

## **ACTION LEARNING SCENARIO #3**

### **Science, Facilities, and Administrative Costs**



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## **Science, Facilities, and Administrative Costs**

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### **The Issue**

As USGS budgets decrease in real terms, efforts to reduce overhead costs are limited by the number of locations at which USGS has facilities.

USGS is currently located in 290 cities in the United States and territories, occupying over 500 facilities. Each separate facility has some common use space. Generally, the smaller the facility, the larger is the common use space as a percentage of the overall space.

In addition, support staffs in smaller installations are required to perform a variety of administrative tasks and are less likely to become expert in any one of them. In smaller staffs, scientists are more likely to perform administrative tasks. In larger facilities, there are greater opportunities to achieve administrative support economies of scale.

On the other hand, much of USGS science operations are tied to local places, whether those are streams, natural hazards, or natural resources. Moving from science operations away from the focus of their scientific investigation could make the science less efficient and increase travel costs.

### **The Challenge**

Examine where USGS science is conducted on the US landscape and recommend methods that can be used to consolidate science operations in a way that will lead to reduced facilities costs and reduced administrative support costs.

### **Resources**

- The USGS Strategic Facilities Master Plan lays includes a variety of statistics on USGS facilities and contains recommendations for improving facility utilization. See <http://internal.usgs.gov/ops/oms/assetmanagement/usgssfmpfinal.pdf>.
- The USGS FBA-online system contains cost and square foot information for all USGS facilities, whether owned, leased, or obtained from GSA or cooperators. See [http://fba-new.er.usgs.gov/fac/fba/facilities\\_new/index.cfm](http://fba-new.er.usgs.gov/fac/fba/facilities_new/index.cfm). The attached Excel spreadsheet contains a download from this system. A few notes on this information. Multiple entries exist for a single building if the building is occupied by multiple cost centers along with the SF occupied by each cost center. For the owned locations, a single entry represents all of the

buildings at the installation. The SF in this report for these entries is not a summation of all the buildings at that installation but usually represents the largest building SF at that installation.

- The USGS planning model outlines how bureau program planning is conducted. See [http://internal.usgs.gov/director/planning/bpm\\_6-25-04.doc](http://internal.usgs.gov/director/planning/bpm_6-25-04.doc).



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