

# USGS Coalition: Addressing a Funding Shortfall

The **USGS Coalition** is an alliance of organizations united by a commitment to the continued vitality of the unique combination of biological, geological, hydrological and mapping programs of the U.S. Geological Survey. The USGS provides independent, high-quality data, information, research support and assessments needed by federal, state, local and tribal policymakers, resource and emergency managers, engineers and planners, researchers and educators and the public. The Coalition supports increased federal investment in USGS programs that underpin responsible natural resource stewardship, improve resilience to natural and human-induced hazards, and contribute to the long-term health, security and prosperity of the nation.

Established by Congress as a branch of the Department of the Interior in 1879, **the USGS today has a truly national mission** that extends beyond the boundaries of the nation's public lands to encompass the homes of all citizens through natural hazards monitoring, drinking-water studies, biological and geological resource assessments, and other activities. The USGS has nearly 400 offices, located across the nation in every state. To aid in its interdisciplinary investigations, the USGS works with over 2,000 federal, state, local, and private agencies.

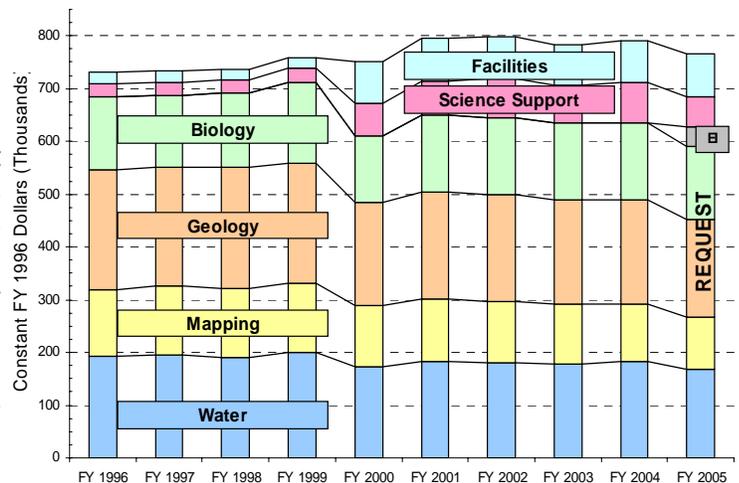
## Funding Shortfall

During the past nine years, total federal spending for non-defense research and development has risen by nearly half from \$37 billion to almost \$55 billion in constant dollars. By contrast, **funding for the USGS has been nearly flat**, as can be seen in the accompanying chart. Even this flat funding for the Survey reflects the restoration by Congress of proposed budget cuts.

In language accompanying the FY03 spending bill, the House Appropriations Committee strongly urged the Administration "to **continue to fund these critical science programs** in the base budget in future years." For its part, the Senate Appropriations Committee urged the Administration "to bear in mind the expressed public support across the United States for the Survey's programs."

**The need for science in support of public policy decision-making has never been greater.** USGS scientists and engineers produce knowledge and geospatial and other types of data that support water, energy and mineral resource management, wildlife and ecosystem management, and protection and prevention measures for natural disasters.

In order to meet the tremendous needs of the future, **more investment is needed.** That investment should be used to strengthen USGS partnerships, improve monitoring networks, produce high-quality digital geospatial data and deliver the best possible science to address societal problems and inform decision makers.



## A Sampling of Essential Services for the Nation

USGS water-quality studies help to protect the nation's **drinking water** and fresh water resources by assessing how environmental and human factors affect the condition of our streams and ground water over time. The National Weather Service uses data from the USGS streamgage network to issue **flood warnings**. Other agencies use the data for assessing flood risk and drought impacts.

Not only does USGS produce the topographic maps familiar to many, but it also works with partners to provide a whole new generation of high-quality, **digital geospatial data** products that help inform decisions by resource managers, state and local officials, and the public.

**Invasive species** are a major environmental and economic problem. USGS researchers track the pathways of these species and study their effects on the native organisms and ecosystems.

Nearly 80 million people in 39 states are at risk from destructive **earthquakes**. New USGS sensor arrays can produce real-time groundshaking maps and other products to help vulnerable urban areas reduce the human and economic effects of future quakes.

USGS assessments of **energy and mineral resources** provide crucial information for environmentally prudent development and conservation, contributing to the nation's economic security.

USGS biologists are studying **wildlife health** issues like chronic wasting disease and West Nile virus. Because such diseases can also affect human populations, this research has important medical value as well.

With elevated **homeland security** concerns, the Survey and its federal partners are developing and deploying advanced sensors to monitor vulnerable water bodies and natural resources. As the nation's mapper, USGS provides geospatial data for an array of homeland security needs.

---

### Coalition Member Organizations

American Congress on Surveying and Mapping  
American Fisheries Society  
American Geological Institute  
American Geophysical Union  
American Institute of Biological Sciences  
American Institute of Professional Geologists  
American Society for Photogrammetry & Remote Sensing  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Civil Engineers  
American Water Resources Association  
AmericaView  
Association of American Geographers  
Association of Ecosystem Research Centers  
Association of Engineering Geologists  
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies  
Association of State Floodplain Managers  
The Botanical Society of America  
Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas at Austin  
California Institute of Technology  
California Seismic Safety Commission  
Clean Beaches Council  
Council of Science Editors  
Crop Science Society of America  
Earthquake Engineering Research Institute  
Ecological Society of America  
Geological Society of America  
Geo-Institute of ASCE  
Geoscience Information Society  
The Groundwater Foundation

International Association of Emergency Managers  
Interstate Council on Water Policy  
Kansas Geological Survey  
Natl. Assn. of State Universities & Land Grant Colleges  
Natl. Assn. of University Fisheries & Wildlife Programs  
National Council for Science and the Environment  
National Flood Determination Association  
National Geographic Society  
National Ground Water Association  
National Institutes for Water Resources  
Natural Science Collections Alliance  
NatureServe  
North American Benthological Society  
OhioView  
Ornithological Council  
Phycological Society of America  
Renewable Natural Resources Foundation  
Seismological Society of America  
Society for Range Management  
Society of Economic Geologists  
Society of Envir. Toxicology & Chemistry — North America  
Soil Science Society of America  
Universities' Council on Water Resources  
University Consortium for Geographic Info. Science  
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research  
University of Southern California  
Water Environment Federation  
Western States Seismic Policy Council  
The Wildlife Society

---

For more information about the coalition, please visit our web site at [www.usgscoalition.org](http://www.usgscoalition.org) or contact Emily M. Lehr at [eml@agiweb.org](mailto:eml@agiweb.org); voice 703 379 2480 x212; fax 703 379 7563.