

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Resource Summary

(\$ in thousands)

Appropriations	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Estimate	FY 2013 Request	Increase / Decrease
American Positions	8	8	8	0
Funds	2,354	2,279	2,441	162

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 to support more effectively the Department’s strategic goal to counter threats to the United States and the international order, and advance civilian security around the world. The IBC has established a 15-year 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 its performance goal. A new 15-year plan taking into account past and current funding levels, will be included in the IBC 2011 annual report.

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 (i.e., “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. It ensures the sovereignty of each nation over its territory by clearly establishing where one’s rights and responsibilities end and the others 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 for continuous maintenance is due to the deterioration and destruction of boundary monuments with 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. Costs 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, convert all North American Datum 27 (NAD27) map coordinates that currently define the boundary to NAD 83 positions, and provide funding for the Mapping and Geographic Information System (GIS) maintenance.

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Justification of Request

The FY 2013 request of \$2.441 million will fund IBC operations and eight boundary maintenance projects, of the total \$1.310 million is for administration. This level of funding reflects an increase of \$162,000 above the FY 2012 estimate and includes \$12,000 for American COLA, \$22,000 domestic inflation and \$8,000 overseas price inflation. The amounts below will be matched by reciprocal funding by IBC's Canadian counterpart.

- Reclearing and Monumentation 141st Meridian (64 miles) (Alaska-Yukon) : \$561,000 (*3rd year of 5-year project*)
- Vista clearing Southwest section Highlands (50 miles) (Maine-Quebec): \$149,000
- St. Francis River Vista clearing and Boundary marking (Maine-New Brunswick): \$38,000
- Monument maintenance and clearing of the vista from Lake Superior to the Rainy River (Minnesota-Ontario): \$70,000
- Vista Clearing 49th Parallel- Pembina Hills Turtle Mts. (47 miles) (Minnesota-Manitoba): \$106,000
- Clear 3 miles Glacier Park (Montana-Alberta): \$25,000
- Clean Paint and clear Ranges Passamaquoddy Bay (Maine-New Brunswick): \$32,000
- Mark Navigable Waterways: \$150,000.

Funds by Program Activity

(\$ in thousands)

Activities	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Estimate	FY 2013 Request	Increase / Decrease
International Boundary Commission	2,354	2,279	2,441	162
Equipment Lifecycle Program	48	46	49	3
Field Campaigns	1,242	1,203	1,289	86
IBC - Operations	919	890	953	63
Mapping / Survey Projects	145	140	150	10
Total	2,354	2,279	2,441	162

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Funds by Object Class

(\$ in thousands)

	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Estimate	FY 2013 Request	Increase / Decrease
1100 Personnel Compensation	575	557	597	40
1200 Personnel Benefits	172	167	179	12
2100 Travel & Trans of Persons	97	94	100	6
2300 Rents, Comm & Utilities	86	83	90	7
2500 Other Services	1,323	1,281	1,370	89
2600 Supplies and Materials	53	51	55	4
3100 Personal Property	48	46	50	4
Total	2,354	2,279	2,441	162