

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 6, 2017

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment  
and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment  
and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

As the House Committee on Appropriations works on the Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations bills, we respectfully request that you support stable and full funding for the National and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers under the Land Resources account of the U.S. Geological Survey (formerly the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center/Climate Science Centers program under the Climate and Land Use Change account of the U.S. Geological Survey). The FY2017 and FY2016 enacted appropriations for this program were \$25.335M and \$26.435M, respectively. The FY2018 budget request provides \$17.435M for the program, a decrease of \$7.9M from the FY2017 enacted level. The budget request also stated that this funding level would consolidate the current eight centers to four.

The National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center (NCCWSC) (now called National Climate Adaptation Science Center in the FY2018 budget request) was established in 2008 under the Bush Administration and was directed to provide science to help fish and wildlife resource managers to prepare for, respond to, and reduce the negative consequences of climate extremes. To meet this goal, NCCWSC established several regional science “hubs” that could address the unique weather patterns of different areas of the United States. These “hubs” became the current eight regional Climate Science Centers (now called Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers in the FY2018 budget request). The Centers have been partnerships between the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), research universities, and tribes or tribal colleges.

The CSCs have helped natural and cultural resource managers assess climate-related vulnerabilities in their local jurisdictions as a first step in enhancing preparedness. These decision makers are already using information developed in partnership with the CSCs to reduce the impacts of wildfire, nuisance flooding and flash flooding, ecosystem stresses, reductions in water supply, and changes in hunting and fishing patterns on their communities.

Every year, heavy precipitation, flooding, drought, coastal storm surge, hot and cold extremes, and other weather hazards take a heavy toll on the nation’s natural resources. These impacts have dire economic consequences for Americans. For example, scientists from the South Central CSC are assisting Cotton Inc. with research related to how the role of soil temperature impacts agricultural health. Management actions that protect natural resources from the impact of such hazards provide enormous economic benefits to the nation.

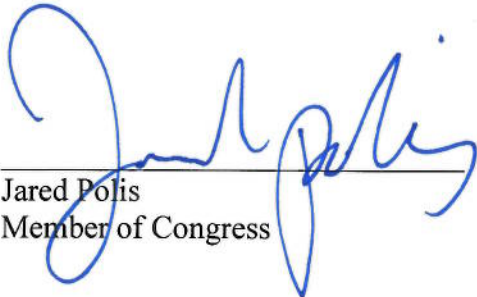
The \$90 billion fish and game industry (with over 680,000 jobs) relies on the maintenance of robust and resilient habitats for fish and game species. Each year over 300 million people visit the vast landscapes, coastlines, majestic mountains, and sweeping plains of our National Parks, bringing billions of dollars in economic benefit to the surrounding communities. Making cost-effective and long-lasting decisions that will maintain the health of these resources in the face of climate extremes requires the latest data, tools, and scientific knowledge. The Climate Science Centers work closely with water, land, cultural heritage, and other natural resource managers to develop peer-reviewed, evidence-based science that these managers use to make their own local decisions.

The CSCs are located at host research universities throughout the country to reduce costs to the Federal government (through financial leveraging and cost sharing agreements), to develop and share cutting-edge research, and to access the talent, energy, and workload of outstanding and diverse students with local knowledge and experience. As of May 2017, the eight regional CSCs are: Alaska, hosted at the University of Alaska; Northwest, hosted at Oregon State University; Southeast, hosted at North Carolina State University; Southwest, hosted at the University of Arizona; North Central, hosted at the Colorado State University; South Central, hosted at the University of Oklahoma; Northeast, hosted at the University of Massachusetts–Amherst; and Pacific Islands, hosted at the University of Hawaii–Manoa.

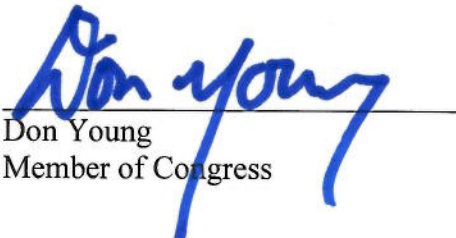
Recently, the Climate Science Centers have seen dramatic growth in the requests for their scientific guidance and products by DOI managers, Tribes, and DOI partners, including state agencies, private and non-profit organizations, and municipal partners. Acting as “boundary organizations,” these regional centers translate science into actionable information for managers and respond to the research needs of decision makers to protect our economy, infrastructure and ecosystems. As a result, the Centers act as a fulcrum to move the knowledge from thousands of peer-reviewed scientific manuscripts into powerful and concentrated information that can be used by managers to act. The CSCs carry the taxpayer’s investment into cutting-edge science right into their communities, parks, and homelands.

We support the reputable and important work of the DOI’s National and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers. We understand that their return-on-investment is large and we encourage continued stable support and full funding for the program.

Sincerely,



Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



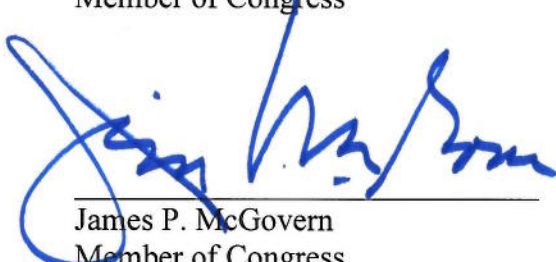
Don Young  
Member of Congress

  
Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress


  
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress


  
Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress


  
Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

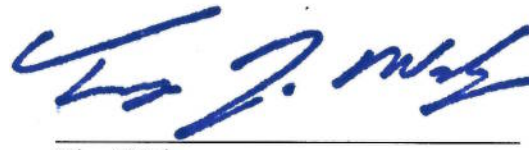
  
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

  
Salud O. Carbajal  
Member of Congress

  
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress


  
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

  
Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress

  
Tim Walz  
Member of Congress

  
Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress

  
Raúl M. Grijalva,  
Ranking Member

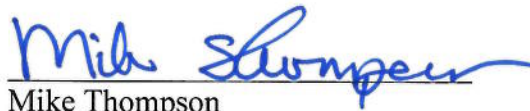
  
Aumua Amata C. Radewagen M.C.  
Member of Congress

  
Mia Love  
Member of Congress



---

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



---

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



---

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress