

SRI Foundation Estimation of the US Spending for Cultural Resource Management and Archaeology for Fiscal Year 2020

The following presents the SRI Foundation's (SRIF) estimate of spending by government agencies and private organizations on cultural resource management (CRM) activities for fiscal year (FY) 2020. We have also provided an estimate of spending on academic research for archaeology and cultural heritage. The total amount expended on CRM in the US in FY 2020 is projected to be \$1.4 billion. The total available for academic research is estimated around \$43.4 million.

In Table 1, we have divided CRM expenditures into five categories based on our perception of the strength of the estimate for each category. The most secure category is for programs that are line items in the budgets of US government agencies agreed to by Congress and the President. Most of these preservation programs support the federal heritage "infrastructure" (SHPOs, THPOs, NRHP, etc.), historic institutions (e.g., historically black colleges and universities), and grants. Competitive grants, which total \$27.31 million, include the following programs: African-American Civil Rights (\$15.5 million), Civil Rights for All Americans (\$2.5 million), Underrepresented Communities (\$.75 million), NAGPRA (\$1.907 million), Japanese Confinement Sites (\$3.155 million), Native Hawaiian and Alaska Native Cultural and Arts Development (\$1.5 million), and 9/11 Memorial (\$2 million).

The second category presents the budgets of agencies and programs in which CRM spending is combined with other activities. For example, the Department of Defense (DOD) annually reports to Congress on the state of its environmental programs. The most recent report is for FY2018 (DOD 2019). The report states that for FY 2020 DOD will request \$444.9 million for natural and cultural resources programs (see Table 10 DOD 2019:13). Of this total, we estimate that a third will be expended on DOD CRM, or about \$147 million. This figure does not include the Joint Prisoner of War Mission in Action Accounting Command (JPAC). In 2017 and 2018, the cost for missions to find, analyze, and return remains was \$45.8 and \$56 million, respectively, for an average of about \$50 million per year (DOD 2018:49 (Table 1). In all, we estimate DOD spending on CRM for FY 2020 to be \$197 million.

The US Forest Service combines recreation, heritage, and wildlife as a budget line. The FY 2020 budget for this line is \$262 million, of which cultural resources receives 10.5% (\$26.9 million).

Following the Society for American Archaeology and others, we estimate that one-third of the National Park Service (NPS) Resource Stewardship budget will be used for CRM activities. The total budget for NPS resource stewardship is \$342 million, resulting in expected CRM stewardship spending of \$113.8 million. Similarly, we follow SAA and others in projecting that one-third of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) National Conservation Lands (NCL) budget will be used for CRM projects. Of the total for BLM NCL (\$43.8 million), \$15.6 million is estimated for CRM projects.

Table 1. FY 2020 Estimate of CRM Spending in the US¹

US Agencies Cultural Resource budgets allocated by Congress	FY 2020 (in millions \$)
National Park Service Cultural Programs	31.12
National Heritage Areas	21.94
National Park Service Networks	1
American Battlefields	13
Bureau of Land Management Cultural Programs	18.63
State Historic Preservation Offices	52.67
Tribal Historic Preservation Offices	13.74
Save America's Treasures	16
Competitive Grants	27.31
Historic Revitalization Grants	7.5
National Park Service International Park Affairs	1.9
Historically Black Colleges & Univ	10
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	7.37
Subtotal - Gov allocated CRM	222.18
US Agencies CR mixed budgets allocated by Congress	
Department of Defense	197
US Forest Service Recreation/Heritage	26.86
National Park Service Resource Stewardship	113.8
BLM National Conservation Lands	15.58
Subtotal - Gov allocated CRM/NRM	353.24
US Agencies CR Project Budgets	
Department of Transportation	250
Corps of Engineers (not regulatory)	25
Bureau of Reclamation	10
Bureau of Land Management	5
Federal Emergency Management Agency	50
National Resource Conservation Service	1
US Fish & Wildlife	1
Subtotal - Gov projects	342
Non-Fed Gov't	15
Total US Gov't	932.42
Total Private Sector	466.21
Total CRM	1398.63

The third category includes government agencies that do not have specific budget lines for CRM programs. For example, the Federal Highways Administration allocates money to state Department of Transportations (DOTs) for specific transportation projects on a formula that cost shares these projects with the states. Project funds are bundled so that it is nearly impossible to determine how much is designated for CRM services. For 2008, Altschul and Patterson (2010) estimated state DOT spending, in addition to funding to states from other federal DOT projects and programs (Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and other agencies), at between \$4-5M per state. These funds included both infrastructure costs (i.e., salaries for state DOT CRM professionals as well as personnel funded by state DOTs at other state agencies, tribal offices, or municipal agencies to administer state DOT projects) and CRM services, which are routinely contracted to the private sector. Transportation funding has been relatively stable for the last decade. In Table 1 we use \$5 million per state for a total of \$250 million, which accounts for all jurisdictions (e.g., states and territories) covered by the Federal Department of Transportation.

Agencies responsible for water and flood control, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Corps of Engineers (COE), also program CRM money through projects. Although much smaller than DOT and DOD, they are not insignificant. Again, estimates for BOR and the COE include infrastructure and agency projects. Importantly, the number does not include permitted, or regulatory, projects (such as, COE Section 404 permits), which are captured in the line item “private sector.”

CRM spending for emergencies is extremely difficult to predict year-to-year. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires its grant-funded programs to comply with historic preservation laws, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In the last few years, we have witnessed a large increase in FEMA-required spending on CRM due to larger numbers and greater intensity of natural disasters. As a consequent of climate change, the trend toward high numbers of intense disasters is likely to continue. We estimate that \$50 million will be allocated to these disaster relief preservation efforts in FY 2020.

To complete federal spending, we added \$5 million to account for the BLM’s programs that are funded through permitting fees, such as the research program funded under the Permian Basin Programmatic Agreement. We also added \$1 million each to the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (F&W). These agencies spend some money on CRM, largely from fees and other payments from users of their lands or services. It is nearly impossible to segregate the amount from these sources that fund CRM personnel and projects. Our estimates should be viewed as placeholders to recognize agency spending, but not as figures based on reliable source data.

The fourth category of CRM expenditures are state, municipal, and tribal government and enterprises. There is very little information on local level spending on CRM. We allocated \$15 million for state, municipal, and tribal spending as a recognition that money is spent by these entities on CRM services. This number, while reasonable, is not based reliable source data.

In all, SRIF estimates government spending on CRM will be about \$933 million in FY 2020.

The last category of CRM funding is the private sector. For 2008, Altschul and Patterson (2010) estimated private sector CRM at 50 to 100% of government spending. We believe the percentage to be on the low end of this scale. Much of private sector CRM spending is on infrastructure projects that are performed under contract by large Architect and Engineering (A/E) firms. Often, A/E firms will subcontract the CRM portion to smaller CRM providers. We suspect that using a figure close to 100% double counts a significant portion of these expenditures. Accordingly, we used the lower 50% factor for the US private sector to come up with a figure of \$466 million.

Summing the five categories, SRIF's estimate of total CRM spending in FY 2020 is \$1.4 billion.

FY 2020 Projection of Archaeological Expenditures in the US

Academic spending on archaeology and cultural heritage—including all salaries, benefits, facilities, and associated costs of archaeological, architectural history, historic preservation, and other allied fields—is beyond the scope of the SRIF CRM estimate for FY 2020. We realize, however, that for the archaeological community there is great interest in estimating the total amount available for archaeological research in the US and the breakdown of this sum between CRM and academic research. Our estimates of funding available for archaeological research in the US, excluding most notably salaries and benefits for archaeology faculty at colleges and universities, are provided in Table 2.

Academic funding is available from multiple sources. Three of these sources are government institutions that publicly report their funding. To develop an estimate, we averaged the total annual amounts awarded in the years 2017, 2018, and 2019 by the National Science Foundation's (NSF) archaeology and archaeometry program and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH; keyword 'archaeology'). For the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP), we used the data available for the last three reported years (2016, 2017, and 2018). To account for other programs and competitions in NSF that fund archaeological research, we added a separate line in Table 2 that is equivalent to a third of the annual average of the archaeology and archaeometry programs. The Smithsonian Institution's archaeology program is budgeted under the larger anthropology program. SI archaeology includes some activities that are best categorized as CRM, but these constitute such a small percentage that we decided not to separate them out. In consultation with the SI, we estimate total SI spending on archaeology for FY 2020 at \$4 million. For research funding from private and public foundations and other institutions, we simply doubled the amount from NSF, NEH, SI, and AFCP. Our estimate for funds available for academic research in FY 2020 is \$43.4 million.

Table 2. FY 2020 Estimate of Funding Available for Archaeological Research Project Costs²

Total CRM	1398.63
Total CRM Archaeology	699.32
Total CRM Archaeological Project Costs	349.66
Academic Archaeological Research	
National Science Foundation Archaeology and Archaeometry	7.5
National Science Foundation Other	2.5
National Endowment for the Humanities	1
Smithsonian Institution - Research	4
Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation	6.7
Other	21.7
Total Academic Research	43.4
Total Academic Research project costs	26.1
Total US CRM and academic project costs for archaeological research	375.76

Following Altschul and Patterson (2010), we assume that half of CRM expenditures are for archaeology as opposed to architectural history, conservation, and so forth. Total CRM archaeological expenditures in FY 2020, therefore, will be on the order of \$700 million. Much of these funds will be expended on activities ancillary to archaeological research, such as resource management, agreement documents, planning services, public outreach, project administration, etc. A better proxy of research dollars is to estimate project related expenses. Such funds encompass salaries, equipment, subcontractors, and laboratory tests associated with completing a contract or grant for an archaeological project, such as a survey or excavation.

We suspect that about a third of academic research dollars are earmarked to institutional overhead, leaving about \$26.1 million for archaeological research. For CRM, we estimate that about half the total for archaeology is project related expenses, or \$349.7 million. Summing the two yields about \$375.8 million for total archaeological research, with CRM accounting for 93% of archaeological research funding in the US in FY 2020.³

Notes

1. The source for line items in Table 1 related to the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture is the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act 2020 (HR 1865). We wish to thank Society for American Archaeology (SAA) for providing these figures. The allocation formula for the Forest Service was provided by William Reed, Acting Director Region 3, Recreation, Heritage, and Wildlife Resources.

2. NSF funding was calculated using source data on projects at <https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/advancedSearch.jsp>. For NEH, we exported the table from

<https://securegrants.neh.gov/publicquery/main.aspx?q=1&a=0&n=0&o=0&ot=0&k=1&kv=archaeology&kj=phrase&w=1&f=0&s=0&cd=0&p=0&d=1&dv=6&y=0&prd=0&cov=0&prz=0&wp=0&ob=year&or=DESC> and calculated the total grant funding awarded in 2017, 2018, and 2019. For AFCP, we used the data in the AFCP Awards reports for 2016, 2017, and 2018 available at <https://eca.state.gov/cultural-heritage-center/ambassadors-fund-cultural-preservation/annual-reports>. Torbin Rick, Curator of North American Archaeology at the Smithsonian Institution provided the estimate for SI.

3. The estimates in this document represent the best judgement of the SRI Foundation. We alone are responsible for errors in logic or fact. If you have additional or better information relevant to these estimates, we would like to hear from you. Please send comments to tklein@srifoundation.org.

References

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