

House and Senate Provide Increases for USGS R&D, Restore Proposed Cuts

(This analysis is part of a series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates on the FY 2003 congressional appropriations process. This analysis includes information on R&D in House and Senate-approved FY 2003 appropriations for the Department of the Interior. **This analysis updates a July 10 analysis of Interior R&D in Senate appropriations.** The complete series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates, including continually updated analyses of R&D by agency in FY 2003 appropriations, is available on the AAAS R&D Web Site (<http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd>) in the "FY 2003 R&D" or the "What's New" sections.)

(The text in this analysis updates a July 10 analysis of R&D in Senate appropriations for the Department of the Interior with information on House appropriations)

Just before a week-long Fourth of July recess, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved the first of its 13 appropriations bills. The FY 2003 Interior appropriations bill (S 2708), which provides funding for R&D in the Department of the Interior, goes to the Senate floor this week or next week. The House drafted its version of the bill July 9 (HR 5093); its version is expected to go to the House floor next week. **The Senate bill would provide \$684 million for Interior R&D**, an increase of 3.7 percent or \$24 million over FY 2002. **The House would provide a similar \$681 million, for a 3.1 percent increase.** Although the President's FY 2003 request would have cut R&D in Interior's U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) by 7 percent, both the House and Senate would restore funding to the proposed cuts; the Senate would give USGS a slight increase of 2.6 percent over FY 2002 for its R&D programs, while the House would boost USGS R&D by 2.0 percent. Both the House and Senate would also block the proposed elimination and transfer (to the National Science Foundation (NSF)) of a toxic hydrology program.

The **U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)** is the primary sponsor of R&D in Interior. The Senate would provide \$927 million for its total budget in FY 2003, \$59 million more than the request. The House would provide slightly more, for a total of \$928 million. The Administration requested a \$47 million cut in USGS from the FY 2002 funding level; the Senate and House appropriations would restore the cuts (see Table).

R&D accounts for nearly two-thirds of the USGS budget. The Bush Administration requested only \$542 million for USGS R&D, a proposed cut of 7.0 percent from FY 2002, but the Senate would provide \$598 million, a 2.6 percent increase while the House would provide \$595 million, a 2.0 percent increase (For details of the President's request for Interior R&D, please see Chapter 12 of *AAAS Report XXVII: R&D FY 2003*).

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 a proposed 18.5 percent); last year's FY 2002 request proposed similarly steep cuts, but Congress rebuffed these proposals. The FY 2002 and 2003 budgets 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.

As they did last year, both the House and the Senate would keep funding for most water resources programs at or above the FY 2002 funding level. The Senate would provide \$142 million for R&D in the Water Resources Division (up \$2 million or 1.6 percent), \$28 million more than the request; the House would provide a nearly identical \$143 million. The request proposed to eliminate the **Toxic Substances Hydrology Program** in USGS and reconstitute it in a different and reduced form within NSF, but both the House and the Senate would provide \$14 million within USGS, up slightly from FY 2002. The program is a collaborative effort of USGS scientists, university and private-sector researchers, and state, local, and other federal agency scientists to conduct long-term research on water resource contamination in surface and

groundwater environments. The request also proposed to eliminate the \$6 million water resources research institutes program, but both the House and the Senate would keep funding at the FY 2002 level. This program funds 54 state water research institutes, with every federal dollar matched by two state and other non-federal dollars.

The request also proposed to cut **the National Water Quality Assessment Program (NAWQA)** to \$57 million from \$63 million. 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 Senate and the House would instead provide a slight increase to \$64 million.

The Senate would provide \$172 million for the USGS **Biological Resource Division (BRD)**, \$6 million more than FY 2002, similar to the House's \$170 million appropriation.

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.

Although USGS is the primary science agency in Interior, three other Interior bureaus also fund R&D (see Table). These agencies would mostly receive the requested amounts for R&D in both the House and Senate bills, including funds for minerals and mining research in the Minerals and Management Service, and wildfire prevention research in the Bureau of Land Management.

The House and Senate Interior bills now move to the House and Senate floors, respectively, where each version may be amended. After expected House and Senate approvals of the respective versions, the bill heads to House-Senate conference; because of the strikingly similar USGS appropriations in the bills so far, the final USGS budget is likely to change little from either version.

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**Table. Department of the Interior
House Appropriations Committee Action on R&D in the FY 2003 Budget
(budget authority in millions of dollars)**

	FY 2002 Estimate	FY 2003 Request	FY 2003 Senate	Action by House					
				FY 2003 House	Chg. from Request Amount	Chg. from Request Percent	Chg. from FY 2002 Amount	Chg. from FY 2002 Percent	
U.S. Geological Survey:									
Surveys, Investigations, and Research (SIR):									
National Mapping	44	43	45	47	4	8.5%	3	6.2%	
Geologic Resources	233	221	239	235	14	6.4%	2	0.8%	
Water Resources	140	114	142	143	29	25.4%	3	2.2%	
Biological Research	166	164	172	170	6	3.6%	4	2.4%	
Total USGS R&D	583	542	598	595	53	9.7%	12	2.0%	
<i>(USGS Non-R&D SIR Activities)</i>	331	325	329	334	9	2.6%	3	0.8%	
<i>(Total USGS SIR Budget)</i>	914	867	927	928	61	7.0%	14	1.6%	
Bureau of Reclamation *	10	7	7	7	0	0.0%	-3	-30.0%	
Bureau of Land Management	34	50	50	50	0	0.0%	16	47.1%	
Minerals Management Service	33	29	29	29	0	0.0%	-4	-12.1%	
Total Interior R&D	660	628	684	681	53	8.4%	21	3.1%	

AAAS estimates based on FY 2003 appropriations bills. Includes conduct of R&D and R&D facilities.

FY 2002 and FY 2003 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.

* Funded in the Energy-Water bill, which has not been drafted yet by the Senate or House. FY 2003 House and Senate figures assume R&D will be funded at the requested level.

July 12, 2002 - House Appropriations Committee-approved appropriations.

These figures may be amended or rejected on the House floor.