

USGS Coalition: Addressing a Funding Shortfall

The USGS Coalition is an alliance of over 70 organizations united by a commitment to the continued vitality of the unique combination of biological, geographical, geological, and hydrological programs of the United States Geological Survey (USGS). 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.

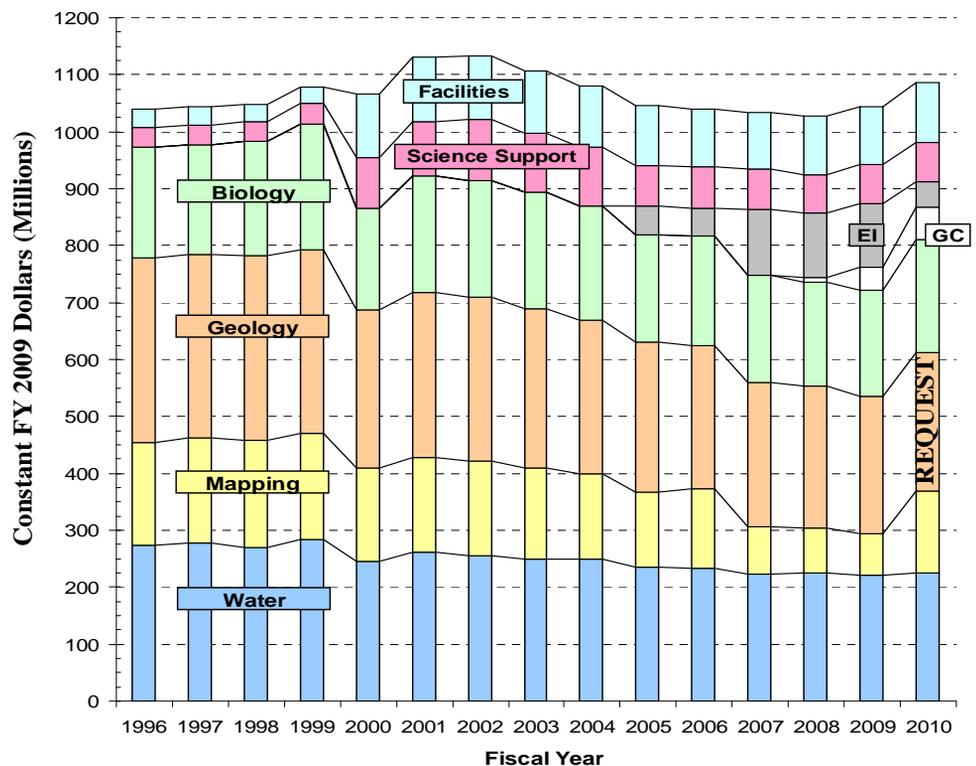
Established by Congress as a branch of the Department of the Interior in 1879, **the USGS has a truly national mission** that extends beyond the boundaries of the nation's public lands to encompass the homes of all citizens, through natural hazards monitoring, drinking-water studies, natural resource assessments, and other activities. The agency provides high-quality research and data to policymakers, emergency responders, resource managers, educators, and the public. 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

The USGS budget has declined in real dollars for six consecutive years from FY 2003 to FY 2008. **In real terms, funding for the USGS is at its lowest level since FY 1997**, as can be seen in the accompanying figure. The decline in funding for the USGS would have been even greater if Congress had not repeatedly restored proposed budget cuts.

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 need for science to support public policy decision making, **more investment is needed.** That investment should be used to support vital USGS partnerships, improve valuable monitoring networks, produce high-quality digital geospatial data, implement needed bioinformatics networks, and deliver the best possible science to address societal problems and inform decision makers.



Essential Services for the Nation

USGS water-quality studies help to protect the nation's **drinking water** and freshwater resources by assessing how natural and human factors affect the condition of streams and groundwater. Other agencies, such as the National Weather Service, use the data to issue **flood warnings** and to assess flood risk and drought impacts.

Research conducted by the USGS is vital to understanding and predicting the impacts of **climate change** on our nation's coastal cities, water resources, ecosystems, and wildlife. The USGS is also developing new methods to assess the nation's potential for **carbon sequestration**.

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.

The USGS provides fundamental scientific data that informs management of **natural resources** (e.g., data for Fish and Wildlife Service on polar bear populations), control of **invasive species** (e.g., snakehead fish, zebra mussels), and monitoring of **wildlife diseases** (e.g., Highly Pathogenic Avian Flu, Chronic Wasting Disease).

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 earthquakes.

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

With elevated **homeland security** concerns, the USGS 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
American Water Works Association
AmericaView
Applied Technology Council
Association of American Geographers
Association of American State Geologists
Association of Ecosystem Research Centers
Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities
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
Cartography and Geographic Information Society
Clean Beaches Council
Council of Entomology Department Administrators
Council of Science Editors
Crop Science Society of America
Earthquake Engineering Research Institute
Ecological Society of America
ESRI
Geological Society of America
Geo-Institute of ASCE
Geoscience Information Society
The Groundwater Foundation
Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology
International Association of Emergency Managers
Interstate Council on Water Policy
Kansas Geological Survey
Natl. Assn. of University Fisheries & Wildlife Programs
Natl. Cooperators' Coalition for USGS Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Units
National Council for Science and the Environment
National Flood Determination Association
National Geographic Society
National Ground Water Association
National Institutes for Water Resources
National Mining Association
Natural Science Collections Alliance
NatureServe
NBII Coalition
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
Southern California Earthquake Center at USC
Universities' Council on Water Resources
University Consortium for Geographic Info. Science
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
University of Southern California
Water Environment Federation
Weed Science Society of America
Western States Seismic Policy Council
The Wildlife Society

For more information about the USGS Coalition, please visit our web site at www.USGScoalition.org or contact co-chairs Craig Schiffrics (cschiffrics@geosociety.org) or Robert Gropp (rgropp@aibs.org).