



FY 2024 House and Senate Mark Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

	FY2023	FY2024 PBR	FY24 PBR – FY23 Enacted	FY2024 APLU Request*	FY2024 House Action	FY2024 Senate Action
INTERIOR-ENVIRONMENT						
United States Geological Survey (USGS), <i>Water Resources Research Act (WRRRA)</i>	15.5	15	3.3%	18	16	16
USGS, <i>Cooperative Research Units (CRUs)</i>	28.2	29.3	3.9%	32	28.2	29.2
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), <i>Office of Science and Technology</i>	802.3	967.8	21%	876	560.7	795
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)	207	211	1.9%	225	186.3	207
Joint Fire Science Program	9	8	-11.1%	20	9	9

House Action

[Bill Text](#) | [Committee Report](#)

The House Appropriations Committee advanced the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies bill on July 20. The Environmental Protection Agency Office of Science and Technology would receive \$560.7 million, a 30 percent cut over FY23 levels, and the National Endowment for the Humanities would receive \$186.3 million, a 10 percent cut from FY23 levels. Funding for the U.S. Geological Survey Cooperative Research Units (CRUs) and the Joint Fire Science Program are flat, while funding for the Water Resources Research Act received a modest increase of 3 percent.

Provisions of Note

Of the \$560.7 million to support the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Science and Technology, \$19.5 million is set for research related to national priorities. \$10 million of this funding is for extramural research grants, independent of the Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program. The committee recommendation provides \$28.2 million to support Cooperative Research Units within the ecosystems mission area. The committee directs USGS to complete a report examining other potential geographic or mission areas that could help address gaps in the agency’s research goals, including examining those areas without a wildlife CRU. The bill also includes \$16 million for Water Resources Research Act programs, including no less than \$10 million for base grants, \$1.5 million in competitive grants on aquatic invasive species in the Upper Mississippi River region, and remaining funds on national competitive grants. In addition to flat funding the Joint Fire Science Program with the Department of Agriculture, the committee urges the Department to prioritize research related to workforce health and well-being of wildland firefighters.

Regarding the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Committee directs 40 percent of allocated funds to support the work of state and regional humanities councils. The Committee

directs NEH to strengthen partnerships with diaspora communities and to train the next generation of storytellers to continue chronicling American life. The Committee recognizes the power of NEH grants in providing access to underserved populations and regions and commends NEH for its work supporting Tribal and Native Hawaiian heritage and culture and for benefitting veterans.

The bill also prohibits funds from directly or indirectly supporting the Wuhan Institute of Virology, or any lab owned or controlled by the governments of China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia, or Venezuela (sec. 456).

The bill includes a number of controversial prohibitions on use of funding setting up conflict with Democrats:

Section 439, Rescission of Environmental and Climate Justice Grants: Of the unobligated balances of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for activities of the Environmental Protection Agency by section 138(a) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7438(a)), \$1,353,000,000 are hereby permanently rescinded.

Section 447, Social Cost of Carbon: None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to consider or incorporate the social cost of carbon— (1) as part of any cost-benefit analysis required or performed pursuant to— (A) any law; (B) Executive Order 13990 (86 Fed. Reg. 7037; relating to protecting public health and the environment and restoring science to tackle the climate crisis); (C) Executive Order 14094 (88 Fed. Reg. 21879; relating to modernizing regulatory review); (D) the Presidential Memorandum entitled “Modernizing Regulatory Review” issued by the President on January 20, 2021; (E) any revisions to Office of Management and Budget Circular A-4 proposed or finalized under Executive Order 14094; or (F) “Technical Support Document: Social Cost of Carbon, Methane, and Nitrous Oxide Interim Estimates under Executive Order 13990,” published under the Interagency Working Group on the Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases, in February of 2021; (2) in any rulemaking; (3) in the issuance of any guidance; (4) in taking any other agency action; or (5) as a justification for any rulemaking, guidance document, or agency action.

Section 448, Ecogrief: None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be obligated or expended to carry out the program for Federal employees at the Department of the Interior entitled “Acknowledging Ecogrief and Developing Resistance” or any counseling sessions, workshop, or any other meeting pertaining to ecological grief, ecogrief, or eco-resilience.

Section 455, Limitation: None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out any program, project, or activity that promotes or advances Critical Race Theory or any concept associated with Critical Race Theory.

Section 476, Official Flags: None of the funds made available by this Act may be obligated or expended to fly or display a flag over a facility of a Department or agency funded by this Act other than the flag of the United States; the flag of a State, insular area, or the District of Columbia; the flag of a Federally recognized Tribal entity; the official flag of the Secretary of the Interior; the official flag of a U.S. Department or agency; or the POW/MIA flag.

Senate Action

[Bill Text](#) | [Committee Report](#)

The Senate Appropriations Committee advanced the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies bill unanimously on July 27. The bill funds the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Science and Technology at \$795 million, a one percent decrease from FY23. The bill flat funds Water Resources Research Act programs within the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) at \$16 million and the Joint Fire Science Program at \$9 million. The bill includes \$29.2 million for the Cooperative Research Units within the USGS, a \$1 million increase over FY23, and \$207 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities, the same level as FY23.

Provisions of Note

The bill provides \$795 million for the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Science and Technology, of which \$19.5 million is for research on national priorities and \$101 million for climate research programs. The Committee directs continued research within the Cooperative Research Units Program on all Department of Interior science priorities, including climate considerations. The Committee provides \$4.5 million from Department of the Interior (along with \$4.5 million in the Agriculture appropriations bill) for the Joint Fire Science Program and expects the program to continue engaging a broad network of academic researchers through an open, competitive process.

Within the \$207 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities, \$7 million is for Special Initiatives, specifically the “A More Perfect Union” initiative. The report also directs NEH to continue the National Digital Newspapers Program and the Landmarks of American History and Culture workshops. The Committee also supports NEH’s continued partnership with the National Science Foundation on the Documenting Endangered Languages initiative. Additionally, the bill directs NEH to continue developing an Office of Outreach to work with underserved communities and institutions, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES

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