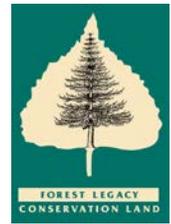




U.S. Forest Service State and Private Forestry Briefing Paper



Topic: Forest Legacy Program

Overview: Through the Forest Legacy Program (FLP), the Forest Service provides grants to State partners to protect important forests -- providing forest products and resource based jobs, protecting air and water quality, providing recreational opportunities, and protecting important fish and wildlife habitat including those for threatened or endangered species.

Authorization: FLP is authorized by the 1990 Farm Bill, which amended the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, and directs the Secretary to establish the FLP to protect environmentally important forest areas that are threatened by conversion to nonforest uses. FLP was amended by the 1996 Farm Bill, to allow for grants to States.

Funding:

- FLP was funded at \$62.347 million in FY 2016, \$53 million in 2015, \$50.9 million in 2014
- Proposed in Administration's FY 2017 budget at \$62.347 million
- Program demand exceeds \$155 million annually.
- Since 2004, FLP has been funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Program Accomplishments:

- To date, the FLP has protected more than 2.58 million acres of important forests.
 - FLP uses a real-time database to track status of projects and program accomplishments.
- FLP consistently leverages a 50% cost share, double the required 25% cost share.
- 53 States and territories are currently in the program.
- FLP is managed with low administrative costs (less than 15% of total appropriated funds since 2003).

Program Specifics

- Projects are selected through a two-step competitive process resulting in high quality projects that are supported locally and are nationally significant.
- Projects are evaluated for Importance (includes ecologic and environmental criteria), Threat and Strategic contribution.
- Through the Forest Action Plans (Statewide Assessment and Resource Strategies), the States identify priority areas within the State to target FLP.
- The program operates on the principle of "willing buyer, willing seller."
- Lands are protected through conservation easements (65% of all FLP projects, 82% of the acres) and fee-simple purchases (35% of all FLP projects, 18% of the acres).
- Lands or conservation easements are held by State agencies or another unit of government.
- Land trusts and other conservation organizations play a critical role in the program by working with landowners, identifying projects, helping to secure cost share including holding cost share properties, and facilitating the completion of projects.



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<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml>