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# Acting Deputy Secretary DanielDavis Announces \$236 Million from President Biden's Investing in America Agenda for Wildfire Resilience and Recovery

Interior Department has invested over \$1 billion from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for wildland fire management

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Contact: Interior Press@ios.doi.gov

**TUCSON, Ariz.** — Acting Deputy Secretary of the Interior Laura Daniel-Davis today announced \$236 million in funding allocations from President Biden's Investing in America agenda to support wildland fire management into fiscal year 2025 across the nation. The funding will help reduce risk from wildfires, support improved wildland firefighter training, expand efforts to rehabilitate burned areas in collaboration with partners, and advance wildfire science. Today's announcement brings the total the Department of the Interior has allocated for wildland fire management from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to nearly \$1.1 billion across the nation since it went into effect in fiscal year 2022.

Acting Deputy Secretary Daniel-Davis made the announcement at Saguaro National Park in Tucson, Arizona, with Mayor Regina Romero and Arizona State Forester and Director Thomas Torres. The state is receiving upwards of \$10 million in this latest allocation, bringing the total funding for wildfire mitigation and recovery in Arizona through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to more than \$60 million.

"Since the enactment of the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Interior Department has worked quickly to get money out the door and in the hands of states, Tribes and local communities to help combat the ever-growing threat of the climate crisis," said **Acting Deputy Secretary Daniel-Davis**. "Communities in the West in particular understand this threat – with increasing temperatures and more

severe fires – and the Biden-Harris administration is taking action by investing in comprehensive wildland fire management that is creating more climate-resilient lands across the nation."

The Department is dedicating nearly \$176 million from today's announcement to collaboratively reduce the risk of extreme wildfires across landscapes by expanding capacity and accelerating the pace and scale of fuels management projects in coordination with partners. These projects reduce excessive vegetation that can fuel wildfires through methods such as mechanical vegetation removal and chemical treatments of invasive species. Projects will also use beneficial fire, such as prescribed fires and cultural burning. To support the acceleration of these activities, some of this funding will be used to expand the National Interagency Prescribed Fire Training Center, providing the interagency wildland fire workforce with access to prescribed fire training and opportunities to gain practical experience.

Nearly \$56 million will be used to help restore landscapes damaged by recent wildfires. This includes over \$20 million to continue developing locally adapted seeds and plant materials to revegetate areas so severely impacted by wildfires that the lands are unlikely to recover naturally. This builds on the Department's <a href="National Native Seed Strategy Keystone Initiative">National Native Seed Strategy Keystone Initiative</a>, focused on securing enough native seeds and plants to restore and enhance the resilience of lands and waters.

Nearly \$3.1 million will support the Department's wildland fire workforce by continuing to modernize training and position qualifications. This includes additional investments in the interagency Incident Performance and Training Modernization initiative, which will provide updated courses, offer more options for practical experience, reduce barriers to qualification and establish seamless interoperability within the interagency wildland fire workforce.

Today's announcement also includes \$1.4 million to advance wildfire science. The <u>Joint Fire Science Program</u>, funded by both the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture (USDA), will use this investment to further support research that will help inform how the interagency wildland fire community can best address the growing threat of wildfires amid a changing climate.

These critical investments are supporting the nation's wildland fire workforce, accelerating the pace and scale of fuels management and burned area rehabilitation, and advancing wildland fire science. Additional investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will continue through 2026.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also created the <u>Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management</u> <u>Commission</u>, charged with making recommendations to improve federal policies related to the mitigation, suppression, and management of wildland fires in the United States. In September 2023, the Commission released a <u>comprehensive report</u> outlining 148 recommendations to improve the nation's relationship with wildfire. Today's funding advances many of those recommendations.

Visit the Department's <u>interactive map</u> to track funding invested so far from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for wildland fire management nationwide.

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