

DIVISION G – DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT,
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

The following statement is an explanation of the effects of Division G, which makes appropriations for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Forest Service, the Indian Health Service, and related agencies for fiscal year 2018.

The joint explanatory statement accompanying this division is approved and indicates congressional intent. Unless otherwise noted, the language set forth in House Report 115-238 carries the same weight as language included in this joint explanatory statement and should be complied with unless specifically addressed to the contrary in this joint explanatory statement. While some language is repeated for emphasis, it is not intended to negate the language referred to above unless expressly provided herein.

In instances where the House report speaks more broadly to policy issues or offers views that are subject to interpretation, such views remain those of the House and are not affirmed by this explanatory statement unless repeated herein. In cases where the House report or this explanatory statement directs the submission of a report, such report is to be submitted to both the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations. Where this explanatory statement refers to the Committees or the Committees on Appropriations, unless otherwise noted, this reference is to the House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies and the Senate Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies.

The Committees direct each department and agency funded in this Act to follow the directions set forth in this Act and the accompanying statement, and not reallocate resources or reorganize activities except as provided herein or otherwise approved by the Committees through the reprogramming process as referenced in this explanatory statement. This explanatory statement addresses only those agencies and accounts for which there is a need for greater explanation than provided in the Act itself. Funding levels for appropriations by account, program, and activity, with comparisons to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level and the fiscal year 2018 budget request, can be found in the table at the end of this division.

Unless expressly stated otherwise, any reference to “this Act” or “at the end of this statement” shall be treated as referring only to the provisions of this division.

Committee Directives.—The Department of the Interior and Forest Service are directed to continue the directions included in the Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31) relating to Vacant Grazing Allotments; State Wildlife Data; Bighorn Sheep; Land Grants, Acequias, and Community Ditches; and Public Access.

Fleet Management Practices.—Agencies shall provide supporting documentation on their methods for determining their optimal fleet inventories and justification for any deviation from the General Services Administration’s Federal Property Management Regulations upon request of the Committees. Agency inspectors general shall provide results from audits of fleet management practices and make them publicly available.

Invasive Species.—The Department of the Interior is directed to provide a written report to the Committees within 180 days of enactment of this Act, detailing the funds appropriated and expended, actions taken, and outputs achieved for the early detection of and rapid response to invasive species, as prescribed in the National Invasive Species Council Management Plan, 2016-2018.

Delivery of Reports and Correspondence.—All reports, correspondence, and reprogramming requests from the agencies to the Committees shall be provided in both physical and electronic formats.

Youth Partnership Programs.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture are encouraged to utilize, where practicable, youth partnership programs like the Public Lands Corps, Youth Conservation Corps, Student Conservation Association, Job Corps and other related partnerships with Federal, State, local, tribal or non-profit groups that serve young adults.

Land and Water Conservation Fund.—The agreement includes \$425,000,000 derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for programs consistent with chapter 2003 of title 54 of the United States Code, as identified in the table below.

	FY 2017 Enacted	Budget Request	This Bill
Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$400,000,000	\$64,040,000	\$425,000,000
State, Local and Forest Legacy Programs	211,151,000	11,524,000	224,731,000
National Park Service State Assistance	110,006,000	3,043,000	124,006,000
Coop. Endangered Species Conservation Fund	30,800,000	0	19,638,000
American Battlefield Protection Act	10,000,000	8,481,000	10,000,000
Highlands Conservation Act	10,000,000	0	10,000,000
Forest Legacy Program	62,347,000	0	67,025,000
Rescission	-12,002,000	0	-5,938,000
Federal Land Acquisition	188,849,000	52,516,000	200,269,000
Bureau of Land Management	31,416,000	3,609,000	24,916,000
Fish and Wildlife Service	49,995,000	17,051,000	53,839,000
National Park Service	42,023,000	14,856,000	46,935,000
Forest Service	54,415,000	7,000,000	64,337,000
Department of the Interior Valuation Services	11,000,000	10,000,000	10,242,000

There is bipartisan support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and this agreement includes funding for State assistance and new land acquisition projects. The Committees expect the

agencies to move forward with all projects specifically identified and funded through this agreement and those funded in previous fiscal years; to utilize funding in a timely manner; and to seek Congressional approval for reprogramming unobligated balances if applicable. Agencies are directed to continue their longstanding process of identifying and prioritizing potential Federal land acquisition projects in anticipation of program appropriations as consistent with previous years. **Within 30 days of enactment of this Act, each agency is directed to submit to the Committees a prioritized list of projects for fiscal year 2019 consideration.** In future years, the agencies are directed to submit their lists within 30 days of the President's budget submission to Congress.

The Committees believe increasing access to our public lands for hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities is important and again include funding for these projects. The Committees expect recreational access projects to be selected based on their role in meeting key recreation needs and the agencies should work with their respective regions, State offices, and/or management units to identify potential projects. The Committees are to be informed about the selection process and how the agencies are meeting the outlined objectives prior to proceeding with projects. Further, the agencies are again directed to include in future budget justifications an explanation of the process used for allocating funds for recreational access in the previous year.

National Ocean Policy.—The Committees direct the Department of the Interior to identify by agency and account, and submit no later than 60 days after enactment of this Act, all funding and associated actions in the President's budget submission for fiscal year 2019, proposed for the implementation of the coastal and marine spatial planning and ecosystem-based management components of the National Ocean Policy developed under Executive Order 13547.

REPROGRAMMING GUIDELINES

The following are the procedures governing reprogramming actions for programs and activities funded in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. The Committees remind the agencies funded in this Act that these reprogramming guidelines are in effect, and must be complied with, until such time as the Committees modify them through bill or report language.

Definitions.—“Reprogramming,” as defined in these procedures, includes the reallocation of funds from one budget activity, budget line-item, or program area, to another within any appropriation funded in this Act. In cases where either the House or Senate Committee report displays an allocation of an appropriation below that level, that more detailed level shall be the basis for reprogramming.