

The committee asked for pre-pandemic to current position counts. In FY19, we had 119 full-time positions. In FY27, we have 144 — an increase of 25 positions. Twenty of those positions are limited service and largely federally funded.

The primary driver of growth has been time-limited federal funding through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Positions funded through IRA and BIL will sunset over the next two to four years.

Overall, staffing growth reflects where federal funding opportunities have been available, not necessarily an expansion of core General Fund-supported priorities. For example, in forestry, we have been able to leverage significant outside investment to build temporary capacity. By contrast, state lands stewardship has far fewer federal funding streams, even as demand and workload continue to grow.

While overall position counts have increased, that growth is tied primarily to time-limited federal opportunities and strategic internal realignment — not across-the-board General Fund expansion.

DIVISION STAFFING CHANGES AND FUNDING CONTEXT

Administration

Growth reflects strategic internal reallocation by converting an exempt position to classified without new funding, moving a position from Forestry into the business office, and adding federally funded limited-service capacity to administer approximately \$3.3 million annually in Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars.

Forests

The increase is primarily federally funded limited-service positions tied to Forest Action Plan implementation and Building Forest Resilience grants federal IRA and BIL funding. Several of these positions are time-limited and will sunset. One limited-service position is currently vacant and unlikely to be filled given funding constraints.

State Parks

The increase reflects implementation of the Parks Modernization Study that identified that parks operations would benefit from more year-round full-time positions. We reduced reliance on seasonal staff and strategically converted capacity to four year-round classified positions to improve continuity, safety, and operational efficiency. Those increases were offset by reductions in temporary employees.

POSITIONS CHANGES FY19 – FY27



Lands Administration and Recreation

Increases in this division are largely limited-service and federally or specially funded positions. These include support for state lands planning and Act 59 implementation, with funding through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB).

We also added a recreation grant position supported by administrative funding through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and Recreational Trails Programs.

Additionally, two ANR lands survey positions were added using a combination of interdepartmental transfer and federal funds.

One position is vacant and unlikely to be filled given current funding constraints.

Position Changes from FY19 to FY27			
Division	FY19	FY27	FY19 vs. FY27
Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants –3 • Contracts –1 • Managers –2 	8	13	5
Forestry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Lands –2 • Urban and Community Forestry –1 • Forest Health –1 • Wildland Fire –1 • Forest Economy –1 • Watershed –1 • Outreach –1 • Climate –1 	57	64	7
State Parks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks operations positions -4 	46	50	4
Land Administration and Recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation Grants –2 • Conservation –3 • Survey –2 • Recreation –1 • State Lands –1 	8	17	9
TOTAL	119	144	25