

Statement of  
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Department of the Interior  
Before the  
Committee on Appropriations,  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
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Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Administration's proposal for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) fiscal year 2010 budget. This budget provides new funding to address several important Administration and Secretarial priorities that seek to expand our work in climate change, renewable energy, and youth programs. These initiatives are well aligned with the science priorities outlined in our Science Strategy. This strategy, which was developed by a cadre of USGS scientists and professional staff, responds to national priorities and global trends through scientific excellence and strong collaboration with partners at the Federal, State, and local level. The 2010 budget request for the USGS is \$1.1 billion, an increase of \$54.0 million from the 2009 enacted level of \$1.04 billion.

The Administration's 2010 budget proposal for the USGS focuses on issues of national importance and ensures that USGS maintains the expertise necessary to address the scientific and societal challenges that will arise in the months and years ahead. The budget enhances USGS efforts in support of key Administration and departmental priorities such as the New Energy Frontier, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Youth Conservation Corps, and Climate Impacts. It continues strong efforts to ensure the availability of crucial data and research results to governmental, academic, commercial, and international users. The budget reflects \$39.9 million in program increases, \$7.1 million in program decreases and \$21.3 million in increases for fixed costs.

Within the Department's New Energy Frontier initiative, the USGS is requesting \$3.0 million to support departmental efforts to develop renewable energy sources. The USGS will study geothermal resources to provide a scientific basis to improve the viability of this important and underutilized resource. Additionally, USGS will provide the scientific base to understand the impacts of renewable energy options, such as wind, solar, and biofuels on ecosystems and wildlife populations. USGS work in renewable energy sources will support the Administration's goals to expand the generation and transmission of renewable energy. Due to its multidisciplinary nature, the USGS is well-positioned to engage multiple partners in addressing these complicated natural resource issues. These partners include other Interior agencies such as the National Park Service (NPS), the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Minerals Management Service (MMS); other Federal agencies, such as the Department of Energy (DOE), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); State agencies; industry consortia; and others.

The potential impacts of climate change are of great concern to the Nation, and mission essential to the Department of the Interior land managers, who have a critical need for information to adapt management approaches to changes on the landscape. With USGS' abilities to conduct national, regional, and local research across the Nation and to provide science information across multiple disciplines, times, and scales, the USGS plays a valuable and unique role in the climate science community. In 2010, USGS is requesting an increase of

\$22.0 million dollars to continue its climate impacts monitoring efforts and develop regional collaborative research hubs. The USGS will continue to develop the methodology for assessing biologic carbon storage potential and will use the recently-developed geologic assessment methodology to initiate a national assessment of geologic carbon sequestration potential. This initiative will continue support for the National Climate Change Wildlife Science Center and will allow the USGS to provide ecological and population modeling capacity to the FWS Landscape Conservation Cooperatives and provide information to FWS for use in their development of Strategic Habitat Conservation.

The Secretary's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Youth Conservation Corps initiative allows the USGS to expand existing academic collaboration efforts to additional universities across the country, enhance relationships with key partners, and further connect with the next generation of scientists. Additionally, it will expand USGS efforts to assist Tribes with the scientific and technical training necessary to develop the competencies needed to manage Tribal energy and natural resources more effectively. This initiative advances Secretary Salazar's priority to enhance opportunities for America's youth to explore and obtain careers in the natural sciences and to support Tribal self-governance. The initiative would increase the number of internships and fellowships supported or facilitated by the USGS educational program by 120 to 175. This initiative also provides an opportunity to leverage ongoing training investments, expand our direct reach to additional Tribal members, and significantly expand our impact using technology to develop distance learning mechanisms to deliver scientific and technical courses. For these efforts, the USGS is requesting an increase of \$2.0 million.

The USGS is participating in the Great Lakes restoration initiative, which is requested in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) budget. This multi-agency initiative will expand research to enhance ecosystem-based management of coastal resources by USGS partners. The USGS 2010 budget anticipates increases of \$15.0 million to be funded by the EPA. With this funding, the USGS will integrate ecosystem-based collaborative studies that provide forecast models and assessments to anticipate future coastal change, and develop tools to effectively evaluate policy and management strategies to preserve the environmental and economic health of coastal systems.

In addition to these high priority initiatives, the budget requests an increase of \$5.0 million to enhance the National Streamgauge Network. Streamgages are the essential monitoring tools used to track the flow of water and associated components in streams and rivers across the Nation. A stable hydrologic monitoring network is also a cornerstone to understanding climate change. In order to fully understand the changes that climate variability exerts on watersheds, information is needed to understand the natural hydrologic system and how humans change that system through movement and use of water. The USGS streamgauge network is funded in partnership with over 800 Federal, State, and local agencies. In recent years, streamgauge operations at some sites have been jeopardized by funding constraints at the State and local level. This increase will support the re-establishment of some discontinued streamgages, and will ensure support for existing high priority streamgages.

The USGS budget request includes an additional \$4.2 million to address species at risk due to changing arctic ecosystems. The USGS has demonstrated that wide-spread loss of arctic sea ice and terrestrial permafrost-supported habitats have serious consequences and will be a significant long term challenge for the polar bear and a suite of other species and ecosystems under the Department's jurisdiction. This increase will support a strategic expansion of the physical-biological forecasting capacity that was successfully used to assess polar bear status last year. The refinement of forecasting models made possible by this expanded effort will

enhance information needed by partner agencies. The FWS and NPS will use the models to inform Arctic management decisions. The models will be used as part of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Treaty for conservation of polar bears in the Chukchi Sea and in considering permitting of oil and gas development in the Arctic Ocean. Scientifically, the models will enhance the ability of USGS to predict the status of other Arctic species, such as the Pacific walrus and associated ecosystems, and enhance capacity to evaluate policy and management strategies.

The budget requests an increase of \$1.0 million for the analysis and synthesis of data collected during two previous USGS seafloor mapping cruises in the Arctic. The total \$4.0 million will also allow the USGS, working with the Interagency Task Force on the Extended Continental Shelf, to develop plans and lay the groundwork for additional seafloor mapping expeditions, to develop a data management infrastructure for the effort, and to advance collaborative development of a successful U.S. extended continental shelf delineation. This work is time sensitive, given the interest and progress of other Nations in doing the same.

The USGS requests an increase of \$727,000 to support the USGS partnership with other Interior bureaus, State and local agencies, industry and private land owners in the Wyoming Landscape Conservation initiative. This effort is committed to maintaining healthy landscapes, sustaining wildlife and preserving recreational and traditional uses. The USGS role is to provide the science framework and information necessary for partners to use in making decisions and will allow the USGS to support field work required to maintain current data and implement scientific studies to evaluate various habitat treatments and monitor at risk species such as sage grouse, song birds and pygmy rabbits. In 2010, the USGS will build on 2009 accomplishments such as inventorying species and habitats, monitoring and assessing water resources, integrating energy resources and habitat data, and providing a robust data inventory.

The budget request also includes an increase of \$2.0 million for the Cooperative Research Units (CRU) program. This increase will be used to fill vacant research scientist positions located in Units across the country. Research conducted at Cooperative Units is critical to the Nation's interests in balanced energy development, climate change, invasive species, infectious diseases, and threatened fish and wildlife conservation. Additional science capacity in the CRU program will enhance and expand graduate education and science training as mandated in the Cooperative Units Act, contributing to the science expertise that will be needed to meet future natural resource challenges on issues of national priority. The increase also will be used to fully leverage the funding and material support provided by the States, host universities, the Wildlife Management Institute, and partner agencies including the FWS.

The 2010 budget includes \$143.9 million for USGS geography programs, continuing support for the USGS role in land remote sensing and geographic research. It also includes a request to move National Geospatial Program activities from Enterprise Information to the Geography Discipline. The Geography budget request includes an increase of \$300,000 for a component of the Department's New Energy Frontier initiative and \$1.5 million for fixed costs.

The budget proposes \$247.0 million for USGS geology activities. This request includes an increase to the Coastal and Marine Geology Program of \$1.0 million for extended continental shelf studies, discussed previously. The Geology budget includes a \$375,000 increase to the Coastal and Marine Geology Program, a \$100,000 increase to the Mineral Resources Program, and a \$1.0 million increase to the Energy Resources Program as part of the New Energy Frontier initiative. The Geology budget also includes an increase of \$4.0 million for fixed costs.

The budget for USGS water resources programs proposes \$227.9 million to support water research and monitoring activities that address important national issues such as water availability, water quality, and flood and drought hazards. The request includes a \$5.0 million increase to enhance the National Streamgauge Network in support of climate change monitoring, discussed previously. An additional \$200,000 is requested for the Hydrologic Networks and Analysis Program to address water quality issues associated with renewable energy sources such as biofuels production as part of the Department's New Energy Frontier initiative. The Water Resources budget also includes an increase of \$4.5 million for fixed costs.

The 2010 budget requests \$199.3 million for biological research. This proposal reflects increases of \$1.0 million for a component of the New Energy Frontier initiative, \$727,000 for sustainable energy development in the Green River Basin, \$5.0 million for climate change and science support for the FWS, \$2.0 million to fund key scientific positions at Cooperative Research Units across the country, and \$4.2 million to refine forecasting models for species at risk as a result of changing Arctic ecosystems, discussed previously. The Biology budget also includes an increase of \$3.3 million for fixed costs.

A total of \$58.2 million is requested for USGS global change activities. This request includes a \$5.0 million increase for the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center, an additional \$7.0 million for geological and biological carbon sequestration activities, and \$5.0 million for climate change science work to further climate impacts monitoring efforts already underway. The budget also includes \$549,000 for fixed costs.

The budget requests \$221.6 million for science support, enterprise information, and facilities. The National Geospatial Program is moved from Enterprise Information to the Geography Discipline. The budget also includes a total increase of \$7.4 million for fixed costs in these three activities.

The USGS 2010 budget request addresses issues important to the Administration and Department and aligns with the 2007 USGS Science Strategy. This budget reflects our commitment to address both short-term and long-term challenges of importance to the Nation.

With a worldwide reputation for excellent, objective science, the USGS is well-suited to address a broad array of natural-resource and natural-science issues facing the Nation, employing scientific tools at scales ranging from microscopic to global. The 2010 budget request will enable USGS to build on its breadth of expertise and its long tradition of service to provide the data, long-term scientific understanding, and scientific tools needed to help the the environment remain healthy and the quality of life in the United States remain high, now and into the future.

This concludes my statement, Mr. Chairman. I will be happy to answer any questions you and other members may have. I appreciate this opportunity to testify before you and this Subcommittee.