

ANALYSIS

Item 53: Department of Forestry Workload Staffing

Analyst: Matt Stayner

Request: Increase Federal Funds expenditure authority for the Department of Forestry by \$598,368 and authorize the establishment of six limited duration positions (3.0 FTE) to address workload staffing issues resultant from increased federal funding for existing programs.

Analysis: The Oregon Department of Forestry anticipates increased federal support for existing state administered, federally funded programs through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act from multiple sources over the next five years. Initial communications with the U.S. Forest Service indicate that just over \$1.6 million in additional funding will be provided to support five programs:

- Forest Stewardship: \$325,334
- Urban and Community Forestry: \$325,333
- Forest Health Cooperative Assistance: \$325,333
- State Fire Assistance: \$437,890
- Volunteer Fire Assistance: \$187,420

To address the increased workload resultant from program expansion for these and other potential federal programs, the Department has identified the need to establish an additional two administrative positions and four field support positions at a cost of \$598,368. The positions would be limited duration and paid for from the additional federal revenues.

Recommendation: The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that the Emergency Board increase the Federal Funds expenditure authority for the Department of Forestry by \$598,368 and authorize the establishment of six limited-duration positions (3.0 FTE) to address workload staffing issues resultant from increased federal funding for existing programs.

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Oregon Department of Forestry
Klein

Request: Increase Federal Funds expenditure limitation by \$598,368 and establish six new limited duration positions (3.00 FTE) for workload associated with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Discussion: Based on conversations with federal partners, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) anticipates receiving at least \$1.6 million in additional funding from the United States Forest Service and Private Forestry programs associated with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). To support this additional workload, ODF is requesting six limited duration positions (3.00 FTE) using the increased Federal Funds from the IIJA to cover positions and supplies costs. These positions include: an Accountant 1 to provide additional accountability and management to the increased Federal Funds, four Natural Resource Specialist 2 positions to provide direct support to landowners and ODF staff to implement program as part of the IIJA, and an Administrative Specialist 2 to support ODF staff and provide support to the expanded programs. In addition to the increased staffing the funding received will provide additional small grants and other pass-through funds to landowners and local communities for cost-share programs. The Department anticipates the increased funding and workload to continue for the next five fiscal years and will likely submit a policy package to continue these positions into the 2023-25 biennium.

Legal Reference: Increase the Federal Funds expenditure limitation established by chapter 605, section 4(5), Oregon Laws 2021, for the Oregon Department of Forestry, Private Forests, by \$598,368 for the 2021-23 biennium.



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Forestry

State Forester's Office

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May 2, 2022

Senator Peter Courtney, Co-Chair
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Emergency Board
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Oregon Department of Forestry – Limited Duration Capacity Request

Dear Co-Chairs:

Nature of the Request

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) respectfully requests an increase of \$598,368 in Federal Funds limitation and position authority to hire six limited-duration (three full-time equivalent) employees to provide the capacity necessary to handle the anticipated increase in workload related to existing federally-funded programs that will be expanded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) investments.

Agency Action

The IIJA will bring to the department additional funding through existing business lines and federal authorities over the next five fiscal years. At present, we anticipate receiving at least \$1.6 million in additional funding through existing US Forest Service State and Private Forestry programs and authorities. We also anticipate increased workload through other cooperative agreements with federal partners (e.g., the Natural Resources Conservation Service) as those agencies augment programs we help support with IIJA funds. Much of this work relates to one-on-one technical assistance with landowners and administering small grants and other pass-through funds that are part of cost share programs. Thus, there is a need for both administrative (headquarters) and field support. The department may consider a Policy Option Package to ensure a continuation of these federally-funded positions through the 2023 -2025 biennium. The department would seek federally-funded positions authority for the following:

- One Accountant 1 (\$86,509 and \$12,500 Service & Supply) to support the tracking, reporting, and other accountability around the management of federal funds within the agency and via pass-through funding to partner and other supporting organizations. Many of the new and expanded programs include small grant opportunities for landowners. These programs increase demands for regular tracking, reporting, and related financial controls.

- Four Natural Resource Specialist 2 (\$359,084 and \$50,000 Service & Supply) positions to provide program coordination and implementation support. These positions would be field-based and work directly with landowners and other ODF staff to help plan and implement projects, provide technical assistance, and perform quality checks to ensure projects meet eligibility requirements. Positions may be located within landowner assistance or urban and community forestry programs.
- One Administrative Specialist 2 (\$77,775 and \$12,500 Service & Supply) to provide centralized administrative support for new or expanded federally-funded programs. This position would support field and headquarters staff in program implementation and many also help track payments and other disbursements to program participants (e.g., small landowners who receive grants specific to a federally-funded program).

Action Requested

The department respectfully requests an increase of \$598,368 in Federal Funds limitation and position authority to hire six limited-duration employees to provide the capacity necessary to handle the anticipated increase in workload related to existing federally-funded programs.

Legislation Affected

SB 5518, Chapter 605, Section 4(5), Oregon Laws 2021

Sincerely,



Cal Mukumoto
Oregon State Forester
(503) 945-7211

c: Jason Miner, Governor's Office
Oregon Board of Forestry
Matt Stayner, Legislative Fiscal Office
Renee Klein, Chief Financial Office