



THE ADMINISTRATION

Administration Basics

The Executive Branch

In the federal government, the executive branch is charged with enforcing law as given in the Constitution and written by Congress. The President, as the head of the executive branch, manages the federal government through his administration, or staff. The President's administration is composed of all federal Departments, and the individual agencies under the authority of those Departments.

The Importance of the Administration

While Congress writes laws, the administration determines the ways in which those laws are enforced and the means by which federal policy is executed through the development of government regulations, implementation of federal law, and formulation and management of budget requests. In general, legislatures set broad policy mandates in passing laws, while executive agencies create more detailed regulations that enforce those laws. The finer points of federal policy that are dealt with at the agency level can have profound impacts on the workings of government programs.

The Administration at a Glance

- The Administration is made up of 15 executive Departments, each with a specific jurisdiction as to the enforcement of federal law and management of federal agencies
- An incoming President can appoint up to 6,000 officers before assuming command, and may make another 8,000 while in office

Forests and the Administration

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available science, and efficient management. Forests and forestry are a important area of focus for the USDA and there are a number of agencies within the USDA charged with forests policy in some capacity:

U.S. Forest Service

Mission: To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Activities: The activities of the Forest Service cover four broad areas. First is management of public forests and grasslands, organized under the National Forest System, covering 8.5% of all lands within the U.S. They support forestry research through forest and range experiment stations located across the country. State and private forestry at the regional level furthers management and restoration of forest lands not held by the federal government through cooperation with state and local governments, forest industries, and private landowners. International forestry efforts promote policies and programs around the world that ensure sound management of the world's forest resources.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Mission: To provide products and services that enable people to be good stewards of the Nation's soil, water, and related natural resources on non-Federal lands.

Activities: The NRCS provides assistance to landowners and resource managers through five business activities that help support government conservation programs. Conservation planning and technical consultation helps identify natural resource problems and develop conservation plans to solve resource issues. Conservation implementation ensures successful conservation practices once conservation goals have been identified. Natural resource inventories and assessments collect and disseminate the most updated data in order to better understand natural resource issues. Natural resource technology transfers help landowners and managers understand the most recent developments in the conservation field. Finally, financial incentives provide landowners with real incentives to adopt conservation practices that produce real environmental benefits.

Cooperative State Research, Extension, and Education Service (CSREES)

Mission: To advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities by supporting research, education, and extension programs in the Land-Grant University System and other partner organizations.

Activities: Cooperative state Research, Extension, and Education Service (CSREES) furthers their research, extension, and education efforts largely through the administration of a grant programs to land grant universities and partner organizations. Competitive grants are awarded to eligible institutions based on recommendations of proposal review panels, while formula grants are appropriated to state extension offices based on statutory, population-based formulas and typically require a 50% nonfederal con-share.

Farm Service Agency

Mission: To equitably serve all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans.

Activities: The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is primarily tasked with the implementation of farm conservation and regulation laws through the country. While the FSA administers the large farm subsidy programs that guide agricultural production nationwide, they also administer the large farmland conservation programs including the Conservation Reserve Program, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, the Emergency Forest Restoration Program, and the Biomass Crop Assistance Program.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) protects and provides access to the nation's natural and cultural heritage through resource use and management, recreational opportunities, and community assistance. The DOI agency that most directly deals with forests and forestry is the Bureau of Land Management.

Bureau of Land Management

Mission: To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Activities: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers public lands in under control of the DOI. The BLM is mandated to carry out multiple use management of federal lands that seeks to balance oil, mineral, and timber production which bring in federal revenues with the maintenance of wilderness areas and public lands recreations opportunities that are aimed at enhancing public lands.

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

In the executive office of the President, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is responsible for assembling the administration's budget request. After federal agencies submit their budget requests to their perspective departments, the OMB assembles the departmental requests and begins a review process. The OMB passes its conclusions back to the departments and the final result becomes the President's annual budget request, which is then acted upon by Congress through the budget and appropriations processes. The OMB occupies an incredibly important position in the budget process, as its product, the Presidential budget request, frames the initial discussion for the agency appropriations.

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