

House committee passes Interior, Environment Appropriations Bill

July 15, 2014

The House Appropriations Committee passed the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for fiscal year (FY) 2015 on July 15. The \$30.2 billion bill would fund the Department of the Interior and appropriates \$1.035 billion for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), \$3.7 million more than the FY 2014 enacted level but \$37.6 million less than the President's request.

All USGS mission areas are funded at or above FY 2014 enacted levels except for Core Science Systems which received roughly \$3 million in cuts. The committee report on the bill includes \$92 million for Energy, Minerals, and Environmental Health; Mineral Resources Program funding is unchanged from the FY 2014 enacted level. The report allocates \$209 million to the USGS Water Resources directorate, \$2 million more than last year's appropriation. Climate and Land Use Change is funded at \$133 million, a \$1 million increase over FY 2014; the committee report includes increases to drought impacts and adaptive management within the mission area.

The Natural Hazards mission area is allocated \$133 million, roughly \$5 million more than FY 2014, with no change to the funding levels for Landslide Hazards programs from FY 2014. The bill provides \$5 million in additional funds for an earthquake early warning system and supports the request for increased funding for induced seismicity research. The committee is concerned about earthquake risks from the Cascadia subduction zone and suggests USGS request funding in the future for offshore data collection. The bill also appropriates money for the Bureau of Land Management (1.2% decrease from FY 2014), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (5.7% increase from FY 2014), the Environmental Protection Agency (8.7% decrease from FY 2014), the National Parks Service (0.1% increase from FY 2014), the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (0.7 percent decrease from FY 2014), and the Smithsonian Institution (1.0% increase from FY 2014), among other agencies.

The full House takes up consideration of the bill next. Congress goes on recess for the month of August so the bill is unlikely to be considered in the next month.

Sources: House Appropriations Committee
