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# U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: FY2024 Appropriations

## Introduction

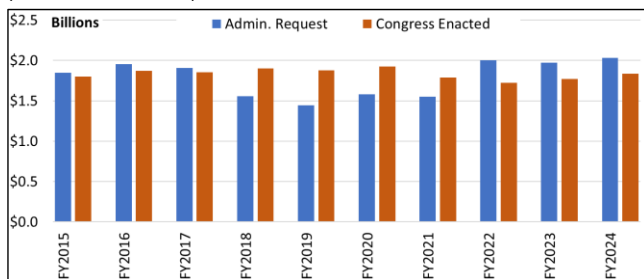
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), an agency within the Department of the Interior (DOI), has a mission to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats. Congress funds FWS through discretionary and mandatory appropriations. FWS discretionary appropriations typically are included in the annual Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Acts. Discretionary appropriations fund many activities related to the agency’s mission, such as resource management and conservation, construction projects, and payments and grants to states and other parties. This In Focus focuses primarily on annual discretionary funding for FWS for FY2024.

FWS sometimes receives supplemental funding in addition to annual discretionary appropriations. For instance, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; P.L. 117-58), enacted in 2021, provided FWS with supplemental funding of \$91.0 million annually from FY2022 to FY2026. The monies were provided for activities under the Resource Management account, including fish and wildlife passage restoration and regional ecosystem restoration. Further, mandatory (permanent) appropriations are provided to FWS under various statutes within the jurisdiction of authorizing committees. *The Interior Budget in Brief, Fiscal Year 2025*, estimated FWS mandatory appropriations at \$1.92 billion for FY2024. This total does not include \$95.0 million in annual mandatory funding authorized under the Great American Outdoors Act (P.L. 116-152) for deferred maintenance.

## FWS Discretionary Appropriations

From FY2015 to FY2024, FWS received, on average, \$1.84 billion annually in discretionary funding (adjusted to FY2023 dollars; see **Figure 1**). For FY2024, the Administration requested \$2.09 billion in discretionary funding for FWS across eight accounts (**Table 1**).

**Figure 1. FY2015-FY2024 FWS Discretionary Funding**  
(in FY2023 dollars)



**Source:** CRS using P.L. 118-42, Division E, and “budget authority” data from Appendix A of *The Interior Budget in Brief*. In general,

enacted amounts are taken from the volume two years later than the fiscal year indicated.

**Notes:** Appropriations generally exclude supplemental funding, transfers, rescissions, and cancellations. Figures are adjusted to FY2023 constant dollars using Office of Management and Budget, *Historical Tables, Table 10.1: Gross Domestic Product and Deflators Used in the Historical Tables: 1940-2029*.

**Table 1. Discretionary Funding by Account for FWS**  
(nominal \$ in millions)

Account	FY2023 Enacted	FY2024 Request	FY2024 Enacted
Resource Management	1,555.7	1,854.1	1,520.3
Construction	29.9	51.0	19.3
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund	24.6	23.7	23.0
National Wildlife Refuge Fund	13.2	0.0	13.2
North American Wetlands Conservation Fund	50.0	50.0	49.0
Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund	5.1	9.9	5.0
Multinational Species Conservation Fund	21.0	22.0	20.5
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants	73.8	76.6	72.4
Damage Recovery Provision	0.0	5.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,773.3</b>	<b>\$2,092.2</b>	<b>\$1,722.7</b>

**Source:** CRS using data from the *Congressional Record*, vol. 170, no. 39 (March 5, 2024), pp. S1801-S1803.

**Notes:** The FY2024 request included \$5.0 million for a damage recovery provision as an administrative cost. Values may not sum to totals shown due to rounding.

For FY2024, Congress appropriated \$1.72 billion to the FWS for FY2024 under Division E, the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-42). FY2024 annual appropriations were \$369.6 million below the FY2024 President’s budget request of \$2.09 billion and \$50.6 million below the FY2023 enacted level of \$1.77 billion.

In earlier FY2024 action, H.R. 4821, as passed by the House on November 3, 2023, would have provided \$1.54 billion for FWS. This was \$552.7 million below the Administration’s FY2024 request and \$183.2 million below the FY2024 enacted level. S. 2605, as reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee on July 27, 2023, would have provided \$1.80 billion for FWS for FY2024. This was \$288.4 million below the FY2024 request and \$81.2 million above the FY2024 enacted level.

## Resource Management Account

The Resource Management account comprises the majority (88% in FY2024) of the FWS annual discretionary appropriation (**Table 1**). For FY2024, the Administration requested a \$298.4 million increase from the FY2023 enacted level for this account. In FY2024, Congress appropriated \$35.4 million below the FY2023 appropriation. **Table 2** shows the funding levels for activities within the account.

**Table 2. Activities Within Resource Management**  
(nominal \$ in millions)

Activity	FY2023 Enacted	FY2024 Request	FY2024 Enacted
Ecological Services	296.0	384.5	288.3
Habitat Conservation	74.2	100.1	72.0
National Wildlife Refuge System	541.6	624.9	527.0
Conservation and Enforcement	175.0	223.2	173.7
Fish and Aquatic Conservation	241.6	259.8	226.8
Science Support	35.4	55.5	33.8
General Operations	166.3	206.2	153.8
Stewardship Priorities	25.6	0.0	44.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,555.7</b>	<b>\$1,854.1</b>	<b>\$1,520.3</b>

**Source:** CRS using data from the *Congressional Record*, vol. 170, no. 39 (March 5, 2024), pp. S1799-S1801.

**Note:** Values may not sum to totals shown due to rounding.

## Other FWS Accounts

In FY2023, \$217.6 million in annual discretionary funding was appropriated for seven other FWS accounts that support construction, conservation activities, financial and technical assistance, and revenue sharing, among other activities. For FY2024, the Administration requested a \$15.6 million increase from the FY2023 enacted level for these seven accounts (and an additional \$5.0 million for a

damage recovery provision). In FY2024, Congress appropriated \$15.2 million below FY2023 levels.

## Status of FY2024 Administration Proposals

For FY2024, Congress considered whether to enact Administration proposals as set out in *The Interior Budget in Brief, Fiscal Year 2024*. For example, one Administration proposal sought to expand the authority for agencies to transfer funds under the IJA to FWS to accelerate and improve environmental reviews in support of development of infrastructure projects and energy solutions. The Senate Appropriations Committee noted in its report on S. 2605, the Interior appropriations bill reported by the Committee, that the requested transfer authority of unobligated IJA funding to FWS (and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS]) was included in S. 2309, the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill reported by the Committee. P.L. 118-47, Division B, Section 754, authorized the transfer of unobligated IJA funds to the FWS and NMFS, subject to specified terms and conditions, for the costs of carrying out responsibilities related to the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. §§1531 et seq.).

As a second example, a proposal included in *The Interior Budget in Brief, Fiscal Year 2024*, sought to shift the Office of Subsistence Management from FWS to the DOI Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, with a related shift of funding from activities within Resource Management. According to FWS, the change would facilitate expanded tribal co-management partnerships and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge into subsistence management. The explanatory statement accompanying P.L. 118-42 expressed that the “Office of Subsistence Management function and funding has been moved from the [FWS] and is provided for within the Office of the Secretary” (*Congressional Record*, March 5, 2024, p. S1677). Specifically, P.L. 118-42, Division E, provided that funds within the DOI Office of the Secretary may be transferred to and merged with the FWS Resource Management account “only to implement the functional transfer of the Office of Subsistence Management to the Office of the Secretary and maintain uninterrupted execution of ongoing subsistence management activities” (*Congressional Record*, March 5, 2024, p. S1163).

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