

AAAS R&D Funding Update October 1, 2004 -

Congress Set to Give USGS Flat Funding for R&D

Highlights

- **The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) would see virtually no change in its R&D budget for FY 2005 in both Senate and House budget plans.** The Senate recently proposed \$547 million for USGS R&D in FY 2005, unchanged from last year and just \$1 million less than a House plan in June (see Table). Although FY 2005 started on October 1, the FY 2005 Interior budget is still weeks away from being finalized.

- **In keeping USGS funding flat, both the House and the Senate would reverse many of the Bush Administration's proposed cuts to geology and water research programs; all four USGS divisions would see their R&D funding essentially unchanged from FY 2004.**

- Total Interior R&D would fall slightly to \$670 million in the Senate plan and \$672 million in the House.

Senate FY 2005 Appropriations for USGS R&D

On September 14, the Senate Appropriations Committee drafted its version of the FY 2005 Interior appropriations bill (S 2804), lagging months behind the House version of the bill (HR 4568). The bill funds most of the Department of the Interior as well as the Smithsonian Institution and parts of the Departments of Energy and Agriculture. With time running out on the congressional session and with FY 2005 already underway, the Senate bill may never make it to the Senate floor but will most likely be rolled into a year-end omnibus appropriations bill. **The Senate Interior bill would provide \$670 million for Interior R&D in FY 2005**, a cut of \$5 million or 0.7 percent below FY 2004 that would be nearly identical to the House plan. Although the President's FY 2005 request would have cut R&D in Interior's U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) by 4.0 percent, both the House and Senate bills would restore funding to the proposed cuts and, in the Senate case, keep USGS R&D even with FY 2004 (see Table).

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. Nearly 90 percent 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 give \$939 million to USGS for its total budget in FY 2005, \$20 million more than the request and \$2 million more than FY 2004 (see Table). The House bill in June approved \$5 million more than the Senate level for a total of \$944 million.

R&D accounts for nearly two-thirds of the USGS budget, with the remainder going to non-R&D activities such as environmental data collection, mapping, and natural hazards reduction. In a repeat of previous years, the Bush Administration requested a cut of 4.0 percent for USGS R&D, but both the House and Senate would reject these proposed cuts and allocate \$547 million in the Senate and \$548 million in the House, exactly even with FY 2004 in the Senate case. (For details of FY 2005 House appropriations for Interior R&D, see the June 17 AAAS R&D Funding Update. For details of the President's request for Interior R&D, please see Chapter 13 of *AAAS Report XXIX: R&D FY 2005*). The request proposed to cut funding for R&D in three USGS divisions (Geology, Water Resources, and Biological Research) and keep funding flat in the remaining division (Mapping). Both the House and the Senate would provide enough funding to bring all four divisions' R&D programs approximately to their current-year funding levels.

Funding for nearly every USGS R&D program would stay flat or decline in FY 2005 under the congressional plans, even after the reversal of proposed cuts. In the Water Resources Division, funding for the **Toxic Substances Hydrology Program** would stay even at \$15 million in the Senate plan, an improvement over a requested cut. 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. Both the House and the Senate would reject the Administration's proposal to eliminate the water resources research institutes program, but the \$6.5 million FY 2005 funding level in both bills would be just barely above this year's level. The Senate appropriation of \$16 million for the hydrologic research and development program would be more than the request, but below \$17 million for this year. Both the Senate and the House would keep the **National Water Quality Assessment Program (NAWQA)** at \$63 million, level with FY 2004 funding. 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 Biological Resource Division (BRD) would receive \$177 million in FY 2005, a slight gain of \$2 million in both the House and Senate plans.

R&D in the Geologic Hazards, Resources, and Processes Division would decline slightly to \$208 million, an improvement from a proposed \$10 million cut falling disproportionately on the mineral resources R&D program. The House and the Senate would restore funding for mineral resources R&D. Funding for R&D on earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, geologic mapping, geology, and earth surface dynamics would stay flat or decline slightly. Mapping and Geography R&D would stay at \$33 million.

Other Interior Agencies

Although USGS is the primary science agency in Interior, four other Interior bureaus also fund R&D (see Table). These include funds for minerals and mining research in the Minerals and Management Service (MMS), wildfire prevention research in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), water resources research in the Bureau of Reclamation, and R&D for the Florida Everglades restoration project in the National Park Service. Both the House and the Senate would go along with the President's request for these R&D programs.

Next Steps

The House approved its Interior bill in June, but the Senate version faces a more difficult path. With the October 1 start of FY 2005 already past and the October 8 target adjournment date looming with other legislative priorities stacked up, the Senate will run out of time to debate and approve the Interior bill as a stand-alone bill. Thus, Interior programs will operate through at least November 20 at FY 2004 levels under a continuing resolution (CR; temporary appropriations bill) approved by Congress this week. After the November elections, Congress will try to finish up appropriations; the most likely scenario is that the Interior bill will be rolled into an omnibus appropriations bill along with the other unfinished appropriations bills in a post-election lame duck session. With the House and Senate Interior appropriations so similar, USGS R&D is almost certain to receive the flat funding outlined in both bills, but the big question remaining is when that allocation will become a final FY 2005 budget.

(This analysis is one of a series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates on FY 2005 congressional appropriations. The complete series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates, including continually updated analyses of R&D in FY 2005 appropriations, is available on the AAAS R&D Web Site (<http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd>) in the "FY 2005 R&D" or the "What's New" sections.)

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**Table. Department of the Interior
Senate Appropriations Committee Action on R&D in the FY 2005 Budget
(budget authority in millions of dollars)**

	FY 2004 Estimate	FY 2005 Request	FY 2005 House	Action by Senate				
				FY 2005 Senate	Chg. from Request Amount	Chg. from Request Percent	Chg. from FY 2004 Amount	Chg. from FY 2004 Percent
U.S. Geological Survey: *								
Surveys, Investigations, and Research (SIR):								
National Mapping	33	33	34	33	0	-0.2%	0	-0.2%
Geologic Resources	210	201	210	208	7	3.6%	-2	-1.1%
Water Resources	129	120	128	129	9	7.8%	0	0.0%
Biological Research	175	172	176	177	5	3.0%	2	1.4%
Total USGS R&D *	547	525	548	547	22	4.1%	0	0.0%
<i>(USGS Non-R&D SIR Activities)</i>	391	394	396	392	-2	-0.5%	1	0.4%
<i>(Total USGS SIR Budget)</i>	938	920	944	939	20	2.1%	2	0.2%
Bureau of Reclamation **	16	10	11	10	0	0.0%	-6	-37.5%
National Park Service	33	33	33	33	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Bureau of Land Management	49	52	52	52	0	0.0%	3	6.1%
Minerals Management Service	30	28	28	28	0	0.0%	-2	-6.7%
Total Interior R&D	675	648	672	670	22	3.4%	-5	-0.7%

AAAS estimates based on FY 2004 and FY 2005 appropriations bills. Includes conduct of R&D and R&D facilities.

FY 2004 and FY 2005 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.

USGS figures exclude effects of proposed Enterprise Information restructuring.

* The FY 2005 request proposes to transfer some program costs to a new Enterprise Information account.

The FY 2005 House and Senate bills agree with this proposal. All figures are adjusted to the FY 2004 structure for comparability.

** Funded in the Energy-Water bill, which has not been drafted by the Senate. FY 2005 Senate assumes the request.

October 1, 2004 - AAAS estimates of House and Senate Appropriations Committee-approved funding levels.