On Monday, President Trump released his proposed budget for fiscal year 2019. The $4.4 trillion budget that adds $7 trillion to deficits contains massive cuts to clean energy, environmental, and climate change programs, and is being met with sharp criticism from clean energy and environmental advocates. While the budget faces a steep uphill climb to enactment, it is significant to the extent that it depicts the administration’s priorities and goals on core issues.

Below are several of the proposed energy and environment-related cuts that merit attention:

**Environmental Protection Agency**

President Trump’s proposed 2019 budget requests $5.4 billion for EPA, a $2.8 billion or 34 percent decrease from the 2017 enacted level. The last time the EPA had a budget of less than $6 billion was in 1990, when the agency’s funding was $5.4 billion. These cuts are deeper than those sought by the administration last year when it requested a 31 percent cut to EPA’s $8.2 billion budget.

The budget proposes to eliminate several programs altogether that “create unnecessary redundancies or those that have served their purpose and accomplished their mission.” These include the Climate Change Research and Partnership Programs; the Indoor Air and Radon Programs; the Marine Pollution and National Estuary Programs; the Environmental Education Program; the Beaches Program; Pollution Prevention Program; Waste Minimization & Recycling; funding for water system improvements in U.S. communities along the U.S.-Mexico border; and partnerships to monitor and restore water quality in the Gulf of Mexico, Puget Sound, and other large bodies of water.

The budget also drastically reduces federal support for the restoration of iconic U.S. waterways including the Great Lakes and the Chesapeake Bay. Funding for the Great Lakes would be cut from $300 million to $30 million while that for the Chesapeake Bay from $72 million to $7 million.

The Energy Star program is no longer on the chopping block—the 2018 proposed budget called for its elimination—but the 2019 budget calls for EPA to administer the program through user fees. The Superfund cleanup program would also not face the same draconian reductions as were proposed in last year’s administration budget.

Further savings at EPA would come from “returning the EPA to its core mission” and reducing “unnecessary reporting burdens on the regulated community.” However, many of the EPA’s core mission programs that aim to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water, and ensure chemical safety would also face significant cuts under the new budget (see table below). State and local clean air agencies, for instance, would see a $75 million funding reduction, falling 34 percent to $152 million.

**Department of Energy**
The budget requests **$30.6 billion for the DOE** \(^4\), a slight increase from the current $30.1 billion. About half of this budget is designated for the National Nuclear Security Administration, the agency “responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science.” Additionally, the budget proposes deep cuts to clean energy R&D funding while seeking to bolster fossil fuel technologies.

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy will see its budget slashed from around $2 billion to only $696 million, and focusing on early stage R&D in energy technologies including new approaches to battery storage beyond current battery technologies.

In addition, the budget puts several other programs on the chopping block. ARPA-E, which has been a hallmark of bipartisan cooperation since its creation a decade ago and has funded projects that develop solar cells, wind turbines, biofuel, and energy storage, among others, is once again the target of the Trump administration. The program was slated for elimination in President Trump’s 2018 budget but was awarded an additional $15 million by Congress. The 2019 budget cuts the $305 million required to keep ARPA-E alive. DOE’s various loan programs that help companies bridge the gap from research to commercialization including Title 17 Innovative Technology Loan Guarantee Program, the Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing Loan Program, and the Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee are also slated for termination.

Despite the Trump administration's support for nuclear energy, the Office of Nuclear Energy is set to receive a 25 percent reduction in funding level. The money would support “early stage R&D, prioritizing support for advanced manufacturing methods, instrumentation and reactor technologies” and includes $54 million for advanced small modular reactor R&D.

As expected, the 2019 budget channels more funding towards fossil fuel R&D, including clean coal technologies. The Office of Fossil Fuel Energy would see its budget increase by nearly 20 percent to $502 million, to focus on cutting-edge, early-stage R&D to improve the reliability and efficiency of advanced fossil-based power systems.

Finally, the proposed budget would include $120 million for the Yucca Mountain and Interim Storage Program while the administration pushes forward with the licensing of Nevada’s Yucca Mountain geologic repository, which has been proposed as a long-term storage site.

**Department of Interior**

The DOI is slated for a 14 percent reduction in its budget, from its current $13.2 billion to $11.7 billion for FY 2019.

A major component of the 2019 budget is the creation of the Public Lands Infrastructure fund \(^5\), which would aim to provide up to $18 billion to address the department’s deferred maintenance backlog in the national parks, national wildlife refuges, and the Bureau of Indian Education schools. The fund would be filled exclusively from new energy developments on public lands. DOI, for instance, recently proposed a strategy \(^6\) for opening up a huge swathe of U.S. coastal waters to oil and gas drilling with a new draft proposal for lease sales of 47 new offshore blocks between 2019 and 2024. However, this proposal has been met with resistance from states \(^7\).

At the same time, the budget almost entirely cuts the DOI’s existing Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) reducing its budget by roughly 90 percent. It was created in 1964 and is funded almost entirely by fees on offshore oil and gas extraction. The National Park Service has used the LWCF to expand protections for Civil War battlefields or to buy private land in holdings within the current boundaries of national parks. The program has strong bipartisan support and even though the Trump
administration’s budget attempted to gut it last year, Congress funded its preservation.

Finally, the budget proposes extreme staffing cuts of nearly 2,000 National Park Service rangers, impacting most of the park units. National park visitation is at an all-time high and this proposal has raised concern that cuts to park staff could lead to a reduction in services to the public, closed facilities, and heavier workload for remaining staff.

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