

# Bush wants big budget cuts



Dennis Cook/The Associated Press

Copies of President Bush's proposed FY2007 budget arrive Monday on Capitol Hill. The President suggests funding cuts for national parks and agricultural research.

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◆ Fort Collins Coloradoan ◆

## Colorado hit hard if proposed 2007 budget passes

By **DIANA MARRERO**  
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — President Bush is asking Congress to cut funding for national parks, aid to communities with large blocks of non-taxable federal land and agricultural research in his 2007 budget proposal — all areas important to Larimer County and Colorado.

But Bush also is calling for an increase in spending on energy programs that could lead to more oil and gas drilling on pub-

lic lands and a greater use of agricultural products for energy.

Under the president's budget request unveiled this week, agricultural research funding would be cut by \$382 million to \$2.3 billion — cuts that could mean less federal money for research universities such as Colorado State University.

Overall, agricultural programs would be cut by \$1 billion, including a 5 percent cut to commodity supports for farmers, according to Sen. Ken



**MUSGRAVE**

Salazar, D-Colo.

In a statement, Salazar said the proposed cuts "hit Colorado and other rural states especially hard."



**SALAZAR**

Bush also is recommending cuts for rural development, conservation programs and the payment in lieu of taxes the federal government pays to local communities with large swaths of publicly owned lands.

A total of 57 of Colorado's 64 counties rely on payment in lieu of taxes to shore up their tax base for local services.

Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, R-Fort Collins, said she was especially concerned about cuts to the payment in lieu of taxes pro-

### On the Internet

President Bush's budget proposal:  
[www.budget.gov](http://www.budget.gov)

gram, which would receive \$198 million next year, a cut of \$34 million. She vowed to fight to restore the cuts.

"Counties shouldn't be cheated

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# Budget

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on their rent money because the federal government is their lessee," Musgrave said in a statement. "In Colorado, the federal government manages 36 percent of the state's land mass, and local officials use the federal compensation for essential services just as they would if the money was from a private landowner's property taxes."

The National Park Service also would have less money to fund new construction or improve roads at the nation's parks. If Congress approves Bush's blueprint, national parks would receive \$2.2 billion in 2007, about \$100 million less than the current year's spending.

Park conservation advocates worry the cuts could force increases in entrance fees and put a dent on educational activities in parks. Already, park officials are considering increasing entrance fees at about 30 to 40 of the nation's 388 parks this year.

The increases could mean \$1 more per person or \$5 more per car in entrance fees at certain parks, said Elaine Sevy, a National Park Service spokeswoman.

So far, one Colorado park, Colorado National Monument in the western part of the state, will raise its fees from \$5 to \$7 per car and \$3 to \$4 per person starting in March, park officials announced recently.

The parks funding is part of the overall Department of Interior funding proposal of \$10.5 billion, down \$300 million from current-year spending.

But there are increases in other areas of the budget that touch Coloradans.

Bush is proposing a 25 percent increase, to \$125 million, for energy and minerals programs at the Bureau of Land Management, according to BLM budget officer Mike Ferguson. The agency oversees much of the energy drilling on public lands.

Bush is also requesting \$2.1 billion — a \$381 million increase — for the Energy Department as part of his Advanced Energy Initiative to reduce America's dependence on imported energy sources. The money would help develop clean, affordable energy sources that could reduce the use of fossil fuels, according to the Bush administration.

In Colorado, Bush is proposing an increase in funding to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, an increase for the assembled chemical weapons alternatives program at Pueblo Chemical Depot and money for a new veteran's hospital in Aurora.

Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo., said the new hospital would improve hospital services for many of the state's veterans.

Overall federal spending in Bush's proposed \$2.77 trillion budget would increase 2.25 percent, or \$61 billion next year. It comes on the heels of a 9.6 per-

cent jump this year that occurred in large part because of the war in Iraq and the cost of hurricane relief and reconstruction on the Gulf Coast.

But the '07 blueprint does not include a \$120 billion supplemental request the administration wants to pay for war costs this year and next. That request is expected to push this year's deficit up to \$423 billion — more than \$100 billion more than in 2005.

Even so, the administration said it's still on course to cut the deficit in half by 2009.

Cost controls proposed for 2007 involve \$65 billion in savings over five years in entitlement programs, including \$35.9 billion in Medicare and \$16.7 billion through reforms at the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. that insures traditional pension plans.

Gannett News Service reporter Brian Tumulty contributed to this report

## Haynes stinging from loss

This rebuttal letter is in regard to Ed Haynes' Jan. 31 letter to the editor asking state Sen. Bob Bacon questions about his role in helping Rep. Angie Paccione make her decision to run for Congress. He asks if Bacon promised Paccione his state Senate seat if she did not win the election against Marilyn Musgrave. I think Haynes is asking this kind of question because he is a sore loser. He lost badly to Angie Paccione in his race against her for District 53 state representative in 2004.

Also, what kind of question is that anyway? You presume Paccione will lose against Musgrave in the Fourth Congressional District. I think Paccione will beat Musgrave. Musgrave has done little for her constituents and has too many ties to her own self interests, big oil and indicted Republicans. I live in the Fourth Congressional District and am one of many who is tired of the shady and shabby representation of Musgrave.

Also, Mr. Haynes, you could not have a better state senator than Bacon, so I would think you would be thankful for his good representation. And, on the outside chance that Bacon did promise Paccione his seat in the Senate if she loses to Musgrave, you would still have an excellent representative as your senator.

Perhaps you should just be thankful for the good people you have representing you.

**Sharon Boyce,  
Loveland**