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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.

As of January 22, 2024, BLM is receiving appropriations for FY2024 under continuing resolutions (CRs) providing appropriations at FY2023 levels. This is because full-year appropriations for FY2024 have not been enacted. The third CR (P.L. 118-35) provides BLM funding through March 8, 2024, unless different levels of appropriations are enacted earlier.

For FY2024, President Biden requested \$1,621.5 million for BLM—\$127.5 million (9%) over the FY2023 regular enacted level of \$1,494.0 million (in P.L. 117-328, Division G). The request included increases 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 an increase for BLM’s second largest account—Management of Oregon and California Grant Lands (O&C).

On November 3, 2023, the House passed H.R. 4821 with \$1,238.6 million for BLM for FY2024. Earlier, on July 24, 2023, the House Appropriations Committee reported H.R. 4821 (H.Rept. 118-155), also with \$1,238.6 million. This would be a decrease of \$255.4 million (17%) from FY2023. H.R. 4821 would decrease funding for the MLR account and eight of the account’s nine main activities, with level funding for the recreation activity. The bill also contained a decrease for the O&C account.

On July 27, 2023, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported S. 2605 (S.Rept. 118-83), with \$1,498.6 million for BLM for FY2024. This would be an increase of \$4.7 million (<1%) over FY2023. S. 2605 would increase funding for the MLR account; of the nine main activities in the account, five would receive level funding, three would increase, and one would decrease. S. 2605 also contained an increase for the O&C account.

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 \$564.1 million for FY2023 and \$423.9 million for FY2024. This total does

not include \$95.0 million for BLM *deferred maintenance* (DM) for each year (discussed below).

For FY2024, issues for Congress include determining the amount of funding for BLM accounts and activities and the terms and conditions of such funding, as well as whether to enact related Biden Administration proposals. Congress also could conduct oversight of expenditures as well as consider additional funding (e.g., for any emergencies).

Discretionary Appropriations Accounts

For each BLM discretionary account, **Table 2** shows FY2023 enacted amounts and FY2024 amounts requested by the Biden Administration, passed by the House (H.R. 4821), and reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee (S. 2605).

Management of Lands and Resources (MLR). For FY2024, the President sought a \$115.1 million (9%) increase, the Senate committee-reported bill sought a \$3.7 million (<1%) increase, and the House-passed bill included a \$195.0 million (15%) decrease. This account, BLM’s largest, funds diverse activities and programs within those activities. 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).

Table 1. Activities Within MLR Account (in Millions)

Activity	FY2023 Enacted	FY2024 Request	H.R. 4821	S. 2605
Land Resources	\$294.6	\$304.3	\$281.5	\$291.2
Wildlife & Aquatic Habitat	207.2	235.4	188.5	209.2
Recreation	74.8	91.1	74.8	74.8
Energy & Minerals	234.3	281.5	216.5	236.3
Realty and Ownership	89.8	97.6	71.9	89.8
Resource Protection & Maintenance	154.8	189.9	129.5	154.8
Transportation & Facilities Maintenance	76.2	85.0	57.1	76.2
Workforce & Organizational Support	175.8	190.5	105.5	175.8

Activity	FY2023 Enacted	FY2024 Request	H.R. 4821	S. 2605
National Conservation Lands	61.6	72.9	55.5	63.6
Mining Law Administration (with Offsets)	-31.3	-30.3	-38.0	-30.3
Offsetting Collections (Oil & Gas Fees)	0	-65.0	0	0
Total MLR	\$1,337.7	\$1,452.8	\$1,142.6	\$1,341.3

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

Notes: MLR = Management of Lands and Resources. Because of rounding, columns may 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 sought a \$1.0 million (1%) increase, and the House-passed bill included a \$60.3 million (50%) decrease.

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, and Senate committee-reported bill 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, and Senate committee-reported bill 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 and contained in the House-passed and Senate committee-reported bills.

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 provide level funding, and H.R. 4821 did not detail the level of funding.

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 allocate funding as proposed by BLM.

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 President requested \$73.9 million, H.R. 4821 reflected an allocation of \$76.2 million, and S. 2605 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
Management of Lands and Resources	\$1,337.7	\$1,452.8	\$1,142.6	\$1,341.3
Oregon and California Grant Lands	120.3	132.7	60.0	121.3
Range Improvements	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Service Charges, Deposits, and Forfeitures	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous Trust Funds	26.0	26.0	26.0	26.0
Total BLM	\$1,494.0	\$1,621.5	\$1,238.6	\$1,498.6

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.

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