

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

	FY 2024 ACTUAL	FY 2025 ESTIMATE	FY 2026 BASELINE
OPERATING BUDGET			
<i>Full Time Equivalent Positions</i>	235.5	235.5	235.5
Personal Services	2,457,000	2,100,000	2,100,000
Employee Related Expenditures	880,800	825,000	825,000
Professional and Outside Services	38,000	75,000	75,000
Travel - In State	3,068,300	300,000	300,000
Travel - Out of State	16,800	50,000	50,000
Other Operating Expenditures	608,700	2,238,500	2,238,500
Equipment	59,800	350,000	350,000
OPERATING SUBTOTAL	7,129,400	5,938,500	5,938,500
SPECIAL LINE ITEMS			
Environmental County Grants	250,000	250,000	250,000
Fire District Grants	4,329,000	0	0
Fire Suppression	3,200,000	8,200,000	3,200,000 ^{1/}
Hazardous Vegetation Removal	3,005,400	3,039,300	3,039,300 ^{2/}
Inmate Firefighting Crews	844,900	876,600	876,600
Post-Release Firefighting Crews	1,093,000	1,292,700	1,292,700
Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000 ^{3/}
State Fire Marshal	1,773,100	1,805,300	1,805,300
State Fire School	289,000	289,600	289,600
US Forest Service Land Thinning	915,700	1,669,300	1,669,300
Wildfire Mitigation	12,855,400	27,110,300 ^{4/}	27,110,300
AGENCY TOTAL	36,684,900	51,471,600	46,471,600 ^{5/}
FUND SOURCES			
General Fund	36,684,900	51,471,600	46,471,600
SUBTOTAL - Appropriated Funds	36,684,900	51,471,600	46,471,600
Other Non-Appropriated Funds	69,796,300	71,949,900	71,949,900
TOTAL - ALL SOURCES	106,481,200	123,421,500	118,421,500

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/} 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.
- ^{2/} 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, through June 30, 2027. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- ^{3/} 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)
- ^{4/} The FY 2025 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, 2027. (FY 2025 General Appropriations Act footnote)
- ^{5/} General Appropriations Act funds are appropriated as an Operating Lump Sum with Special Line Items by Agency.

Operating Budget

The Baseline includes \$5,938,500 and 43 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2026 for the operating budget. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2025.

Environmental County Grants

The Baseline includes \$250,000 from the General Fund in FY 2026 for Environmental County Grants. This amount is unchanged from FY 2025.

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.

Fire Suppression

The Baseline includes \$3,200,000 from the General Fund in FY 2026 for Fire Suppression. Adjustments are as follows:

Remove One-Time Funding

The Baseline includes a decrease of \$(5,000,000) from the General Fund in FY 2026 for removal of one-time fire suppression funding.

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 Baseline includes \$3,039,300 from the General Fund in FY 2026 for a Hazardous Vegetation Removal program. This amount is unchanged from FY 2025.

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 Baseline includes \$876,600 and 13 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2026 for Inmate Firefighting Crews. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2025.

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 Baseline includes \$1,292,700 and 20 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2026 for Post-Release Firefighting Crews. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2025.

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 Baseline includes \$1,000,000 from the General Fund in FY 2026 for the Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication line item. This amount is unchanged from FY 2025.

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.

State Fire Marshal

The Baseline includes \$1,805,300 and 19.5 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2026 for the State Fire Marshal. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2025.

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 Baseline includes \$289,600 and 1 FTE Position from the General Fund in FY 2026 for the State Fire School. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2025.

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 \$89,600 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 Baseline includes \$1,669,300 and 17 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2026 for the US Forest Service Land Thinning line item. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2025.

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 Baseline includes \$27,110,300 and 122 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2026 for the Wildfire Mitigation line item. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2025.

Monies in this line item are to be used for personnel, operating costs, equipment, and contracted services to mitigate future fires. In FY 2024, DFFM expended a total of \$12,855,400 from this line item as follows:

- \$5,135,700 for 122 DFFM staff to oversee the work of 10 crews of 72 inmates working to remove hazardous vegetation.
- \$1,304,100 for inmate crews and corrections staff.
- \$3,471,900 for Department of Transportation program costs, general operating costs, and other equipment and maintenance.
- \$1,653,600 for contracted personnel to support wildfire mitigation efforts.
- \$1,290,100 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 2024, DFFM reports using roughly \$16,600,000 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.)*

SUMMARY OF FUNDS	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate
Arson Detection Reward Fund (FFM2169/A.R.S. § 37-1387)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Donations, court-imposed fines, and monies from forfeiture of bail posted for arson convictions.		
Purpose of Fund: To provide rewards for information leading to convictions of arson cases.		
Funds Expended	0	12,000
Year-End Fund Balance	115,300	104,800

SUMMARY OF FUNDS	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate
Cooperative Forestry Fund (FFM2232/A.R.S. § 37-1306)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Legislative appropriations, reimbursements from organizations, the public, other levels of government, and state agencies.		
Purpose of Fund: To fund the State Forester's activities, including forestry assistance and wild land fire prevention and suppression on state lands.		
Funds Expended	15,392,100	16,320,500
Year-End Fund Balance	4,643,700	4,844,700
Fire Suppression Revolving Fund (FFM2360/A.R.S. § 37-1305)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: General Fund appropriations, monies authorized by the Governor's Emergency Council and the Wild Land Fire Emergency Council, civil penalties related to the use of fireworks on state lands and other monies. If the unobligated balance of the fund exceeds \$2,000,000 at the end of any calendar year, the excess shall be transferred to the General Fund.		
Purpose of Fund: To cover the costs of fighting fires on public and private lands. General Fund appropriation expenditures are displayed, which may cause double counting of appropriations.		
Funds Expended	51,187,800	53,765,200
Year-End Fund Balance	45,000	287,600
IGA and ISA Fund (FFM2500/A.R.S. § 35-142)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Various intergovernmental and interagency service agreements.		
Purpose of Fund: Clearing account for monies expended under Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) and Intergovernmental Service Agreements (ISA).		
Funds Expended	2,956,000	1,392,500
Year-End Fund Balance	2,660,200	2,767,700
Indirect Cost Recovery Fund (FFM9000/A.R.S. § 35-142)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Fees from the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with the U.S. Forest Service.		
Purpose of Fund: To offset the costs of the department's overhead personnel.		
Funds Expended	260,400	459,700
Year-End Fund Balance	733,300	1,223,600
Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication Fund (FFM2456/A.R.S. § 37-1309)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Legislative appropriations. The FY 2020 General Appropriation Act appropriated \$1,000,000 from the General Fund to the department in each of FY 2020 through FY 2029 to deposit into the Nonnative Vegetation Species Eradication Fund.		
Purpose of Fund: To provide grants to other state agencies, cities, towns, counties, Indian tribes, other political subdivisions and nonprofit organizations for projects that will assist in fire and flood prevention, conservation of water, replacing nonnative vegetative species with native vegetative species and restoring native habitats. General Fund appropriation expenditures are not displayed to avoid double counting of appropriations.		
Funds Expended	0	0
Year-End Fund Balance	1,853,900	1,853,900
Trampoline Court Safety Fund (FFM2578/A.R.S. § 37-1422)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Fees charged to owners of trampoline courts.		
Purpose of Fund: To implement and maintain the registry of trampoline courts operating in Arizona.		
Funds Expended	0	0
Year-End Fund Balance	14,000	15,800