



ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Fifty-fifth Legislature
First Special Session

HB 2001: appropriations; fire suppression

Sponsor: Representative Griffin, LD 14

Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water

Overview

Appropriates \$99,541,800 to the Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM) for wildfire emergency response and mitigation efforts and establishes certain requirements for expending these monies.

History

DFFM

DFFM is led by the State Forester (Forester) and prevents and suppresses wildland fires on state lands and private property located outside of municipalities. The Forester can enter into agreements with state subdivisions and federal agencies for wildfire prevention and suppression and to assist with emergencies in Arizona or other states (A.R.S. §§ [37-1301](#) and [37-1303](#)).

With the Governor’s approval, the Forester may spend up to \$3,000,000 each fiscal year for wildfire suppression and support of other unplanned risk activities ([A.R.S. § 37-1305](#)). The fiscal year 2020-2021 (FY 2021) General Appropriations Act appropriated DFFM an additional \$200,000 for fire suppression, \$693,200 for inmate firefighting crews and \$3,000,000 for hazardous vegetation removal ([Laws 2020, Chapter 58, § 36](#)).

Declarations of Emergency for Wildfires

The Governor may declare a state of emergency for an affected area if conditions of disaster or extreme peril, including fire or flood, exist and are considered beyond the control of any single county, city or town (A.R.S. §§ [26-301](#) and [26-303](#)).

On June 9, 2021, Governor Ducey issued two such declarations for the [Mescal Fire](#) in Gila County and the [Telegraph Fire](#) in Gila and Pinal Counties.

Provisions

Wildfire Emergency Response (Sec. 1)

1. Appropriates \$75,000,000 from the state General Fund (GF) to DFFM in FY 2021 for wildfire emergency response efforts and exempts this appropriation from lapsing.
2. Permits the appropriation to be used for:
 - a) Fire suppression and pre-positioning fire suppression equipment and staff;
 - b) Capital and equipment associated with fire suppression efforts;
 - c) Mitigation projects to address postfire flooding and other damage that may occur as a result of fires or fire suppression activities;
 - d) State or local government agencies' emergency liabilities for emergency shelter, wraparound services and support activities;
 - e) Financial assistance to landowners for emergency repairs to infrastructure damaged by fires or fire suppression activities; and

<input type="checkbox"/> Prop 105 (45 votes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Prop 108 (40 votes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency (40 votes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal Note
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- f) Reimbursement to a state agency or political subdivision for eligible claims from a state or federal emergency.
- 3. Requires the appropriation to supplement, and not supplant, any federal monies.
- 4. Directs DFFM to seek federal reimbursement for expenditures made from the appropriation and that any reimbursements be credited to the appropriation.
- 5. Caps at \$10,000,000 the amount that can be spent for state capital purposes for pre-positioning and fire suppression.
- 6. Instructs DFFM to distribute financial assistance for landowners only as the payor of last resort after all other sources of payment have been exhausted.
- 7. Establishes monthly reporting requirements for DFFM to the Legislature.

Wildfire Mitigation (Sec. 2)

- 8. Appropriates the following from the GF to DFFM in FY 2021 for wildfire mitigation:
 - a) \$16,999,300 and 122 FTEs for inmate firefighting crew supervisors and operating costs;
 - b) \$3,910,000 for vehicle purchases;
 - c) \$1,382,500 for vehicle operating costs; and
 - d) \$2,250,000 for contracted hazardous vegetation removal.
- 9. Exempts the appropriation from lapsing through June 30, 2022.