

December 23, 2025

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: FY2026 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 annual Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Acts. Discretionary appropriations fund many activities, such as resource management and conservation, construction projects, and payments and grants to states and other parties.

This In Focus addresses annual FY2026 discretionary funding for FWS. Issues for Congress include determining the amount of funding for FWS accounts and activities, the conditions of such funding, and whether to enact related Trump Administration proposals.

FWS sometimes receives supplemental discretionary funding in addition to annual discretionary appropriations. For instance, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58) provided supplemental funding of \$91.0 million annually from FY2022 to FY2026 for activities under the Resource Management account. Further, FWS receives mandatory (permanent) appropriations under various statutes. The most recent estimate was included in the FY2025 FWS budget request: \$2.02 billion for FY2025.

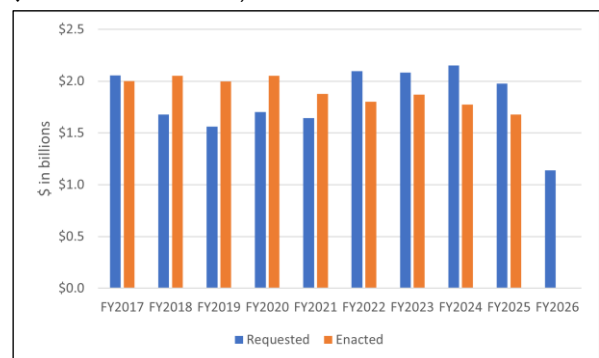
FWS Discretionary Appropriations

For FY2026, FWS generally is receiving appropriations at FY2025 levels under a continuing resolution (CR), P.L. 119-37, Division A. The CR is in effect through January 30, 2026, unless other appropriations for FWS are enacted earlier. From October 1, 2025, until November 12, 2025, FWS experienced a lapse in appropriations because no FY2026 appropriations had been enacted.

From FY2017 to FY2025, FWS received, on average, \$1.94 billion annually in discretionary funding (adjusted to 2025 dollars). The highest funding levels were provided in the first four years of the period (FY2017-FY2020). (See **Figure 1**.) For FY2026, the Administration requested \$1.14 billion in discretionary funding for FWS across eight accounts (**Table 1**). The FY2026 request was approximately \$538.4 million below the FY2025 enacted amount of \$1.68 billion.

On July 24, 2025, the House Appropriations Committee reported H.R. 4754 (H.Rept. 119-215), which recommended \$1.57 billion for FWS for FY2026. On the same day, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported S. 2431 (S.Rept. 119-46), which recommended \$1.66 billion for FWS for FY2026.

Figure 1. FWS FY2017-FY2026 Requested and Enacted Discretionary Funding
(adjusted to 2025 dollars)



Source: CRS using data from FWS annual budget justifications covering FY2018-FY2026 and Appropriations Committee sources.

Notes: Amounts shown generally exclude supplemental funding, transfers, rescissions, and cancellations. Adjustments for inflation (in September 2025 dollars) were calculated using the Consumer Price Index, Series CUUR0000SA0, from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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

Account	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Request	H.Rept. 119-215	S.Rept. 119-46
Resource Management	1,475.4	1,125.6	1,374.6	1,462.9
Construction	19.3	13.7	13.7	13.7
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund	23.0	0.0	18.7	22.1
National Wildlife Refuge Fund	13.2	0.0	13.2	13.5
North American Wetlands Conservation Fund	49.0	0.0	49.0	49.0
Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund	5.0	0.0	5.0	5.0

Account	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Request	H.Rept. 119-215	S.Rept. 119-46
Multinational Species Conservation Fund	20.5	0.0	21.0	20.5
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants	72.4	0.0	73.8	72.4
Total	1,677.7	1,139.3	1,569.0	1,659.1

Sources: S.Rept. 119-46 on S. 2431, 119th Congress, for FY2025 enacted and FY2026 Senate committee-reported, FWS FY2026 budget justification for FY2026 requested, and H.Rept. 119-215 on H.R. 4754, 119th Congress for FY2026 House-committee-reported.

Notes: Columns may not sum to totals shown due to rounding. Several accounts also receive mandatory appropriations. For account descriptions and components, see the FWS FY2026 budget justification.

Resource Management Account

The Resource Management account comprises the majority of the FWS annual discretionary appropriation. For FY2026, the Administration request of \$1.13 billion is \$349.7 million less than the FY2025 enacted level for this account. **Table 2** shows the funding levels for activities within this account. The Administration did not request funding for the Science Support activity for FY2026. For FY2026, the House and Senate committee-reported bills included funding for Science Support and the Senate committee-reported bill also included funding for Stewardship Priorities.

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

Activity	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Request	H.Rept. 119-215	S.Rept. 119-46
Ecological Services	288.3	251.6	269.3	284.0
Habitat Conservation	72.0	68.8	68.8	69.8
National Wildlife Refuge System	527.0	412.1	505.7	525.6
Conservation and Enforcement	173.7	138.0	170.8	173.1
Fish and Aquatic Conservation	226.8	152.0	190.6	220.3
Science Support	33.8	0.0	27.4	32.8

Activity	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Request	H.Rept. 119-215	S.Rept. 119-46
General Operations	153.8	103.0	141.9	138.2
Stewardship Priorities	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.1
Account Total	1,475.4	1,125.6	1,374.6	1,462.9

Source: See sources for **Table 1**.

Notes: Columns may not sum to totals shown due to rounding. The Administration refers to the Science Support activity as Science Applications. Listed activities include various sub-activities (e.g., the FWS National Fish Hatchery System is administered through the Fish and Aquatic Conservation activity). For information on activities and their components, see the FWS FY2026 budget justification.

Other FWS Accounts

For FY2025, Congress appropriated \$202.4 million for seven other FWS accounts (i.e., non-Resource Management). These accounts support construction, conservation, financial and technical assistance, and revenue sharing, among other activities (**Table 1**). For FY2026, the Administration requested \$13.7 million for the Construction account and did not request funding for the other six accounts. The House and Senate committee-reported bills recommended funding, at varying levels, for all of these accounts (**Table 1**).

Selected FY2026 Budget Proposals

The FY2026 Administration request includes various budget proposals, some of which are discussed herein. One proposal seeks to consolidate into one program under FWS the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act-related work of FWS's Ecological Services program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Office of Protected Resources. The Administration stated that this consolidation is intended to reduce redundancies, improve species recovery outcomes, and streamline permitting activities. On various occasions going back to the 1970s, some Members of Congress, Presidents, and stakeholders have proposed consolidating parts of NMFS and FWS. None of these proposals has been implemented. The House and Senate committee-reported bills do not include the proposed consolidation.

A second proposal seeks to restructure the FWS workforce, as part of the Administration's broader actions to reduce the size of the federal workforce. The House and Senate Committee reports included language to limit certain workforce restructuring activities, along with broader instructions regarding reprogramming authority.

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