



April 15, 2026

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: FY2027 Budget Request

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 entities.

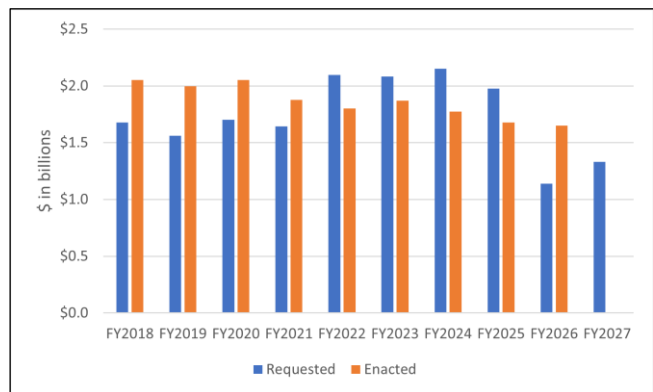
This In Focus addresses FY2027 annual discretionary funding for FWS as proposed in the Trump Administration budget request. Selected issues for Congress include determining the amount of annual funding for FWS accounts and activities, the conditions of such funding, and whether to enact related Trump Administration proposals.

FWS sometimes receives supplemental discretionary funding in addition to annual discretionary appropriations. For example, in recent years Congress has provided additional discretionary appropriations to FWS in budget reconciliation measures. Further, FWS receives mandatory (permanent) appropriations under various statutes. The Administration estimated \$1.94 billion in FWS mandatory appropriations for FY2027.

FWS Discretionary Appropriations

Since FY2018, FWS received an average of \$1.86 billion in discretionary funding (adjusted to 2025 dollars; see **Figure 1**). Funding for FWS has traditionally been spread across eight discretionary appropriations accounts (**Table 1**). For FY2027, the Administration requested \$1.33 billion in discretionary funding for FWS. The FY2027 request was \$323.2 million below (-20%) the FY2026 enacted amount of \$1.65 billion, in P.L. 119-74, Division C. The FY2027 funding request included no discretionary appropriations for five FWS accounts: Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, National Wildlife Refuge Fund, Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, Multinational Species Conservation Fund, and State and Tribal Wildlife Grants.

Figure 1. FWS Discretionary Funding: FY2018-FY2026 Requested and Enacted and FY2027 Requested
(Adjusted to 2025 dollars)



Source: CRS using data from FWS annual budget justifications covering FY2019-FY2027 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 Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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

Account	FY2026 Enacted	FY2027 Request
Resource Management	1,451.5	1,303.6
Construction	14.7	13.7
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund	22.2	0.0
National Wildlife Refuge Fund	13.2	0.0
North American Wetlands Conservation Fund	49.0	10.0
Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund	5.0	0.0
Multinational Species Conservation Fund	21.0	0.0
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants	73.8	0.0
Total	1,650.5	1,327.3

Source: DOI, *Fiscal Year 2027: The Interior Budget in Brief*, p. FWS-3.

Notes: Columns may not sum to totals shown due to rounding. Figures do not include supplemental or mandatory appropriations. For account descriptions and components, see the FWS FY2027 budget justification.

Resource Management Account

The Resource Management account has historically comprised the majority (88% in FY2026) of the FWS annual discretionary appropriation. For FY2027, the Administration request of \$1.30 billion is \$147.9 million less (-10%) than the FY2026 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 or Stewardship Priorities activities for FY2027. The Stewardship Priorities activity includes projects funded through earmarks.

The FY2027 requested amount for FWS's Ecological Services activity reflects a \$150.4 million increase (54%) from the FY2026 enacted level. This increase is due, in part, to \$178.0 million in funding requested for the proposed transfer of Endangered Species Act- and Marine Mammal Protection Act-related work from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to FWS.

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

Activity	FY2026 Enacted	FY2027 Request
Ecological Services	277.5	428.0
Habitat Conservation	69.8	66.9
National Wildlife Refuge System	522.0	417.0
Conservation and Enforcement	171.8	136.0
Fish and Aquatic Conservation	225.8	154.6
Science Support	30.8	0.0
General Operations	134.7	101.2
Stewardship Priorities	19.1	0.0
Account Total	1,451.5	1,303.6

Source: DOI, *Fiscal Year 2027: The Interior Budget in Brief*, p. FWS-4.

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 subactivities (e.g., the Fish and Aquatic Conservation activity includes three subactivities). For information on activities and their components, see the explanatory statement on the FY2026 enacted appropriation and the FWS FY2027 budget justification.

Other FWS Accounts

For FY2026, Congress appropriated \$199.0 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 FY2027, the Administration requested \$13.7 million for the Construction account (-7% from FY2026) and \$10.0 million for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund (-80% from FY2026). The Administration did not

request funding for the other five accounts, citing varying reasons. They included that the funding was duplicative (in the case of the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund) and being reserved for domestic species (in the case of the Multinational Species Conservation Fund and Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund).

Selected FY2027 Budget Proposals

Among other proposals, the FY2027 Administration request proposed to prioritize funding to expand visitor services and access in the National Wildlife Refuge System; improve law enforcement officer retention; and expedite environmental reviews for energy, mineral, and timber projects. The FY2027 request also expressed support for Congress to reauthorize the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (54 U.S.C. § 200402) to help FWS (and other agencies) address deferred maintenance.

The FY2027 Administration request included some proposals that were previously submitted in the FY2026 request and not enacted by Congress in FY2026. One such proposal seeks to consolidate work of FWS's Ecological Services program and NMFS's Office of Protected Resources regarding the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act. Functions transferred from NMFS would be situated in a new Marine Functions subactivity within the FWS Ecological Services program. The Administration stated that this consolidation is intended to reduce redundancies, improve species recovery outcomes, and streamline permitting activities.

The FY2027 Administration request is \$188.0 million above the FY2026 Administration request. Much of the difference (\$178.0 million) is associated with the FY2027 proposal to move certain NMFS functions to FWS. The FY2026 request proposed a similar transfer of functions, but did not specify an associated increase in funding. For FY2026, Congress provided \$511.2 million (45%) above the amount requested by the Administration (\$1.14 billion) for FWS. Congress did not enact FY2026 Administration proposals to eliminate funding for any FWS discretionary appropriations accounts.

In response to staff reductions implemented by the Trump Administration, in P.L. 119-74, Congress directed FWS to maintain staffing levels in order to fulfill the agency's statutory responsibilities and implement programs in a timely manner. For FY2027, FWS seeks to continue to restructure the agency's workforce, as a part of the Administration's broader actions to reduce the size of the federal workforce. The Administration proposed to reduce the total FWS employee count from 6,513 for FY2026 to 5,861 for FY2027 (a reduction of 10%).

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