

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Resource Summary

(\$ in thousands)

Appropriations	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 CR	FY 2012 Request
American Positions	8	8	8
Funds	2,359	2,359	2,433

Program Description

The primary mission of the International Boundary Commission (IBC) is to maintain an “effective” (cleared and well-marked) boundary between the United States and Canada as prescribed by the 1925 Treaty of Washington. In recent years, the IBC has modified its mission in ways that permit it to support more effectively the Department of State’s Strategic goal of Achieving Peace and Security. To achieve its mission the IBC has established a maintenance schedule for the entire U.S.-Canadian boundary (5,525 miles) as the primary performance measure of the effectiveness of the IBC. The February 2004 “Report on the present state of the Maintenance of the United States and Canada Boundary and Recommendations for the Future” details the state of the boundary and the steps necessary for the IBC to meet the performance goal.

The Treaty of 1925 requires the maintenance of an *effective* boundary line between the United States and Canada. The Treaty specifies that, to be *effective*, the boundary line must be accurately delineated and marked with stable identifying monuments. This is accomplished on land by clearing a 20-foot wide line-of-sight (vista) from one boundary monument to the next along the entire 5,525 mile U.S.-Canadian boundary. The IBC maintains more than 5,500 land boundary monuments and more than 2,800 reference monuments, which are used to locate the water boundary. In addition, the IBC regulates construction crossing the boundary and provides boundary-specific positional and cartographic data to the public and private sectors. The IBC appropriation provides funds to implement U.S. obligations under the Treaty, thereby maintaining and preserving an effective boundary line between the two countries that ensures the sovereignty of each nation over its territory by clearly establishing where one’s rights, responsibilities end, and the other’s begin, thus virtually eliminating the potential for serious and costly boundary disputes.

Although the boundary was cleared, surveyed, and marked years ago, a cyclical program of maintenance is required to sustain an effective boundary line. The necessity of continuous maintenance is due to the deterioration, destruction of boundary monuments and to brush, and timber overgrowth obstructing the 20-foot wide vista. Generally, the boundary is on a 15-year maintenance cycle. The discontinuation of herbicide use in the late seventies has had a tremendous impact in high growth areas. Cost associated with clearing these areas has almost doubled. Increased security issues along the boundary in recent years has caused the IBC to alter project priorities and maintenance cycles in some areas and to accelerate the maintenance cycle in other high traffic areas.

The IBC is continuing to resurvey the entire boundary and convert all North American Datum 27 (NAD 27) map coordinates that currently define the boundary to NAD 83 positions.

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Justification of Request

The FY 2012 request of \$2.433 million reflects an increase of \$74,000 above the FY 2010 Actual level. This request funds current services, including the following IBC operations and seven field campaigns / boundary maintenance projects:

- Re-clearing 141st Meridian (Alaska-Yukon, 64 miles), \$550,000
- Vista clearing “49th” Parallel (Minnesota-Manitoba, 48 miles), \$131,000
- St. Francis River Vista clearing and Boundary marking (Maine-New Brunswick, \$60,000)
- Monument maintenance and clearing Lake Superior to the Rainy River (Minnesota-Ontario, \$100,000)
- Clear 3 miles Glacier Park (Montana-Alberta, \$25,000)
- Monument Maintenance SW Branch St. John (Maine-Quebec, \$100,000)
- Monument Maintenance and Survey 141st Meridian Mark (Alaska-Yukon, \$240,000)

Funding will also provide for Mapping and Geographic Information System (GIS) maintenance. A well-marked and maintained boundary enables federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to accomplish their duties more effectively. It ensures that persons arriving at the boundary anywhere along its length will know which country they are in and with which laws they must obey. An ambiguous boundary line would needlessly complicate and disrupt the business of government and private industry as well as the lives of the people living and working along it.

IBC – Operations

Funds requested for this program will cover the cost of all salaries and benefits for the permanent staff of the IBC as well as their support costs. Support cost includes communications, supplies, rent, and all travel by headquarters staff and non-field season travel undertaken by field officers for not only the Washington, D.C. office but also the three field offices located in Great Falls, MT, Thief River Falls, MN, and Houlton, ME.

Mapping/GIS/Survey Projects

The IBC will remap the U.S. - Canadian boundary. The official boundary maps were last updated 70 years ago and are now badly outdated. This request will be to produce 15-20 boundary maps. The GIS portion of this request will be used to hire temporary employees to input data into the database.

Equipment Lifecycle Program

Funds will be used to purchase two All Terrain Vehicles for the Montana field office, and upgrade Global Positioning System equipment.

Program Evaluation

Maintaining an *effective* boundary is vitally important for the National interest. The IBC proposes to track performance by comparing the number of miles along the border maintained (vista clearing and monument maintenance) during each fiscal year with the number of miles targeted for that year, to gauge efficiency by comparing performance data with operational costs, and to document the implementation and results of efficiency improvements.

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Funds by Program Activity (\$ in thousands)

Activities	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 CR	FY 2012 Request
International Boundary Commission	2,359	2,359	2,433
Equipment Lifecycle Program	159	169	50
Field Campaigns	1,125	1,115	1,283
IBC - Operations	925	925	950
Mapping / Survey Projects	150	150	150
Total	2,359	2,359	2,433

Funds by Object Class (\$ in thousands)

	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 CR	FY 2012 Request
1100 Personnel Compensation	572	567	594
1200 Personnel Benefits	172	178	178
2100 Travel & Trans of Persons	97	100	100
2300 Rents, Comm & Utilities	86	96	89
2500 Other Services	1,228	1,217	1,367
2600 Supplies and Materials	56	55	55
3100 Personal Property	148	146	50
Total	2,359	2,359	2,433