

## Section 10: Department of Interior

In FY 2010, the Department of Interior received \$12.1 billion in discretionary funding, a 7.8 percent increase over last year's non-emergency discretionary level.

This amendment would rescind \$606.2 million (five percent) from the Department and direct the Secretary to eliminate and consolidate more than 35 duplicative programs at the Department and eliminate waste to produce savings.

In FY 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency received 10.2 billion, a 34 percent increase over last year's non-emergency discretionary funding. This amendment would also rescind \$514 million from the EPA (five percent).

### Duplicative Interior Programs

#### Historic Preservation

The Department of the Interior oversees multiple, overlapping historic preservation programs. Additionally, every federal agency is required to maintain a historic preservation program and must appoint a historic preservation officer. Historic preservation programs substantially overlap throughout the Department of the Interior, and across several other federal agencies. Examples include:

- The **Heritage Preservation Services** (Interior/National Parks Service office oversees **nine preservation programs**, including the **Federal Agency Preservation Assistance Program, the Historic Preservation Planning Program, and Technical Preservation Services for Historic Buildings.**<sup>1</sup> (Estimated \$55 million in FY 2010)
- **Save America's Treasures Grant Program** (Interior) - This program awards grants to federal, state, local, and non-profit agencies to preserve historically significant properties. (FY 2010- \$25 million, including \$10 million in earmarks)
- **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation** – the Council “is an independent federal agency that promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of our nation's historic resources, and advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy”<sup>2</sup> (FY 2010- \$5.9 million).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/index.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.achp.gov/aboutachp.html>

- **Preserve America** (Interior/ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation)- This “provides planning funding to designated Preserve America Communities to support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation planning.”<sup>3</sup> **(FY 2010- \$4.6 million)**

### Climate Change Impact Programs

Various agencies at the Interior Department have recently established or expanded at least four separate, overlapping programs intended to deal with the impacts of climate change on wildlife. These programs, most in their infant stages, received at least \$62 million in FY 2010. Each has been targeted for further expansion.

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs has launched its own “**Tackling Climate Impacts Initiative**” (\$6 million) to administer adaptive land management efforts, with a special emphasis on fish hatchery programs.<sup>4</sup>
- The United States Geological Survey has established **the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center** (\$15 million) to better “inform adaptation or management of fish and wildlife in the face of climate change.”<sup>5</sup> The new Center will now be charged with establishing “Regional Climate Change Response Centers” throughout the country.<sup>6</sup>
- The **United States Fish and Wildlife Service** was recently given \$26 million in funding by Congress for the development of its **own climate change impact and adaptation programs**. USFWS notes that “As the nation’s principle federal conservation agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is dedicated to helping reduce the impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats.”
- Congress increased funding by \$15 million for **state and tribal wildlife conservation grants** citing the need for those entities to “adapt and mitigate” the impacts of climate change on wildlife.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/preserveamerica/>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.doi.gov/budget/2010/data/greenbook/FY2010\\_IA\\_Greenbook.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/budget/2010/data/greenbook/FY2010_IA_Greenbook.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://nccw.usgs.gov/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.doi.gov/climatechange/SecOrder3289.pdf>

## **Invasive Species Research, Monitoring and Eradication**

Agencies of the Department of the Interior operate dozens of invasive species programs. The **US Fish and Wildlife Service administers eight programs**<sup>7</sup> with an invasive species component.

Other agencies of the Department with invasive species programs include:

- Bureau of Land Management;
- the Bureau of Indian Affairs;
- Bureau of Reclamation;
- US Geological Survey;
- National Park Service; and
- the National Park Service.

Additionally, outside of the Department of Interior, the following other Agencies administer invasive species programs:

- the US Department of Agriculture;
- the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- the Department of Defense;
- the Environmental Protection Agency;
- the National Science Foundation; and
- the Smithsonian Institution.

While USDA acts as the major invasive species research arm through its Agricultural Research Service, the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, several federal agencies have their own research programs.

Finally, at least **four separate federal councils** have been created to coordinate federal invasive species efforts:

- National Invasive Species Council;
- USDA's National Invasive Species Information Center;
- Fish and Wildlife's Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds; and
- the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force.

While overlapping programs make it difficult to pinpoint total federal spending on invasive species activities, agency documents obtained by the Congressional

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.fws.gov/INVASIVES/partnerships.html>

Research Service reveal at least **\$1.4 billion** in spending<sup>8</sup>, up from \$770 million in 2002.<sup>9</sup> FY 2010 appropriations bills included at least 12 invasive species earmarks.

## **Interior Firefighting Programs**

There are numerous firefighting programs within the Department of the Interior and the USDA Forest Service. Since FY01 funding for these activities has nearly doubled according to the Congressional Research Service.<sup>[3]</sup> Despite this increase in funding, three of the past four years have seen a record amount of federal acreage burned.

Within DOI and USDA there are almost identical accounts for how funds are intended to be spent – only that these funds are spent on lands managed by different federal agencies.<sup>[4]</sup> There are even duplicative research accounts on wildfire research.

Total funding for these activities was \$3.567 billion in FY 2010, not including likely emergency appropriations – an increase of at least \$800 million over last year. GAO has also, since 1999, repeatedly found that these activities should be more cohesive and cost-effective.<sup>[5]</sup>

## **Environmental Infrastructure Construction**

The White House and the Corps of Engineers have both concluded that Corps wastewater treatment projects are duplicative and outside of the scope of the Corps' mission.

The Corps has stated they do not have the expertise to do these projects, which the Environmental Protection Agency normally funds through grants and revolving fund loan programs.

According to the President, "The Corps does not assess the economic and environmental costs and benefits of these water and wastewater treatment projects and, therefore, has no basis to determine the value of these projects to the Nation... Providing funding in the Corps of Engineers' budget for

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<sup>8</sup> Congressional Research Service request, documents include cross-cutting tables from the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and Commerce, January 15, 2010.

<sup>9</sup>

[http://www.invasivespecies.gov/global/org\\_collab\\_budget/org\\_collab\\_budget\\_documents/NISC%20FY2007%20Crosscut%20Budget%20Summary.pdf](http://www.invasivespecies.gov/global/org_collab_budget/org_collab_budget_documents/NISC%20FY2007%20Crosscut%20Budget%20Summary.pdf)

<sup>[3]</sup> <http://crs.gov/ReportPDF/RL33990.pdf>

<sup>[4]</sup> These accounts included, "Preparedness," "Suppression," "Emergency Funds," "Site Rehabilitation," and "Fuel Reduction."

<sup>[5]</sup> <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09877.pdf>

environmental infrastructure projects is not cost effective and duplicates funding for these types of projects in other Federal agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture...”<sup>10</sup> In FY 2009, the Administration estimated there were \$180 million in projects and the stimulus also included \$206.7 million for these projects.<sup>11</sup>

## Department of Interior Waste and Mismanagement

The Department of the Interior (DOI) is estimated to have had **\$3.5 billion in unobligated balances** at the end of FY 2009.<sup>12</sup>

The Department maintains 1,840 buildings classified as “not required for its needs and responsibilities” valued at **\$276.4 million**.<sup>13</sup> Yet, the agency increased its total square footage of direct lease spaces from 2.7 million square feet, to 3.7 million square feet between 2002 and 2005.<sup>14</sup> Despite owning 80 million square feet of building space and the large number of excess buildings, the agency is now spending **\$37 million** annually to rent additional space.<sup>15</sup>

For the latest period available, DOI estimates that it spent **\$207 million** on agency travel and conference expenses in FY 2005.<sup>16</sup>

Department **travel credit cards have a 9.7% delinquency rate** (accounts more than sixty days past due), costing taxpayers untold amounts in fees and lost rebates.<sup>17</sup>

Despite managing over **\$5 billion** in procurement contracts and financial awards (1/4 of its budget), according to the agency’s own IG: “We have found that procurement, contracts, and grants have historically been subject to considerable fraud and waste and that their management is a continuing challenge.” Assuming

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2010/assets/trs.pdf>, page 25

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2009-05-07-budgetcuts\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2009-05-07-budgetcuts_N.htm)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2009/pdf/balances.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Office of Management and Budget, “Response to Section 408 of Public Law 109-396,” June 15, 2007, [http://coburn.senate.gov/oversight/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore\\_id=e3a53dbc-d6af-4be7-9c06-364ce3c605fd](http://coburn.senate.gov/oversight/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=e3a53dbc-d6af-4be7-9c06-364ce3c605fd).

<sup>14</sup> Government Accountability Office, “Federal Real Property,” April 2007, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07349.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Federal Real Property Report (2004), General Services Administration, [http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm\\_attachments/GSA\\_DOCUMENT/Annual%20Report%20%20FY2004%20Final\\_R2M-n11\\_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/Annual%20Report%20%20FY2004%20Final_R2M-n11_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> Hatfield, Nina Rose, Deputy Assistant Secretary Policy, Management, and Budget (Interior), “Testimony Before the Federal Financial Management Subcommittee (Senate),” September 14, 2006, [http://coburn.senate.gov/oversight/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore\\_id=a3ecff05-92d0-4053-9d1e-937a056ebe58](http://coburn.senate.gov/oversight/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=a3ecff05-92d0-4053-9d1e-937a056ebe58).

<sup>17</sup> Congressional Research Service, “Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in Agency Travel Card Programs,” July 20, 2009, <http://www.crs.gov/Pages/Reports.aspx?ProdCode=R40580>

just a moderate figure of 20 percent annually lost to waste and fraud, taxpayers are losing **\$1 billion** annually because of poor management.<sup>18</sup>

Past Interior agency awards include: \$50,000 to Salem, Massachusetts to install 32 signs directing tourists in town for Halloween to off-street parking and two public parking garages;<sup>19</sup> \$150,000 for a statewide barn census in Vermont;<sup>20</sup> and \$60,000 for Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in Missouri for “Parkpalooza,” an event featuring “rock climbing, lost worlds, music and dance and a photo contest.”<sup>21</sup>

A senior National Park Service employee already accused of improperly working with outside interests, and **paid \$145,000** annually, was recently caught with 3,200 sexually explicit images on his computer over a two year period. He remains in his current position.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Kendall, Mary (Acting Inspector General), Testimony before House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, March 3, 2009, [http://appropriations.house.gov/Witness\\_testimony/INT/Mary\\_kendall\\_03\\_03\\_09.pdf](http://appropriations.house.gov/Witness_testimony/INT/Mary_kendall_03_03_09.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Dalton, Tom, “City installs new signs,” *The Salem News*, October 22, 2008, [http://salemnews.com/punews/local\\_story\\_295231951.html](http://salemnews.com/punews/local_story_295231951.html).

<sup>20</sup> 118 Cormier, Amanda, “Vermont barn census lays foundation for preservation efforts,” *Middlebury College Student Weekly*, November 13, 2008, <http://media.www.middleburycampus.com/media/storage/paper446/news/2008/11/13/LocalNews/Vermont.Barn.Census.Lays.Foundation.For.Preservation.Efforts-3540249-page2.shtml>.

<sup>21</sup> 177 Website of the National Park Service, <http://www.nps.gov/jeff/parkmgmt/upload/parkpalooza.pdf>; Parkpalooza website, <http://www.nps.gov/jeff/planyourvisit/parkpalooza.htm>.

<sup>22</sup> Kindy, Kimberley, Washington Post, “Report Ignored Explicit Images Found on Park Official’s Computer,” October 19, 2009.