180,800	4,000,000	0
SUBTOTAL - Other Appropriated Funds	41,180,800	4,000,000	0
SUBTOTAL - Appropriated Funds	78,230,700	51,222,200	57,937,100
Other Non-Appropriated Funds	89,359,600	98,309,800	98,309,800
Federal Funds	4,503,600	4,466,600	4,466,600
TOTAL - ALL SOURCES	172,093,900	153,998,600	160,713,500

AGENCY DESCRIPTION — The Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM) is responsible for the prevention and suppression of forest fires on State Trust Land and private land outside incorporated municipalities (22 million acres total). The department includes the Office of the State Fire Marshal, which enforces the state fire codes and provides training and education for fire personnel and the general public.

FOOTNOTES

- ^{1/} The appropriation made in this section is exempt from the provisions of section 35-190, Arizona Revised Statutes, relating to lapsing of appropriations. (FY 2026 General Appropriations Act footnote)
- ^{2/} A.R.S. § 37-1305 annually appropriates \$3,000,000 from the General Fund to the Fire Suppression Revolving Fund. Because this authorization is in permanent statute, \$3,000,000 of the appropriated amount is not included in the General Appropriations Act.
- ^{3/} Of the amount appropriated in the fire suppression line item, \$10,000,000 shall be used for the purposes prescribed by and are subject to the restrictions outlined in Laws 2021, first special session, chapter 1, section 1, as amended by Laws 2022, chapter 1, section 1. Of the amount appropriated in the fire suppression line item, \$10,000,000 is exempt from the

provisions of section 35-190, Arizona Revised Statutes, relating to the lapsing of appropriations, through June 30, 2029. (General Appropriations Act footnote)

- 4/ The appropriation for the hazardous vegetation removal line item is exempt from the provisions of section 35-190, Arizona Revised Statutes, relating to lapsing of appropriations, until June 30, 2028. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 5/ The sum of \$1,000,000 is appropriated from the state General Fund in each of FY 2021, FY 2022, FY 2023, FY 2024, FY 2025, FY 2026, FY 2027, FY 2028, and FY 2029 to the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management for deposit in the Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication Fund established by A.R.S. § 37-1309 to assist in preventing wildland fire and flooding. (FY 2020 General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 6/ The appropriation for the wildfire mitigation line item is exempt from the provisions of section 35-190, Arizona Revised Statutes, relating to lapsing of appropriations, until June 30, 2029. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 7/ General Appropriations Act funds are appropriated as an Operating Lump Sum with Special Line Items by Agency.

Operating Budget

The budget includes \$6,648,900 and 43 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the operating budget. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$345,800 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments. *(Please see the Agency Detail and Allocations section.)*

Environmental County Grants

The budget includes \$250,000 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Environmental County Grants. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

Monies in this line item have been used by Greenlee, Graham, Gila, Navajo, Cochise and Apache Counties for environmental projects that impact economic development in those counties. Previously funded projects included forest restoration, endangered species habitat protection, watershed restoration, and natural resource planning. DFFM must approve any project prior to expenditure of the monies.

Federal Debt Repayment

The budget includes no funding in FY 2027 for Federal Debt Repayment. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

In the FY 2026 General Appropriations Act, the Legislature appropriated \$11,180,800 one-time from the Long-Term Water Augmentation Fund as an FY 2025 supplemental. The Legislature stipulated that the monies must be used to repay debts incurred to the federal government in the course of wildfire suppression activities and made the monies non-lapsing.

Fire Suppression

The budget includes \$13,200,000 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Fire Suppression. Adjustments are as follows:

One-Time Wildfire Suppression Funding

The budget includes a one-time increase of \$10,000,000 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for fire suppression funding.

A budget footnote specifies that the \$10,000,000 is subject to the restrictions and reporting requirements outlined in Laws 2021, 1st Special Session, Chapter 1 (as amended by Laws 2022, Chapter 1) and is exempt from lapsing through FY 2029.

Monies in this line item are used for fire suppression on state trust land and rural private land. A.R.S. § 37-1305 provides an annual appropriation of up to \$3,000,000 from the General Fund for fire suppression. Because this authorization is in permanent statute, only \$200,000 of the appropriated amount is included in the General Appropriations Act. *(See Wildfire Mitigation line item for additional monies supporting fire suppression in Arizona.)*

Hazardous Vegetation Removal

The budget includes \$3,039,300 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for a Hazardous Vegetation Removal program. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

This line item supports hazardous material removal programs that treat state and private lands through prescribed burning or thinning of flammable vegetation. This work can be conducted by DFFM crews or through fuel reduction grants to contractors.

Inmate Firefighting Crews

The budget includes \$921,300 and 13 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Inmate Firefighting Crews. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$18,600 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

These monies provide firefighting training for 12 inmate fire crews. The crews act as first responders and are used for fuel treatment and fire suppression.

Post-Release Firefighting Crews

The budget includes \$1,352,800 and 20 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Post-Release Firefighting Crews. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$20,100 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

Monies in this line item provide firefighting training for recently released inmates who previously participated in Inmate Firefighting Crews (*see Inmate Firefighting Crews line item*). The Post-Release Firefighting Program allows program participants to work towards completing their wildland firefighting certification following release from Department of Corrections custody.

Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication

The budget includes \$1,000,000 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication line item. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

The FY 2020 General Appropriations Act appropriated \$1,000,000 from the General Fund to DFFM to deposit in the Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication Fund in each fiscal year of FY 2021 through FY 2029. Because these monies were advanced appropriated in the FY 2020 General Appropriations Act, these appropriations will not appear in subsequent General Appropriations Acts.

Monies in this line item are used to provide grants to other state agencies, cities, towns, counties, Indian tribes, and other political subdivisions and nonprofit organizations to fund projects that will assist in the prevention of wildfires and flooding and promote restoration of wildlife habitats by removing nonnative vegetation and replacing it with native vegetation. Saltcedar plants are an example of a nonnative vegetation species.

Northern Arizona Wildland Fire Training Facility

The budget includes no funding in FY 2027 for a Northern Arizona Wildland Fire Training Facility. Adjustments are as follows:

Remove One-Time Funding

The budget includes a decrease of \$(4,000,000) from the Long-Term Water Augmentation Fund in FY 2027 for removal of one-time funding to establish a new wildfire suppression training facility near Flagstaff.

Monies in this line item fund the construction of a new operational base for the Flagstaff Fire Department's Wildfire Management Division and provide wildfire suppression training for local and regional firefighters. In addition to the \$4.0 million state-level appropriation in FY 2026, the City of Flagstaff has allocated \$650,000 to design the facility.

State Fire Marshal

The budget includes \$1,891,700 and 19.5 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the State Fire Marshal. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$47,300 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal enforces the state fire codes and provides training and education for fire personnel and the general public.

State Fire School

The budget includes \$294,000 and 1 FTE Position from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the State Fire School. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$2,300 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

Monies in this line item primarily subsidize smaller rural volunteer fire departments attending Arizona State Fire School workshops which provide firefighting education. Besides \$200,000 for subsidizing these costs, the remaining \$91,700 and 1 FTE Position is used for liaison work with the Arizona State Fire Training Committee and other firefighter training activities.

US Forest Service Land Thinning

The budget includes \$1,744,100 and 17 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the US Forest Service Land Thinning line item. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$40,700 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

Monies in this line item fund administrative costs for partnerships with the U.S. Forest Service to thin forests on federal land. DFFM anticipates clearing about 4,500 acres with this funding.

Wildfire Mitigation

The budget includes \$27,595,000 and 122 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the Wildfire Mitigation line item. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$240,100 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

Monies in this line item are to be used for personnel, operating costs, equipment, and contracted services to mitigate future fires. The budget makes the FY 2027 appropriation non-lapsing through June 30, 2029.

In FY 2025, DFFM expended a total of \$16,413,200 from this line item as follows:

- \$7,158,000 for 122 DFFM staff to oversee the work of 10 crews of 72 inmates working to remove hazardous vegetation.
- \$832,300 for inmate crews and corrections staff.
- \$3,888,100 for Department of Transportation program costs, general operating costs, and other equipment and maintenance.
- \$2,486,600 for contracted personnel to support wildfire mitigation efforts.
- \$2,048,200 for external project grants.

(See the Wildfire Mitigation section of the DFFM narrative in the FY 2023 Appropriations Report for more information on prior appropriations to this line item.)

Other Issues

Budget Stabilization Fund Use for Processing Wildland Fire Claims

A.R.S. § 35-144 authorizes DFFM to use up to \$20,000,000 in Budget Stabilization Fund (BSF) monies to pay wildland fire suppression claims.

DFFM coordinates the dispatch of local fire districts in response to wildland fires occurring on federal land. Expenditures incurred by local districts are paid for by DFFM using monies from the BSF. DFFM then requests reimbursement from its cooperating federal partners. Federal reimbursements are provided to the State Treasurer to be deposited into the BSF.

As of October 20, 2025, DFFM reports using \$14,681,385 in BSF capacity for claims awaiting federal reimbursement. *(See the Budget Stabilization Fund Use for Processing Wildland Fire Claims section of the DFFM narrative in the FY 2021 Appropriations Report for more information on DFFM's use of the BSF.)*

Reduce Vacant FTE Positions

The FY 2027 budget reduces the FTE count for DFFM by (20) Positions. While the agency table reflects the correct appropriated FTE count, the narrative does not attempt to allocate this reduction in the agency budget. Agencies may use their discretion in allocating this FTE reduction within their budget and should reflect the changes in their FY 2028 budget request submitted pursuant to A.R.S. § 35-113. The FY 2028 JLBC Baseline will incorporate the changes as allocated by the agency.