



# State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet Federated States of Micronesia 2025



## Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2024 Final
Community Forests and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$84,355
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$45,000
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$0
State Fire Assistance	\$90,000
Urban and Community Forestry	\$190,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$409,355</b>

NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester's office.

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) comprise a vast region of over 600 islands spanning 1,678 miles. It is in the western Pacific in the Caroline Islands, north of the equator, east of Palau and west of the Marshall Islands. The FSM is an independent nation that includes four States: Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. The islands are recognized as part of the globally important Polynesia-Micronesia biodiversity hotspot. They support unique and diverse ecosystems with a variety of environmental resources, including many endemic trees and species rich with historic biocultural uses.

The FSM maintains strong ties with the United States, with which it has a Compact of Free Association. Of the country's population, 50% live on Chuuk, 33% on Pohnpei, 10% in Yap and 7% in Kosrae. The States have a significant level of autonomy with ownership of land and aquatic areas varying between States. In Kosrae and Pohnpei, land is both privately and state owned, with aquatic areas managed by the States and public trusts. In Chuuk, most land and aquatic areas are privately owned and acquired through inheritance, gift, or more recently, by purchase. In Yap, almost all land and aquatic areas are owned or managed by individual estates and usage is subject to traditional control.

Responsibility for environmental issues is shared between the State and National Governments. Each State strives to control development and manage natural resources through the creation of land use plans, coastal zone plans, legislation, and regulations. The National Government provides guidance and technical assistance to the States when needed and requested. This report highlights the goals, objectives, and activities of each USDA Forest Service program implemented with partners and agencies of each island state and National Government. At this time, all the federal program grants are awarded directly to the States' implementing agencies for program activities.

## Program Goals

- ?Agriculture Sector Strategic Goal 1: Maintain and facilitate a well-resourced and properly focused agriculture sector operating within a stable and consistent policy framework.
- ?Agriculture Sector Strategic Goal 2: Increase production of traditional farming systems for household nutritional needs, for traditional needs, and for cash incomes.
- ?Agriculture Sector Strategic Goal 3: Increase the volume of commercially viable surpluses to be marketed by the private sector into local and regional markets.
- ?Agriculture Sector Strategic Goal 4: Promote environmentally sound and sustainable agricultural production.
- ?Environment Sector Strategic Goal 1: Increase environmental considerations, including climate change, within national policy and planning, as well as in all economic development activities.
- ?Environment Sector Strategic Goal 2: Reduce fossil fuel energy use by converting to renewable energy sources to minimize the emission of greenhouse gases.

- ?Environment Sector Strategic Goal 3: Enhance the sustainable use of FSM's biological resources and ensure that the benefits derived are shared fairly amongst all stakeholders.
- ?Environment Sector Strategic Goal 4: Manage and protect the Nation's natural environment through effective conservation of the marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems.
- ?Environment Sector Strategic Goal 5: Improve environmental awareness and education and increase public involvement in conserving the natural resources of FSM.
- ?Environment Sector Strategic Goal 6: Establish effective biosecurity (border control, quarantine, and eradication) programs to effectively protect biodiversity from impacts of non-native, invasive species.
- ?Environment Sector Strategic Goal 7: Enhance the technical capacity of the environmental sector to support environmental programs in-house.

## Key Issues

- ?Coastal Stabilization: Threats to coastal stabilization include development along coastlines, harvesting of mangroves for fuel, dredging for sand and coral, and preference for artificial seawalls. Residents of high islands are increasingly moving inward because of coastal erosion and shifting weather patterns due to climate change. These movements are contributing to habitat fragmentation and degradation due to the increasing demand for housing and infrastructure.
- ?Food security & resilience: Climate change, developmental pressure, and invasive pests are impacting the resiliency of traditional agroforestry systems that provide food to communities across the islands. In particular, the number and volume of coconut trees has significantly decreased in every state due to the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB). Outbreaks of the whitefly have impacted agriculture production and the black sock fungal disease (*Phellinus noxius*) has been affecting native forest trees.
- ?Watersheds (high islands): Watersheds provide important ecosystem services that include access to abundant clean freshwater. Negative impacts of degraded watersheds are accelerated erosion, poor water quality, landslides, siltation of rivers and nearshore marine, and increased flooding downstream.
- ?Production and sustainable harvesting of forests: Population growth and economic pressure have led to over cutting of trees for firewood. Beyond climate change and storm impacts, the most major factors contributing to a loss of mangroves in all four States includes human impacts from new developments, as well as harvesting and removal (through girdling or ringbarking) for wood products and open channels for boat transportation.
- ?Invasive Species: FSM hosts over 500 invasive plant species, 62 invasive animals, one invasive fungus, and various bacteria and diseases which are contributing to the decline of native species, degrading ecosystems, and declining food security.
- ?Climate Change: Shifting weather patterns are affecting the health of the environment by decreasing precipitation, increasing drought, rising sea-levels leading to coastal erosion and salt contamination, and an increase in weather-related events. These impacts threaten FSM's population, the majority of which depends on the country's ecosystems for their livelihoods, both for subsistence and as sources of income.
- ?Wildfire: Mainland Yap experiences chronic wildfires on years with dry periods and acute wildfires that burn valuable forest lands. On two occasions in the last 40 years, at least 22% of Yap has been burned during drought periods.

## Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2024 Accomplishments	Value
Population	106,941	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	195
Acres of Forest Land	148,924	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	0
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	69,500	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	0
Number of NIPF Landowners	1,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	0
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	0
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	29,312	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	0
Number of Rural Fire Departments	4	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	39	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	6
Forest Based Employment	0	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	16,572
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	4,808
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	0		

## Program Highlights

### Cooperative Fire Protection

Yap's wildfire program includes projects designed to compartmentalize fuel loads to suppress and prevent wildfires. It also features outreach components to educate the public about the efforts undertaken by the Forestry Unit.

### Forest Health Protection

Yap is actively managing all known infested areas of the targeted invasive species like the African Tulip, Lantana, Little Fire Ants and Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle for eradication. Invasive plants targeted have been already treated and Yap is now entering second phase with the Management of Operations aimed at reducing their seed banks. Kosrae assisted the Invasive Plant Management in conducting control measures on eight sites targeting two plant species (Leucaena Leucocephala and Clerodendrum). Kosrae contracted groups of locals to control these two targeted invasive plants mechanically by cutting and clearing with no usage of chemicals. Kosrae also updated their Kosrae Invasive Species Taskforce (KIST) Strategic Action Plan (SAP).

### Forest Legacy

The freshwater forested wetland in the Yela Valley of Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia, is the heart of an unusually pristine tropical watershed extending from ridgetop to reef, contains the largest remaining stand of Terminalia carolinensis (locally known as ka) in the world which is endemic to Kosrae and neighboring island of Pohnpei. It contains several other endemic plant species and also provides habitat for the Micronesian pigeon, an endangered species. The landowners of this primeval area are keen to keep this forest untouched of development. The Yela Ka Forest serves as the demonstration forest and an ecotourism attraction educating people about the natural services it provides. Kosrae State celebrated 10th year anniversary of the largest Ka Forest in the world.

### Forest Stewardship

Kosrae does a lot of awareness with communities, schools and joined other conversation societies and introduced mechanical control measures and assisted data collection concerning mangrove ecology with rod-based Surface Elevation Tables (rSET) methodology in 30 plots. In celebration of International Forest Day, Kosrae took 10 students and plant trees at the riverbanks. Furthermore, Kosrae conducted a youth to youth summit, explaining the need to care for the Marine Protected Areas, conservation of natural resources and environmental impacts. Additionally, Yap continues to assist landowners to actively manage their land and actively utilizing State Forestry nursery to help landowners. Chuuk re-introduced

the Stewardship Program by meeting State Leaders, conservation societies, and landowners. Chuuk has already identified key individuals that might comprise of the Stewardship Coordinating Committee and slowly meeting landowners regarding reforestation on their land.

### ***Landscape Scale Restoration***

Micronesia Conservation Trust continues to support the FSM National Government, State Governments, and local partners in advancing terrestrial conservation and forest stewardship across Micronesia, aligning efforts with the Micronesia Challenge 2030 (MC2030) goals.

At the Micronesia Challenge Regional Meeting in December 2024 in Guam, MCT played a key role in coordinating the Terrestrial Measures side event. This session refined regional goals, setting a target to effectively manage 30% of terrestrial resources, with 20% designated as conservation areas. Discussions emphasized integrating scientific research, traditional knowledge including governance to address key threats such as invasive species and habitat loss.

In Kosrae, MCT facilitated a workshop with the Yela Environment Landowners Association (YELA) to update its Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP), identifying priority actions for 2025. A work plan and budget are now in development to support implementation. Meanwhile, in Chuuk, MCT is assessing the Chuuk Conservation Society's (CCS) capacity to implement the Sapo, Oror, Ununo (SOU) FSP following CCS's leadership restructuring.

In Pohnpei, MCT is supporting the Pohnpei Division of Natural Resources Management in forest restoration efforts. The project engages local farmers in reforestation and monitoring, fostering a sense of ownership and encouraging advocacy for forest health. These efforts raise awareness about the dangers of deforestation due to sakau farming and highlight the importance of maintaining a healthy forest.

The MC Terrestrial Measures Webviewer continues to enhance regional access to critical conservation data. Recent upgrades, supported by MCT and the Conservation Biology Institute (CBI), include improved mapping, contextual data updates, and expanded plot summaries. Future plans include integrating a mangrove data layer to strengthen regional resilience against environmental changes.

### ***Mangrove Restoration***

Kosrae Island Resources and Management Authority Forest Stewardship Program funded by USFS, succeeded in mangrove restoration with engagement of two communities and five groups by out planting 3400 mangrove propagules in three areas.

### ***Urban and Community Forestry***

The U&CF Program has demonstrated itself to be an exceptional initiative, providing substantial benefits to Yap State and its communities. The agroforestry system on Yap is very involved and integrated into the communities and environment, featuring a fruit-tree garden that blends seamlessly into the island's natural ecological framework. In 2023, a severe drought impacted the islands of Yap, disrupting numerous ecosystem services. In response, the U&CF Program initiated an agroforest enhancement initiative, which included replanting fruit trees within the communities, resulting in numerous requests for fruit tree seedlings. There was a total of fifteen (15) approved applicants for fruit trees, coastal mitigation, and Nypa projects. Citrus, mountain apple, cacao, soursop, breadfruit, mango, and other fruit trees were distributed across various communities in Yap. In 2024, the drought continued to have severe effects on several outer islands, impacting 70% of crops and trees on Fais limestone atoll. To alleviate the consequences of the drought, the Urban Community Forestry Program collaborated with the Forest Stewardship Program to promote the planting of fruit trees in Fais. Through the partnership between Melai Mai and Yap Forestry, one hundred ten (110) assorted tropical fruit trees were sent to a community on Fais Island.

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## Contact Information



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