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Secure Rural Schools Program

The Secure Rural Schools program provides critical funding for schools, roads, and other municipal services to more than 700 counties across the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

The Forest Service was established in 1905 with 56 million acres of land. By 1910, the amount of National Forest System land tripled to 172 million acres. Today, the agency manages approximately 196 million acres. Congress ratified the Act of May 23, 1908, as a measure to support rural counties whose tax base was limited by the growing amount of Federal land. A portion of Forest Service funds generated through multi-use activities, such as grazing, timber production, and special use permits, are distributed to eligible counties to help maintain local roads and schools.

By the year 2000, after decades of declining agency revenues, Congress passed the [Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act](#) to help stabilize the funds available to rural counties.

Payments are divided into [three distinct categories](#), or Titles: Title I for roads and schools, Title II for projects on Federal lands, and Title III for county projects.

Updates

- [2024 payments](#) 1908 Act (amended) were distributed to states in April 2025. 2024 payments are subjected to 5.7% sequestration reduction. Payment reports do not include a sequestration reduction except the new Final Total Payment Report.
- [Secure Rural Schools County Allocation Election Training](#) (PPTX, 1.04 MB) and [recording](#). The payment and title allocation elections forms were sent to the States Treasurer’s office via email on 6/16/23. Payment elections (1908 Act Amended vs SRS) must be submitted to the Forest Service by August 1, 2023, and title allocation (Title I, II, III percentages) must be submitted by September 30, 2023. States working with their counties are encouraged to submit both the payment and title allocation election by the August 1st deadline.
- The Secure Rural Schools Resource Advisory Committee [Charter](#) allows committees the flexibility to meet virtually. All committees are encouraged to utilize this flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. Notices of virtual meetings will be

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published in the [Federal Register](#) at least 15 days in advance.

- Secure Rural Schools projects must be initiated by Sept. 30, 2025, and project funds must be obligated by Sept. 30, 2026. Any funds, including funds from previous years, can be used.
- Congress [reauthorized](#) Secure Rural Schools payments for fiscal years 2021-2023.
- [Contact Brianna Gallegos](#) to find a local Resource Advisory Committee coordinator or for general questions about Forest Service Secure Rural Schools Program. Please allow at least two business days for a response.

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