

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE AND ADAPTATION

The conference agreement includes a major investment in science and management related to impacts of global warming. Overall, the bill provides over \$400,000,000, including funds for the Department of the Interior climate change initiative and substantial investments at the Environmental Protection Agency, Forest Service, and Smithsonian Institution. The conference agreement supports direction provided by both the House and the Senate regarding this issue. This includes the need for a national strategy for dealing with climate change, as well as continued development of the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center at the U.S. Geological Survey as a model for further implementation of an integrated approach to climate change science and adaptation by the Interior Department bureaus. The conference agreement also includes a provision in Section 426 requiring a detailed report on the Administration's obligations, expenditures and activities regarding climate change programs. The conferees expect that the next budget request will include cross-cutting tables for all Federal climate change related activities including climate change observation, science, and management implementation of adaptation and mitigation.

The conferees note the previous direction provided within the fiscal year 2009 appropriations act directing the Secretary of the Interior to develop a national strategy to assist fish, wildlife, plants, and associated ecological processes in becoming more resilient, adapting to, and surviving the impacts of climate change. This conference agreement provides ample funds to accomplish substantial scientific and management activities, but this needs to be done within the context of an integrated approach among the various Federal departments, States, Tribes and other institutions. The conferees urge the Council on Environmental Quality, working closely with the Department of the Interior as the lead department, to develop a national, government-wide strategy to address climate impacts on fish, wildlife, plants, and associated ecological processes. It should provide that there is integration, coordination, and public accountability to ensure efficiency and avoid duplication. The conferees expect to receive a timeline and a blueprint for the completion of such a national strategic planning effort, as well as regular updates as progress is made.

The conferees are encouraged by aspects of the recent Interior Department Secretarial Order addressing the impacts of climate change on America's water, land and other natural and cultural resources, as well as the draft Fish and Wildlife Service national strategy for climate change adaptation, mitigation and engagement. However, it is essential that further departmental implementation of the Secretary's order on climate change build upon the successful National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center (NCCWSC) and its approach to provide regional science application centers focused on fauna, flora and ecological processes as previously described in Congressional direction and the budget request. The future identity and activities of the NCCWSC must be distinct and accountable, while also working with other departmental and national efforts on climate change science and applications.