

USGS Wins Small Increase in Final Interior Bill

(This analysis is part of a series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates on the FY 2002 congressional appropriations process. This analysis includes information on R&D in final FY 2002 appropriations for the Department of the Interior. The complete series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates, including continually updated analyses of R&D by agency in FY 2002 appropriations, is available on the AAAS R&D Web Site (<http://www.aaas.org/spp/R&D>) in the "FY 2002 R&D" or the "What's New" sections.)

(This update is substantially similar to the October 18 update on Interior appropriations, with some minor revisions.)

On November 5, President Bush signed the FY 2002 Interior appropriations bill (HR 2217; Public Law 107-63) into law. The **final Interior bill provides \$673 million for Interior R&D**, an increase of 6.5 percent or \$41 million above the FY 2001 funding level (see Table). This is more than the House and Senate-proposed funding levels and far above the President's request. Although the President's FY 2002 request caused alarm in the science and engineering community because of its proposed cut of nearly 11 percent for R&D in Interior's U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), both the House and the Senate voted to restore funding to the proposed cuts, and the final bill gives USGS a slight increase of 3.5 percent in its total budget and 3.1 percent for its R&D.

The **U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)** is the primary sponsor of R&D in Interior. The final Interior bill provides \$914 million for its total budget in FY 2002, \$101 million more than the request. The Administration requested a \$70 million cut in USGS from the FY 2001 funding level; final Interior appropriation restores the cuts and provides a \$31 million or 3.5 percent increase over FY 2001 (see Table).

R&D accounts for nearly two-thirds of the USGS budget. The Bush Administration requested only \$491 million for USGS R&D, a proposed cut of 10.7 percent from FY 2001, but the final Interior bill provides \$567 million, an increase of 3.1 percent over FY 2001. (For details of House appropriations for Interior R&D, please see the June 26 AAAS R&D Funding Update; for details of Senate appropriations for Interior R&D, please see the July 2 AAAS R&D Funding Update for details of the President's request for Interior R&D, please see Chapter 12 of *AAAS Report XXVI: R&D FY 2002*).

The request proposed to cut funding for R&D in all four USGS divisions, but hardest hit would have been programs in Water Resources (down 25.5 percent) and Biological Research (down 7.0 percent). The FY 2002 budget explained that USGS performs a significant amount of research that primarily benefits other federal agencies, states, and local governments; the budget proposed to reduce funding for these programs, though without corresponding increases in other agencies' budgets. The final Interior bill instead keeps most programs' funding close to or slightly above the FY 2001 level.

The Interior bill provides \$140 million for R&D in the Water Resources Division (up 2.8 percent from FY 2001), \$38 million more than the request. The request proposed to cut **the National Water Quality Assessment Program (NAWQA)** by nearly a third. NAWQA is charged with monitoring the nation's water quality, and its data are used by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and many state regulatory agencies. The request also proposed to all but eliminate the Toxic Substances Hydrology program. The final Interior bill follows the earlier House and Senate bills in allowing these programs to continue at close to their FY 2001 funding levels.

The final Interior bill provides \$166 million for the USGS **Biological Resource Division (BRD)**, \$17 million more than the request and \$6 million more than FY 2001. The request proposed to eliminate funding for the National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) program. The NBII uses the World

Wide Web and other technologies to establish a distributed web of biological data and information sources through which people can find specific information, retrieve it electronically, and apply it to resource management questions. The request also proposed to cut funding for other BRD programs, but the final bill restores funding for all programs to at least their FY 2001 funding levels.

USGS is one of the leading federal sponsors of earth sciences research, along with the Department of Energy, the National Science Foundation, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Within the earth sciences, USGS is particularly important in geological hazards research, including research on earthquakes and volcanoes. USGS is also a leading sponsor of water resources research and biological research. Most of this research is conducted within Interior labs to address the science needs of Interior's other agencies, such as the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

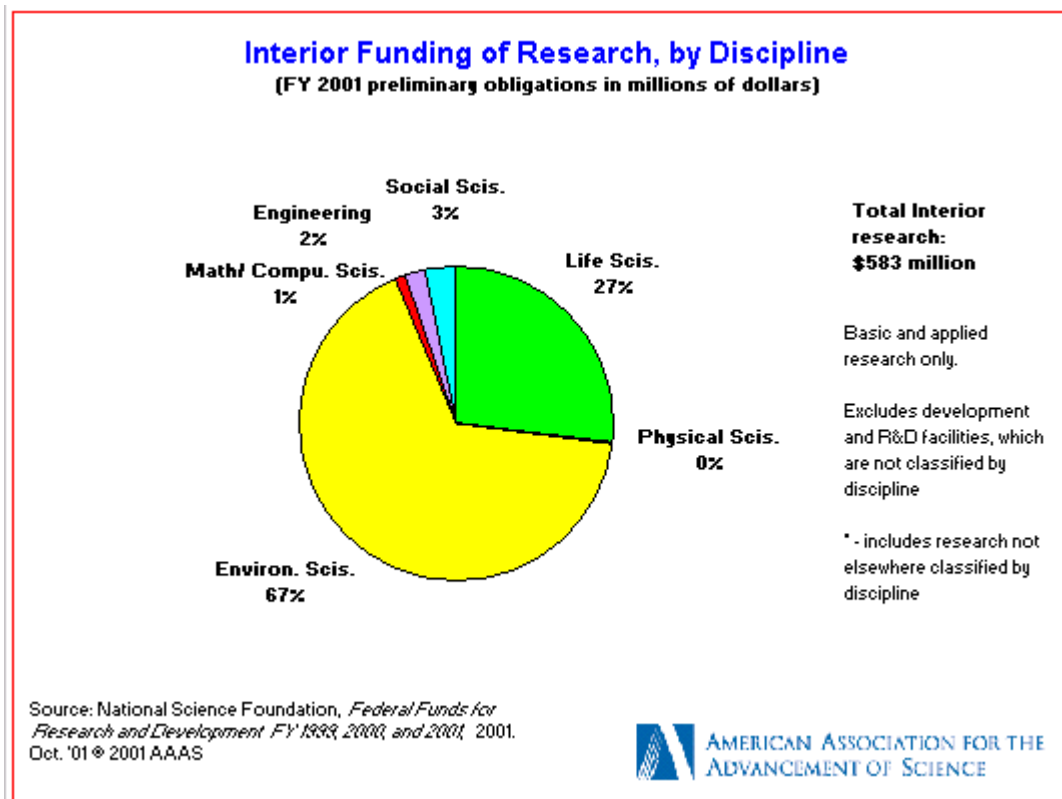


Figure 1. (click on the image to view or download a color, full-page PDF version of this chart)

Although USGS is the primary science agency in Interior, four other Interior bureaus also fund R&D (see Table). These agencies mostly receive the requested amounts for R&D in both the House and Senate bills, including funds for Everglades restoration research in the National Park Service and minerals and mining research in the Minerals and Management Service.

The FY 2002 increase enables Interior R&D to stay just ahead of inflation. Interior R&D has declined sharply since FY 1994, primarily because of the elimination of the Bureau of Mines in FY 1996 and the merging of the National Biological Service into USGS. Since then, Interior R&D has been mostly flat, with small increases in some years.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of Interior's research portfolio (excluding development and R&D facilities) by discipline, most of it funded by USGS. USGS work in earth sciences and water resources falls under the environmental sciences category, which accounts for two-thirds of Interior's research. Biological research in USGS is classified under life sciences, which accounts for a quarter of the Interior portfolio. USGS and the other Interior bureaus fund small amounts of other research.

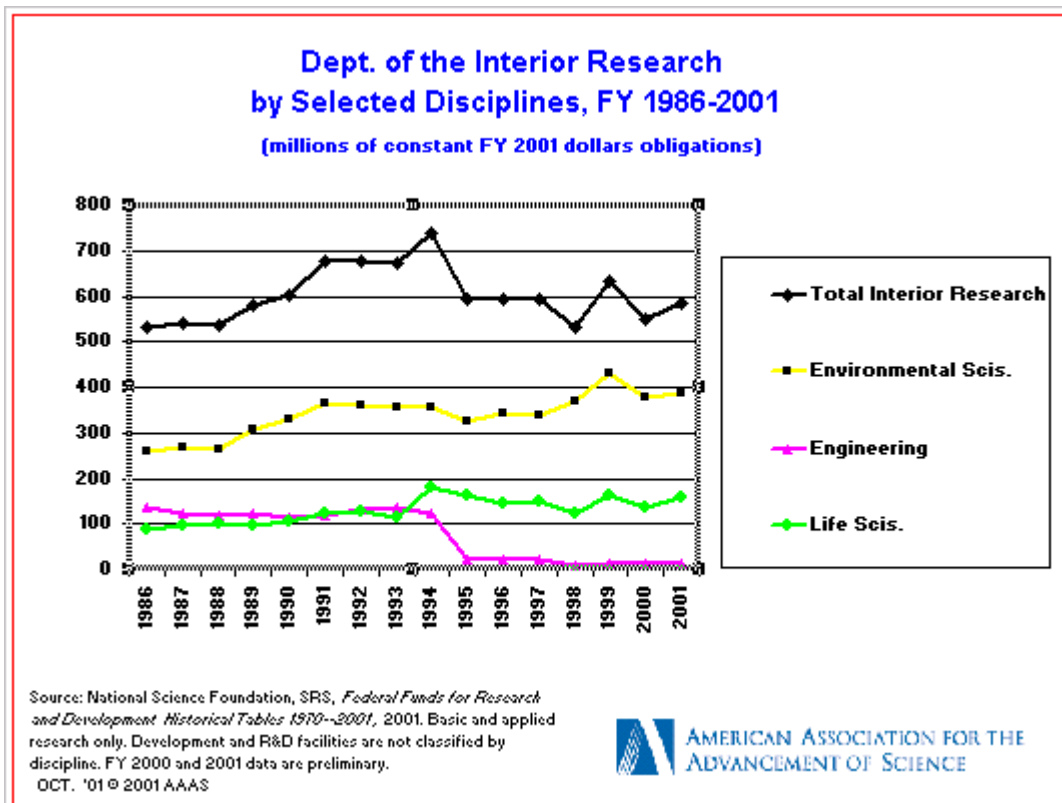


Figure 2. (click on the image to view or download a color, full-page PDF version of this chart)

Interior support for research has followed trends in Interior R&D, because nearly all of Interior's R&D portfolio is research with only a small amount for development. As shown in Figure 2, Interior support of research has declined sharply since FY 1994 in real terms. The most prominent drop is in engineering research, which was almost entirely eliminated with the closure of the Bureau of Mines. Life sciences research increased with the creation of the National Biological Service, but cuts in subsequent years have eroded support. Increases for USGS biological research in FY 2001 and FY 2002, however, should bring life sciences support closer to peak funding levels. Interior support for environmental sciences research has fared better than other disciplines and has remained steady over the years.

President Bush signed the Interior bill into law on November 5 (Public Law 107-63). It was the first of the 13 appropriations bills to be signed into law.

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**Table. Department of the Interior
Congressional Action on R&D in the FY 2002 Budget
(budget authority in millions of dollars)**

	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Request	Action by Congress				
			FY 2002 Approved	Chg. from Request Amount	Chg. from Request Percent	Chg. from FY 2001 Amount	Chg. from FY 2001 Percent
U.S. Geological Survey:							
Surveys, Investigations, and Research (SIR):							
National Mapping	28	26	28	1	4.2%	0	-0.6%
Geologic Resources	225	214	233	19	8.9%	7	3.3%
Water Resources	136	101	140	38	38.0%	4	2.8%
Biological Research	161	149	166	17	11.5%	6	3.6%
Total USGS R&D	549	491	567	76	15.4%	17	3.1%
<i>(USGS Non-R&D SIR Activities)</i>	333	323	347	25	7.7%	14	4.3%
<i>(Total USGS SIR Budget)</i>	883	813	914	101	12.4%	31	3.5%
Bureau of Reclamation	6	6	10	4	66.7%	4	66.7%
National Park Service	30	30	30	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Bureau of Land Management	14	19	19	0	0.0%	5	35.7%
Minerals Management Service	32	47	47	0	0.0%	15	46.9%
Total Interior R&D	631	593	673	80	13.5%	41	6.5%

AAAS estimates based on FY 2002 appropriations bills. Includes conduct of R&D and R&D facilities.

FY 2001 and FY 2002 request figures based on OMB R&D data and supplemental agency budget data.

Figures are rounded to the nearest million. Changes calculated from unrounded figures.

December 26, 2001 - Based on enacted FY 2002 appropriations bills.

Includes emergency appropriations for counterterrorism and national security.