

Changes in Mandatory Program Spending (CHIMPS)

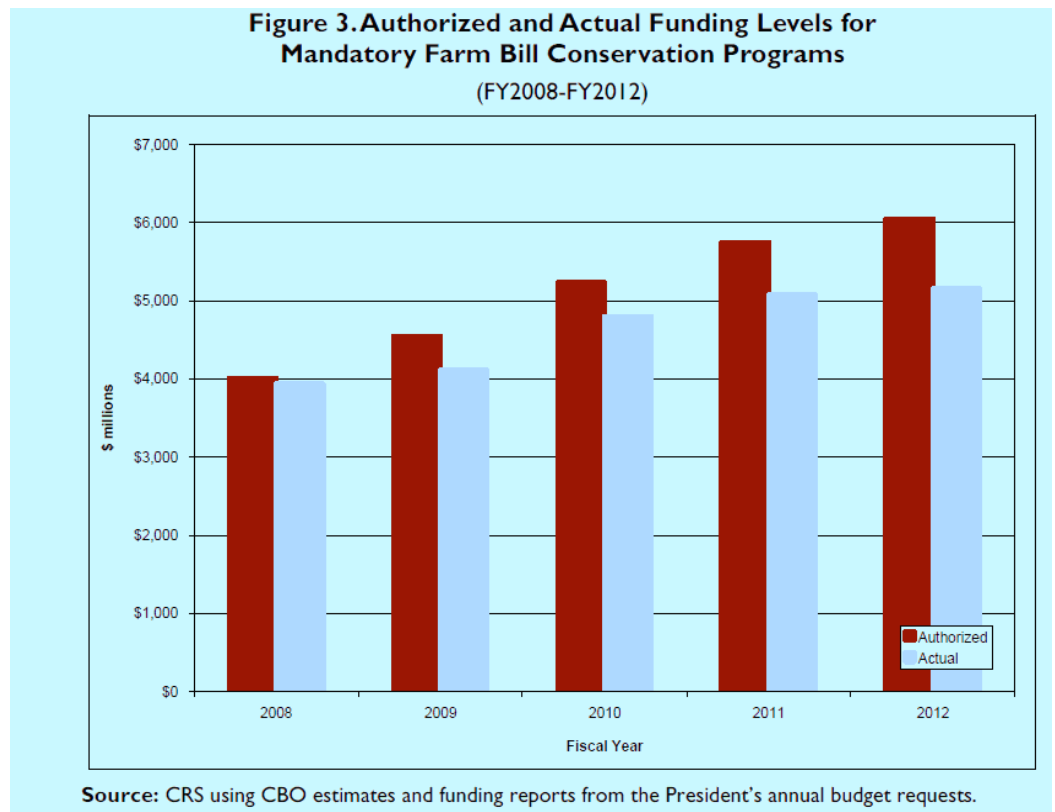
Impacts on Farm Bill Conservation Programs, FY 2003-2012

Budget rules allow the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to unilaterally impose annual spending limits on Farm Bill mandatory spending programs without the approval of the authorizing committees, in this case the Agriculture Committees. These limits are known as Changes in Mandatory Program Spending (CHIMPS). From FY 2003-2012, CHIMPS increased steadily, threatening to undermine our most critical conservation programs.

Fact 1: According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), total CHIMPS to mandatory agricultural programs from FY 2003-2010 equaled \$7.5 billion.¹ This increased to over \$9 billion in FY 2012.

Fact 2: Since the enactment of the 2002 Farm Bill, appropriators have taken roughly \$4.4 billion from Farm Bill mandatory conservation spending.²

Fact 3: The Conservation Title has been uniquely targeted, accounting for over 50 percent of all Farm Bill CHIMPS from FY 2003 to FY 2010 and 83 percent of all Farm Bill CHIMPS from FY 2007 to FY 2010.³



Fact 4: In FY 2012, Farm Bill mandatory conservation spending was cut by \$745.5 million, the largest single-year CHIMP since 2002.⁴

Fact 5: In the 2008 Farm Bill, Congress fully offset the modest increase in spending that the Farm Bill provided to protect our natural resources.

Fact 6: Between FY 2002 and FY 2012, appropriators did not once use CHIMPS to reduce direct spending on farm production subsidies.

¹ Jim Monke and Megan Stubbs, *Reductions in Mandatory Agriculture Program Spending*, CRS Report for Congress (Congressional Research Service, May 19, 2010), <http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/crs/R41245.pdf>.

² NSAC by comparing budget authority to appropriations bills.

³ NSAC using Monke and Stubbs, *Reductions in Mandatory Agriculture Program Spending*, and by comparing budget authority to appropriations bills; does not include rescissions.

⁴ NSAC by comparing budget authority to appropriations bills.