



AAAS R&D Funding Update July 14, 2003 -

House Reverses Proposed Cuts to USGS R&D

Highlights

- **The House would provide a modest increase to R&D in the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)**, Interior's lead science agency. The House appropriation of \$577 million for USGS R&D would be \$8 million or 1.4 percent above the FY 2003 funding level (see Table).
- The House would reverse the Bush Administration's proposed cuts to many of USGS' earth science and water resources research programs.
- Total Interior R&D would climb \$38 million or 6.1 percent to \$665 million because of a requested boost to the Bureau of Land Management's R&D activities.

House Appropriations for USGS R&D

In late June, the House Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2004 Interior appropriations bill, but the bill was not reported and printed (as HR 2691) until July. The full House may debate the bill the week of July 14. **The House bill would provide \$665 million for Interior R&D**, an increase of 6.1 percent or \$38 million over FY 2003. Although the President's FY 2004 request would have cut R&D in Interior's U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) by 4.2 percent, the House would restore funding to the proposed cuts and provide a 1.4 percent boost instead.

The **U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)** is the primary sponsor of R&D in Interior. 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. The House would provide \$938 million for its total budget in FY 2004, \$40 million more than the request and \$16 million or 1.8 percent more than FY 2003 (see Table).

R&D accounts for nearly two-thirds of the USGS budget. The Bush Administration requested a cut of 4.2 percent from FY 2003 for USGS R&D, but the House would provide \$577 million, a 1.4 percent increase. (For details of the President's request for Interior R&D, please see Chapter 13 of *AAAS Report XXVIII: R&D FY 2004*).

The request proposed to cut funding for R&D in all four USGS divisions, but the House would give 2 of the 4 divisions increases and give the other two divisions funding nearly equal to this year.

The House would keep funding for water resources programs at or above the FY 2003 funding level, in contrast to the requested cuts. The House would provide \$145 million for R&D in the Water Resources Division (up \$5 million or 3.8 percent). Within the division, the request proposed to slash funding for the **Toxic Substances Hydrology Program** in USGS by 18 percent, but the House would keep funding near this year's level at \$13.5 million. 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 proposed

to eliminate the \$6 million water resources research institutes program, but the House would keep the program alive and give it a slight increase to \$6.5 million. This program funds 54 state water research institutes, with every federal dollar matched by two state and other non-federal dollars. The House would fund the hydrologic research and development program at \$16 million, up from the \$15 million current funding level and in sharp contrast to a 10 percent requested cut. The request and the House propose to keep **the National Water Quality Assessment Program (NAWQA)** at \$64 million, up just slightly 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 other USGS division to receive an increase in the House plan would be \$173 million for the USGS **Biological Resource Division (BRD)**, \$4 million more than FY 2003.

The Geologic Resources Division would see its R&D budget fall \$1 million to \$208 million in the House plan for FY 2004, although this would be an improvement over a requested cut of \$11 million. The House disagrees strongly with the Administration's proposal to reduce USGS mineral resources research, and would restore proposed cuts. Within tight budgetary constraints for the entire Interior bill, however, the Division's R&D budget would still fall slightly because of a reduction in geologic hazards research.

The National Mapping Division would see its R&D fall \$1 million to \$51 million, a \$5 million addition to the requested cut. The USGS is rolling out a digital National Map to provide comprehensive, continually updated geospatial information electronically.

Other Interior Agencies

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 (BLM). Because of a large expansion in BLM's wildfire-related R&D activities, overall Interior R&D would rise 6.1 percent to \$665 million in the House plan.

Next Steps

The House Interior bill now moves to the House floor for debate and expected approval the week of July 14. The Senate Appropriations Committee drafted its version of the Interior bill on July 10. (The AAAS analysis of the Senate Interior bill will be available shortly).

(This analysis is one of a series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates on the FY 2004 congressional appropriations process. This analysis includes information on R&D in House 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 2004 appropriations, is available on the AAAS R&D Web Site (<http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd>) in the "FY 2004 R&D" or the "What's New" sections.)

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**Table. Department of the Interior
House Appropriations Committee Action on R&D in the FY 2004 Budget
(budget authority in millions of dollars)**

	FY 2003 Estimate	FY 2004 Request	FY 2004 House	Action by House			
				Chg. from Request Amount	Chg. from Request Percent	Chg. from FY 2003 Amount	Chg. from FY 2003 Percent
U.S. Geological Survey:							
Surveys, Investigations, and Research (SIR):							
National Mapping	51	46	51	5	10.6%	-1	-1.2%
Geologic Resources	209	198	208	10	4.8%	-1	-0.5%
Water Resources	140	132	145	13	9.8%	5	3.8%
Biological Research	169	169	173	4	2.6%	4	2.4%
Total USGS R&D	569	545	577	32	5.8%	8	1.4%
<i>(USGS Non-R&D SIR Activities)</i>	350	350	359	8	2.4%	9	2.5%
<i>(Total USGS SIR Budget)</i>	919	896	936	40	4.5%	16	1.8%
Bureau of Reclamation *	11	9	9	0	0.0%	-2	-18.0%
Bureau of Land Management	20	51	51	0	0.0%	31	156.7%
Minerals Management Service	27	28	28	0	0.0%	1	4.4%
Total Interior R&D	627	633	665	32	5.0%	38	6.1%

AAAS estimates based on FY 2003 and FY 2004 appropriations bills. Includes conduct of R&D and R&D facilities.

FY 2003 and FY 2004 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 House. FY 2004 House figures assume R&D will be funded at the requested level.

July 11, 2003 - House Appropriations Committee-approved funding levels.

These figures may be amended or rejected by the full House.