



AAAS R&D Funding Update July 17, 2003 -

Senate Joins House in Reversing Proposed USGS Cuts

Highlights

- **The Senate would join the House in providing a modest increase to R&D in the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)**, Interior's lead science agency. The Senate appropriation of \$573 million for USGS R&D would be a slight \$4 million or 0.7 percent above the FY 2003 funding level (see Table). The House would provide \$4 million more.
- Both the House and Senate would reverse the Bush Administration's proposed cuts to many of USGS' earth science and water resources research programs, but most programs would remain flat at FY 2003 funding levels.
- Total Interior R&D would climb \$34 million or 5.4 percent to \$661 million in the Senate plan because of a requested boost to the Bureau of Land Management's R&D activities.

Senate Appropriations for USGS R&D

On July 10, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2004 Interior appropriations bill (S 1391), which funds the Department of the Interior and several other federal agencies, and sent it to the full Senate for debate and approval. The House was scheduled to approve its version of the bill was on July 17. **The Senate bill would provide \$661 million for Interior R&D**, an increase of 5.4 percent or \$34 million over FY 2003 and just \$4 million less than the House version. Although the President's FY 2004 request would have cut R&D in Interior's U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) by 4.2 percent, both the House and Senate would restore funding to the proposed cuts. The Senate would provide a 0.7 percent boost instead to USGS R&D, while the House would provide \$4 million more for a 1.4 percent boost; both increases would still be well below the 2 percent expected inflation rate.

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. 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 Senate would provide \$929 million for its total budget in FY 2004, \$33 million more than the request and \$10 million or 1.0 percent more than FY 2003 (see Table). The House would provide \$7 million more for a total of \$936 million.

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 Senate would provide \$573 million, a 0.7 percent increase. The House would also provide a modest increase of 1.4 percent. (For details of House appropriations for Interior R&D, please see the House Interior R&D Funding Update of July 14. For details of the President's request for Interior R&D, please see Chapter 13 of *AAAS Report XXVIII: R&D FY 2004*).

The Bush Administration request proposed to cut funding for R&D in all four USGS divisions, but the Senate would give 3 of the 4 divisions increases, albeit small ones, and give the other division funding nearly equal to this year.

The Senate and House are in unusual agreement over USGS funding in their respective Interior bills, and both chambers have now expressed their opposition to proposed cuts in key USGS programs. Both the House and the Senate would keep funding for water resources programs at or above the FY 2003 funding level, in contrast to the requested cuts. The Senate would provide \$141 million for R&D in the Water Resources Division (up \$1 million). Within the division, the request proposed to slash funding for the **Toxic Substances Hydrology Program** in USGS by 18 percent, but the Senate would boost funding to \$16 million, a \$2 million increase. 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 both the House and Senate would keep the program alive and give it a slight increase, to \$6.0 million in the Senate and \$6.5 million in the House. 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 Senate would add funds to the request but would only provide \$14.4 million.

Another small increase would go to the Geologic Resources Division, whose R&D funding would inch up \$3 million to \$212 million in the Senate plan for FY 2004, a \$14 million improvement over a requested cut. Both the House and Senate disagree strongly with the Administration's proposal to reduce USGS mineral resources research, and both chambers would restore proposed cuts.

The National Mapping Division would see its R&D fall \$1 million to \$51 million, a \$5 million addition to the requested cut, in both the House and the Senate.

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 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 5.4 percent to \$661 million in the Senate.

Next Steps

The House Interior bill was scheduled for debate and expected approval by the full House on July 17. Senate debate of its Interior bill was unscheduled at press time, but could take place the week of July 21. A final House-Senate conference version of the bill will not be ready until September at the earliest.

(This analysis is one of a series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates on the FY 2004 appropriations process. This analysis includes information on R&D in Senate 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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AAAS R&D Budget and Policy Program
1200 New York Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 326-6607; -6600
science_policy@aaas.org
www.aaas.org/spp/rd



**Table. Department of the Interior
Senate 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 Senate | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | | | FY 2004 Senate | 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 | 51 | 5 | 10.8% | -1 | -1.0% |
| Geologic Resources | 209 | 198 | 208 | 212 | 14 | 7.0% | 3 | 1.5% |
| Water Resources | 140 | 132 | 145 | 141 | 8 | 6.4% | 1 | 0.5% |
| Biological Research | 169 | 169 | 173 | 170 | 1 | 0.4% | 0 | 0.2% |
| Total USGS R&D | 569 | 545 | 577 | 573 | 28 | 5.1% | 4 | 0.7% |
| <i>(USGS Non-R&D SIR Activities)</i> | 350 | 350 | 359 | 356 | 5 | 1.5% | 6 | 1.6% |
| <i>(Total USGS SIR Budget)</i> | 919 | 896 | 936 | 929 | 33 | 3.7% | 10 | 1.0% |
| Bureau of Reclamation * | 11 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 0.0% | -2 | -18.0% |
| Bureau of Land Management | 20 | 51 | 51 | 51 | 0 | 0.0% | 31 | 156.7% |
| Minerals Management Service | 27 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 4.4% |
| Total Interior R&D | 627 | 633 | 665 | 661 | 28 | 4.4% | 34 | 5.4% |

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

July 17, 2003 - Senate Appropriations Committee-approved funding levels.

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