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April 9, 2026

USGS Coalition Statement on the President's FY2027 Budget Proposal for the U.S. Geological Survey

WASHINGTON — The USGS Coalition, an alliance of more than 80 scientific, academic, conservation, and professional organizations, today issued the following statement in response to the President's FY2027 budget proposal for the U.S. Geological Survey:

"The FY2027 budget proposal would cut the U.S. Geological Survey by \$527.8 million — a 37 percent reduction from current funding levels and the largest proposed single-year cut in the agency's 147-year history. It would completely eliminate the Ecosystems Mission Area, cut Core Science Systems by 43 percent, reduce Natural Hazards funding by 32 percent, and cut Water Resources by 21 percent. The USGS Coalition urges Congress to reject these proposals in their entirety.

"These proposed cuts are not routine budget adjustments; they would dismantle core components of the Nation's scientific infrastructure, weakening programs that underpin public safety, economic decision making, and national security. From hazard monitoring and water data to critical minerals mapping and ecosystem science, USGS provides foundational information that states, communities and industries rely on every day. Eliminating or severely cutting these programs would leave decision-makers at every level operating with less certainty and greater risk.

"The proposed elimination of the Ecosystems Mission Area alone would end federal wildlife monitoring, fisheries science, water quality assessment, disease surveillance for threats like H5N1 avian influenza, and the Cooperative Research Unit program embedded at universities in all 50 states. These are not duplicative or peripheral functions. They are foundational scientific capabilities with no equivalent replacement in universities, states, or the private sector.

"Congress has already made clear it understands what is at stake. When the administration proposed a nearly identical 39 percent cut in FY2026, a bipartisan Congress enacted \$1.42 billion — \$529 million above the request — and rejected the proposed elimination of the Ecosystems Mission Area outright. The FY2027 proposal repeats that request. Congress should reject it again, with equal resolve.

"We also call on Congress to closely scrutinize a proposed legislative provision in the FY2027 Department of the Interior budget appendix titled 'Interior Authority for Operating Efficiencies.' This language appears to grant the Secretary of the Interior broad authority to reorganize or restructure DOI bureaus administratively, without the explicit congressional authorization that changes of this magnitude have historically required. USGS has served the American public as an independent scientific agency for nearly 150 years. Congress should not inadvertently cede its oversight role over that institution's structure through a general provisions rider.

"The U.S. Geological Survey provides the trusted, independent scientific data that states, communities, industries, and emergency managers rely on every day to make decisions about water, safety, and natural resources. It returns far more than it costs — its Landsat satellite data alone generated \$25.6 billion in economic value in 2023. It saves lives through earthquake early warning, flood forecasting, and volcano monitoring. It protects the drinking water of 43 million Americans who rely on private wells that no other agency monitors. It underpins the critical minerals mapping that is central to American economic and national security. This is not a budget line. It is infrastructure.

"We call on Congress to act swiftly, hold hearings, and ensure that USGS emerges from the FY2027 appropriations process with its mission areas intact, its scientific capacity preserved, and its independence protected."

About the USGS Coalition

The USGS Coalition is an alliance of more than 80 organizations united by a commitment to the continued vitality of the United States Geological Survey and its ability to provide critical data and services to the nation. 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.

For more information, please contact the coalition co-chairs, Elizabeth Duffy (eduffy@federalaffairs.com) and Michael Villafranca (mvillafranca@agu.org).