



# COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

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### SUMMARY

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES FISCAL YEAR 2022 APPROPRIATIONS BILL

**Washington, D.C.** – The fiscal year 2022 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies bill provides a total discretionary funding level of \$40.45 billion, which is \$1.993 billion more than the fiscal year 2021 level. In addition, the bill provides \$2.45 billion for the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund, and, in accordance with the Great American Outdoors Act, allocates \$1.9 billion for projects within National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund and \$900 million for projects within the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

**U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.)**, Chair of the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, said:

*“This bill represents a shared commitment to the American people to conserve our public lands and cultural institutions; to safeguard our environment and clean air and water for future generations; and to fulfill our trust and treaty responsibilities to Indian Country. I’m especially proud of the \$100 million investment this bill makes in environmental justice programs at the Environmental Protection Agency to begin to better address the disproportionate impacts of pollution on communities of color and low-income communities. As climate chaos lengthens the severity and duration of the fire season, I also fought hard to make sure this bill addresses our ever-increasing wildfire challenges in the West, and we delivered by supporting year-round staffing for fire-risk reduction and boosting fire prevention work. This is a good piece of bipartisan work to deliver for Oregon and the nation.”*

### **Key Points & Highlights**

#### **Environmental Justice**

The bill makes an historic \$100 million investment in environmental justice at the Environmental Protection Agency. This nearly \$90 million increase to the fiscal year 2021 funding level will go to support the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) efforts to ensure that all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income enjoy the same degree of protection from pollution and have equal access to EPA expertise and participation in all of its environmental and public health decision-making. Funding will support grants to environmental justice

communities and bolster EPA's abilities to integrate environmental justice principals across its entire mission including clean air, clean water, toxic chemicals, and waste management.

### **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

The bill provides \$9.559 billion for EPA, an increase of \$322 million to the fiscal year 2021 enacted level. In addition to investments in environmental justice, the bill includes more than \$420 million for EPA clean air programs to tackle the existential threat of climate change and address the continuing burden of air pollution on communities across the country. The bill also invests in healthy communities and job creation by supporting EPA's infrastructure grant programs. For the first time, the agreement establishes a new grant program to support community efforts to mitigate the severe health hazard posed by wildfire smoke. Funding also includes major investments in clean water: \$2.765 billion for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, \$178 million for grants to address non-point source pollution; \$27.5 million to address lead in schools; \$43 million to address combined sewer overflows; and nearly \$70 million for innovative water infrastructure loans through the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA). The bill also will protect health and spur economic growth by helping clean up contaminated lands and pollution through \$1.23 billion for EPA's Superfund program, \$46 million for brownfields grants, and \$92 million for diesel engine clean up grants.

### **Tribal Programs**

The bill invests in the federal government's treaty and trust responsibilities to Native Americans by providing \$10.28 billion for tribal programs. For fiscal year 2022, the bill provides \$6.63 billion for the Indian Health Service (IHS), an increase of \$395 million more than fiscal year 2021 enacted level. These investments increase health services funding by 8.3 percent and by providing \$2.39 billion for hospitals, clinics, doctors, nurses and health services; \$235 million for dental health; and \$121.9 million for mental health programs such as suicide prevention initiatives for Native youth. This funding also increases Indian Health facilities investments by \$22 million for a total of \$940 million for new hospital construction, new and replacement equipment, and water and solid waste infrastructure improvements for Native American communities to prevent the spread of disease.

Tribal programs provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) are collectively funded at \$3.65 billion, an increase of \$150 million above the fiscal year 2021 level. This funding provides a 25 percent increase for a total of \$25 million to address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women cases in Indian Country and a new \$7 million Indian Boarding School Initiative to conduct a comprehensive review of the troubled legacy of federal boarding school policies.

### **National Park Service**

The bill provides \$3.265 billion for the National Park Service, \$142 million more than the fiscal year 2021 level, which will fully support current staffing levels in parks and support offices. A total of \$10 million is provided to build a voting rights center at the Selma Interpretive Center to honor the legacy of civil rights leaders, including the late Representative John Lewis. This bill also provides increases above fiscal year 2021 of \$2 million for State Historic Preservation Offices, \$1 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, \$2.5 million for Historical

Revitalization grants, \$5 million for Civil Rights preservation, and \$1.5 million for Save America's Treasures grants. Funding for National Heritage Areas is \$27.1 million.

### **Forest Service**

The bill provides \$5.7 billion for the Forest Service (excluding \$2.12 billion in additional funds for the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve), \$316 million more than fiscal year 2021. These increases are provided to radically improve forest restoration and fire risk reduction efforts and to increase year-round staffing to carry out this work. The bill increases hazardous fuels reduction projects to \$187 million to allow the Forest Service to treat more of the highest-risk acres. The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program is doubled to \$28 million, which will fund more projects backed by diverse stakeholders to improve forest landscapes. The bill also restores the Legacy Roads and Trails program to prioritize fish passage improvements and repurposing unnecessary roads as trails. Additional increases are provided for grants to states for fire protection and forest stewardship, and for research on fire behavior, invasive pests, and disease.

### **Wildland Firefighting**

The bill provides \$3.845 billion for fire suppression, of which \$2.45 billion is provided to the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund, \$100 million more than fiscal year 2021, in accordance with the fiscal year 2022 concurrent budget resolution. This additional funding gives the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior an assured amount of funding to be used when regular appropriated funds are spent. The bill also makes available funding to fulfill the President's commitment to improve compensation for federal firefighters, including providing at least \$15 an hour in pay.

### **Bureau of Land Management**

The bill provides \$1.41 billion for the Bureau of Land Management, \$101 million more than fiscal year 2021. National Conservation Lands, which have been chronically underfunded, are increased to \$49 million for recreation and management planning for new, expanded, and restored monuments, invasive species control, wildfire adaptation and climate resiliency projects. The wild horse and burro program receives \$137 million to accelerate removals from degraded and drought-plagued areas, to house horses off-range, and to jumpstart a fertility control program to reduce the future horse population. Additional increases provide resources for wildlife habitat restoration, including in the sagebrush steppe, and abandoned mine and orphaned oil well cleanup.

### **Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)**

The bill fully funds payments to counties through the PILT program, which are estimated at a total of \$515 million.

### **Cultural Programs**

The bill provides \$180 million each to the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities, an increase of \$12.5 million for each endowment compared to the fiscal year 2021 enacted level. Increases will support popular special initiatives like the National Endowments for the Arts military healing arts program and the National Endowment for the Humanities "A More Perfect Union" initiative to highlight the nation's shared history. The bill provides \$1.062 billion for the

Smithsonian Institution, \$29.5 million more than fiscal year 2021. Funding for the National Gallery of Art is included at \$180.5 million and funding for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is continued at \$40.4 million.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The bill allocates \$900 million for Federal land acquisition and financial assistance to states provided through the LWCF via the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA). This program is critical for improving recreational access to our federal lands, protecting iconic landscapes, delivering grants to states and local governments to create and protect urban parks and open spaces, and providing farmers and ranchers with easements to allow them to continue to steward their private lands in the face of development pressures.

**National Parks and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund**

The bill allocates \$1.9 billion for deferred maintenance projects for the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the Forest Service as part of a five-year deferred maintenance initiative under the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA).

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