



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

December 5, 2005

H.R. 3818

Forest Service Partnership Enhancement Act of 2005

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on October 18, 2005

H.R. 3818 would expand the Forest Service's authority to enter into agreements with nonfederal entities (state and local governments, Indian tribes, or nonprofit organizations) to perform certain activities on federal land administered by that agency. (Funding for such agreements comes from annual appropriations and, in some cases, from receipts from the sale of timber on federal land.) H.R. 3818 would not change the amount of funding that would be available to the Forest Service to implement such agreements; however, it would allow the agency to provide to such entities, in advance, its share of costs. Relative to current law, which generally prohibits such advance payments, that authority could accelerate spending of funds that are currently available for cooperative projects on land administered by the Forest Service. Any resulting change in the timing of outlays would affect direct spending.

Based on information from the Forest Service, CBO expects that the agency would provide advance payments only for projects estimated to cost less than a few thousand dollars. CBO estimates that the agency currently spends less than \$500,000 annually for such projects and that any resulting changes in the timing of federal spending under the bill would be negligible. Enacting H.R. 3818 would not affect revenues.

H.R. 3818 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. Any costs incurred by state, local, or tribal governments to participate in the partnership agreements authorized by this bill would be incurred voluntarily.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Megan Carroll. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.