

Updated April 16, 2024

Bureau of Land Management: FY2024 Appropriations

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in the Department of the Interior (DOI), manages 245 million acres of federal land, nearly all in the West. Under its multiple-use mission, BLM manages lands for diverse purposes, including livestock grazing, energy development, recreation, and conservation. The agency also administers onshore federal energy and mineral resources generally.

P.L. 118-42, Division E, enacted on March 9, 2024, contained FY2024 regular appropriations for BLM of \$1,413.1 million. From the start of FY2024 on October 1, 2023, until regular appropriations were enacted, BLM received continuing appropriations at FY2023 levels.

The FY2024 enacted appropriation for BLM was \$80.9 million lower than the FY2023 regular enacted level of \$1,494.0 million (in P.L. 117-328, Division G). The FY2024 total appropriation was provided through five accounts. It included a decrease for BLM's main account—Management of Lands and Resources (MLR)—and for the account's nine main activities (excluding mining law administration). (See **Table 1**.) It also included a decrease for BLM's second-largest account—Management of Oregon and California Grant Lands (O&C). The other three BLM accounts received level funding.

The FY2024 total enacted appropriation was \$208.4 million less than the \$1,621.5 million total that had been requested by President Biden. It also was \$85.5 million less than the \$1,498.6 million that would have been provided by S. 2605, as reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee on July 27, 2023. However, the FY2024 enacted amount was \$174.5 million more than would have been provided by the \$1,238.6 million in H.R. 4821, as passed by the House on November 3, 2023. (See **Table 2**.) This In Focus provides additional comparisons among amounts that were enacted for FY2023 and FY2024 and had been included for FY2024 in the President's request, H.R. 4821 as passed by the House, and S. 2605 as reported by committee.

BLM discretionary appropriations are provided in Title I of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations laws. BLM also receives a portion of the appropriations to DOI for wildland fire management. Mandatory (permanent) appropriations are provided to BLM under various statutes within the jurisdiction of authorizing committees. DOI estimated BLM mandatory appropriations at \$502.4 million for FY2024. This total does not include \$95.0 million for BLM *deferred maintenance* (discussed below).

For FY2024, issues for Congress included determining the amount of funding for BLM accounts and activities, the terms and conditions of such funding, and whether to enact related Biden Administration proposals.

Discretionary Appropriations Accounts

For each of BLM's five discretionary accounts, **Table 2** shows FY2023 enacted amounts, and FY2024 amounts requested by President Biden, passed by the House in H.R. 4821, reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee in S. 2605, and enacted in P.L. 118-42, Division E.

Management of Lands and Resources (MLR). This account, BLM's largest, funds diverse activities and programs. For instance, the land resources activity includes programs on rangelands, forestry, cultural resources, and wild horses and burros. **Table 1** shows amounts for the nine main activities in the MLR account (and mining law administration). For FY2024, the President sought a \$115.1 million (9%) increase, the Senate committee-reported bill would have provided a \$3.7 million (<1%) increase, and the House-passed bill would have provided a \$195.0 million (15%) decrease compared with FY2023 enacted levels. The FY2024 appropriations law included \$1,261.6 million for this account—\$76.1 million (6%) less than enacted for FY2023.

Table 1. Activities Within MLR Account (in Millions)

Activity	FY2023 Enacted	FY2024 Request	FY2024		
			H.R. 4821	FY2024 S. 2605	FY2024 Enacted
Land Resources	\$294.6	\$304.3	\$281.5	\$291.2	\$279.6
Wildlife & Aquatic Habitat	207.2	235.4	188.5	209.2	198.9
Recreation	74.8	91.1	74.8	74.8	72.0
Energy & Minerals	234.3	281.5	216.5	236.3	219.1
Realty and Ownership	89.8	97.6	71.9	89.8	87.5
Resource Protection & Maintenance	154.8	189.9	129.5	154.8	149.0
Transp. & Facilities Maintenance	76.2	85.0	57.1	76.2	55.0
Workforce & Org. Support	175.8	190.5	105.5	175.8	174.7
National Conservation Lands	61.6	72.9	55.5	63.6	59.1
Mining Law Admin. (with Offsets)	-31.3	-30.3	-38.0	-30.3	-33.3
Offsetting Collections	0	-65.0	0	0	0
Total MLR	\$1,337.7	\$1,452.8	\$1,142.6	\$1,341.3	\$1,261.6

Source: CRS, with information from the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.

Notes: MLR = Management of Lands and Resources. H.R. 4821 was passed by the House. S. 2605 was reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee. Because of rounding, some columns do not sum to totals shown.

Oregon and California Grant Lands. This account funds management of more than 2 million acres of forested lands in Western Oregon, primarily for timber production. The FY2023 appropriations law included \$120.3 million for this account. For FY2024, the President sought a \$12.4 million (10%) increase, the Senate committee-reported bill would have provided a \$1.0 million (1%) increase, and the House-passed bill would have provided a \$60.3 million (50%) decrease compared with FY2023 enacted levels. The FY2024 appropriations law included \$115.5 million for this account—\$4.8 million (4%) less than enacted for FY2023.

Range Improvements. The Range Improvements account funds rehabilitation, protection, and improvement of BLM rangelands. By law, 50% of grazing fees collected on BLM lands or \$10.0 million—whichever is greater—is credited to a Range Improvements Fund. Through the Range Improvements account, BLM typically receives an annual appropriation of \$10.0 million for the fund. The FY2023 appropriations law included \$10.0 million. For FY2024, the President's request, House-passed bill, Senate committee-reported bill, and appropriations law also contained this amount.

Service Charges, Deposits, and Forfeitures. This account allows BLM to use monies paid to the agency for activities such as rights-of-way processing and energy and minerals authorizations. The FY2023 estimate was \$30.0 million, offset by collections, for a net of \$0. For FY2024, the President's request, House-passed bill, Senate committee-reported bill, and appropriations law contained the same amount.

Miscellaneous Trust Funds. This account appropriates contributions made to BLM (e.g., from individuals, businesses, and states). The FY2023 enacted amount was \$26.0 million, as were the FY2024 levels requested by the

President, contained in the House-passed and Senate committee-reported bills, and enacted into law.

Selected Mandatory Appropriations

Deferred Maintenance (DM). BLM estimated its DM at \$4.8 billion in FY2022 (the most recent available), more than four times the FY2019 estimate (\$1.1 billion). The increase is largely due to changes in estimation methods.

BLM receives both discretionary and mandatory appropriations to address DM. Annual Interior appropriations laws provide discretionary appropriations, with \$32.0 million in FY2023 through the MLR account. For FY2024, the President sought an increase to \$39.2 million, S. 2605 would have provided level funding, and H.R. 4821 did not detail the level of funding. The FY2024 appropriations law included \$20.0 million.

A source of DM mandatory appropriations is the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund, established by P.L. 116-152, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA). Under GAOA, BLM's appropriation is about \$95.0 million annually (assuming maximum revenue to the fund). GAOA requires BLM to include, as part of its budget submission, projects to be funded. Appropriations laws may specify alternate allocations. For FY2024, H.R. 4821 and S. 2605 would have allocated funding as proposed by BLM; the FY2024 appropriations law included a few differences in project funding.

Land Acquisition. BLM typically receives appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to acquire lands. Under GAOA, LWCF programs receive mandatory appropriations. GAOA requires BLM to include, as part of its budget submission, program and project allocations for the LWCF funds. Appropriations acts may specify alternate allocations. For FY2023, the Interior appropriations law provided \$69.9 million for BLM acquisitions. For FY2024, the appropriations law provided \$73.9 million for specified acquisitions and activities as requested by the President. H.R. 4821 had reflected an allocation of \$76.2 million, and S. 2605 had reflected an allocation of \$62.4 million.

Table 2. BLM Discretionary Appropriations by Account (in Millions)

Account	FY2023 Enacted P.L. 117-328	FY2024 Requested	FY2024 H. Passed H.R. 4821	FY2024 S. Committee S. 2605	FY2024 Enacted
Management of Lands and Resources	\$1,337.7	\$1,452.8	\$1,142.6	\$1,341.3	\$1,261.6
Oregon and California Grant Lands	120.3	132.7	60.0	121.3	115.5
Range Improvements	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Service Charges, Deposits, and Forfeitures	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous Trust Funds	26.0	26.0	26.0	26.0	26.0
Total BLM	\$1,494.0	\$1,621.5	\$1,238.6	\$1,498.6	\$1,413.1

Source: CRS, with information from the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.

Notes: BLM = Bureau of Land Management. *The Interior Budget in Brief* for FY2024 shows higher FY2023 enacted and FY2024 requested totals largely due to differences in offsetting collections. For Service Charges, Deposits, and Forfeitures, the \$0 amounts are a result of an appropriation matched by offsetting fees.

IFI2499

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