Federal Budget & Appropriations

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Congress annually considers several appropriations measures providing discretionary funding for numerous activities—such as national defense, education, homeland security, and environment—as well as general government operations.

Appropriations acts are characteristically annual.

Generally provide funding authority that expires at the end of the federal fiscal year, September 30.
**Budget & Approps Timeline**

1. **President’s Budget** (February)
2. **Committee Oversight Hearings** (February - May)
3. **Budget Resolution** (April 15)
4. **Appropriations Committees Consider Bills** (Summer)
5. **House & Senate Enact Bills** (September 30)
6. **President Signs Bill** (September 30)
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Budget & Approps Timeline
Negotiations take place for months within administration:

- Office of Management & Budget
- PADs and DADs
- Council on Environmental Quality
- Agencies: USFS, USDA, DOI, etc.

OMB, CEQ, Agencies

August - January
USDA Forest Service Budget:

http://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/budget-performance
Budget & Approps Timeline

President’s Budget  
(February)

Budget Resolution  
(April 15)

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President Signs Bill  
(September 30)
• Oversight Hearings (any committee of jurisdiction)
  • Administration defends budget/Congress critiques budget
  • Public involvement:
    - testimony/group letters/public witness day
  • Member requests
• Budget Resolution

Congressional Process Begins

Spring
Budget & Approps Timeline

President’s Budget (February)

Budget Resolution (April 15)

Committee Oversight Hearings (February - May)

Appropriations Committees Consider Bills (Summer)

House & Senate Enact Bills (September 30)

President Signs Bill (September 30)
• 12 Appropriations Bills
  • Work with committee staff
  • Continue to advocate funding levels
  • Consider report language
• House and Senate pass separate bills
• Conferenced Appropriations bill by September 30
• Signed by President by midnight September 30

Approps Committees
Consider Bills

Summer – September 30
Never. Happens. Anymore!
• Continuing Resolutions (CRs)
• Omnibus
• Cromnibus
• Government Shutdown

Never. Happens. Anymore! ??
• Thomas LOC: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php
  • All appropriations bills from House and Senate
  • All report language
  • Every CR and more
  • Going back to FY1998

Bills Posted on Thomas
• Spending Instructions
• Directives
• Spending Restrictions

Agencies are not legally bound to report language, but generally follow them as though it’s law…unless they don’t.
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QUESTIONS?