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Testimony for the Record
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To the Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Regarding the Environmental Protection Agency FY 2021 Budget

March 3, 2020

The Ecological Society of America (ESA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations for the Environmental Protection Agency. ESA is the nation's largest society of professional ecologists, representing over 9,000 members across the country. **We urge you to support robust funding of \$9.4 billion for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for FY 2021, specifically at least \$750 million for Science and Technology within EPA.**

We appreciate your past support for the EPA and the significant increases for the EPA provided in FY 2020. We urge you to once again reject cuts to EPA programs and research as you proceed with FY 2021 appropriations.

The EPA is vital to protecting both the environment and human health, and the agency's Science and Technology programs are critically important to its ability to successfully address environmental problems. Without adequate funding, the EPA cannot fulfill its core mission and responsibilities. Strong investments in the EPA are thus essential to ensuring the health of our nation's citizens and environment.

EPA Science and Technology Programs Reduce Environmental Risks Facing Americans

Since its formation in 1970, the EPA has reduced environmental risk to Americans, enforced laws safeguarding human health and the environment, and helped the nation serve as a leader in protecting the environment.

Science and Technology funding supports programs and research that contribute to clean air, clean water, sustainable communities, homeland security, and human health. Through the Office of Research and Development (ORD), the EPA conducts cutting-edge research programs, including important ecological research and monitoring, that provide the scientific foundation for the agency's decision-making and other programs. These research and monitoring programs also provide essential data and information on which state and local governments depend, with environmental monitoring data collected and maintained by the EPA helping to ensure healthy

communities across the country. EPA research projects focus on issues of national significance and help to solve complex environmental problems – often with public health implications – with new scientific understanding and technologies. From detecting and addressing harmful algal blooms to helping communities rehabilitate contaminated sites, EPA research funded by Science and Technology appropriations delivers solution-oriented results with broad and lasting impacts.

Proposed Cuts Would Have Consequences for Human and Environmental Health

ESA is very concerned with the administration's proposed cuts to the EPA in FY 2021. The president's budget proposal requests only \$6.65 billion for the agency, an estimated reduction of 26.5 percent from enacted FY 2020 funding of \$9.06 billion. The proposed reductions, reflective of those suggested in the president's FY 2020 budget, would have far-reaching and damaging effects on public and environmental health and economic growth that depends on healthy communities.

The administration's budget also proposes to reduce funding for EPA Science and Technology considerably to only \$484 million, a 32 percent cut from FY 2020 funding. Sound science is the foundation of everything the agency does. EPA research programs support clean air, healthy neighborhoods, safer chemicals, and clean water, and help develop solutions to environmental problems. EPA science meets the highest standards for peer review, transparency, ethics, and integrity, and it is essential to maintain strong support for science and research at the EPA. Cuts, particularly cuts of the magnitude proposed in the president's budget, would dangerously hinder the EPA's ability to fulfill its mission and responsibility to the American people and would have serious impacts on the local, state, and national levels.

Strong Investments in the EPA Protect Our Citizens and Our Ecosystems

The EPA is an essential agency that plays a key role in addressing ecological problems and other environmental issues that affect public health. We appreciate your past support for this critical agency, and we urge you, in the interest of ensuring the health of our nation's citizens and ecosystems, to continue this support and provide **robust funding for the EPA in FY 2021 of \$9.4 billion, in particular \$750 million for EPA Science and Technology.**

Thank you for your consideration of this request.