



Ecological Society of America  
1990 M St, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20036

Testimony for the Record

David M. Lodge, President of the Ecological Society of America

To the House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies

Regarding the Department of Energy Office of Science FY 2018 Budget

May 3, 2017

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The Ecological Society of America (ESA) is the world's largest society of professional ecologists, representing over 10,000 members across the country. We write to urge you to provide **\$5.7 billion for the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science in Fiscal Year 2018**. This amount of funding, an increase of 4 percent real growth above FY 2016 enacted levels, will enable the Office of Science to continue supporting and advancing U.S. science and innovation. ESA is concerned with the administration's initial budget proposal to cut Office of Science funding by \$900 million – nearly 20 percent – and we urge you to protect investments in U.S. science and technology.

DOE's Office of Science is a leading federal agency supporting fundamental scientific research and is the country's largest supporter of basic physical sciences research. Its mission advances our nation's energy, economic, and national security through its scientific discoveries and development of major scientific tools.

## **Office of Science Biological and Environmental Research Program Produces Breakthrough Discoveries**

The Office of Science Biological and Environmental Research (BER) program is particularly important to the ecological community. This program advances world-class biological and environmental research programs and scientific user facilities to support DOE's energy, environment, and basic research missions. BER's scientific impact has been transformative. In 1986, the DOE-funded Human Genome Project gave birth to modern biotechnology and genomics-based systems biology. Today, BER addresses diverse and critical global challenges. For example, the program seeks to understand how genomic information is translated to functional capabilities, enabling more confident redesign of microbes and plants for sustainable biofuel production, improved carbon storage, or contaminant bioremediation.

### **Integral Support for Research and the Next Generation of the STEM Workforce**

The Office of Science supports a diverse portfolio of scientific research at institutions across the country. Competitively awarded grants reach over 300 colleges and universities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and support approximately 22,000 undergraduates, graduate students, Ph.D. scientists, and engineers involved in a broad range of scientific research. This essential support is building the next generation of the STEM workforce, including early career researchers. DOE-funded research and education programs strengthen our scientific knowledge base and help ensure our nation's scientific leadership into the future.

## **Laboratories and User Facilities Provide a Vital Scientific Resource**

One of the defining characteristics of the Office of Science is its support of the largest network of major scientific user facilities in the world. These unique, open-access facilities provide advanced capabilities that benefit thousands of scientists and researchers across the country.

The Office of Science is also responsible for the majority of DOE laboratories, supporting 10 of the 17 laboratories that make up the most comprehensive research system of its kind in the world. This laboratory system develops strategic scientific and technological capabilities that contribute to our nation's innovation enterprise.

## **Robust Funding for the Office of Science is Critical to American Scientific Innovation**

The Office of Science is a leader of U.S. scientific discovery and innovation, supporting diverse research that is essential to maintaining American competitiveness and leadership. We appreciate your past bipartisan support for this office within the Department of Energy, and we urge you to continue to make strong investments in scientific research by providing **\$5.7 billion to the DOE Office of Science in FY 2018**. Thank you for your consideration of this request.