

Increase Funding for NEO Surveyor

Protect Earth from hazardous asteroids by increasing funding for the NEO Surveyor space telescope, to recover from major funding cuts and carry out Congressional direction.

Cost: \$210M FY24

NEO Surveyor is the only viable means to meet the congressionally directed near-Earth object (NEO) detection goal in as little as 10 years. The requested funding would enable the program to recover from major FY22 and FY23 funding reductions and launch as early as 2027.

Despite ongoing bipartisan support in Congress and the strong recommendations of the science community, NASA has not prioritized funding for NEO Surveyor, handing the program “baffling” cuts in recent years. In the past year, NEO Surveyor received support in the Planetary Science Decadal Survey¹, from space advocacy groups², and from Republicans on the House Science Committee.³

- In **2005, Congress directed NASA to locate 90% of near-Earth asteroids larger than 140 meters across, within 15 years.**⁴ Nearly 25 years later, the **Planetary Defense Coordination Office estimates it will still take at least 30 more years to meet this goal.**⁵
- In FY22, NEO Surveyor’s first year in the NASA budget, \$142M was enacted, but NASA did not allow the program to execute most of this funding.
- In FY23: the NEO Surveyor program plan called for \$170M, but the President’s Budget Request included only \$39.9M (**a 76% reduction**) and delayed launch by two years to 2028.
- CHIPS & Science Act: directed NASA to develop NEO Surveyor “on a schedule to achieve a launch-readiness date before March 30, 2026, or the earliest practicable date....”
- FY23 Omnibus Appropriations Conference Report provided “not less than \$90M for NEO Surveyor” and “notes concern about...the proposed launch slippage to 2028...”
- NEO Surveyor passed its Key Decision Point C review, 29 Nov 2022. In this review, NASA revised the total program cost to \$1,200M and expected launch by June 2028.⁶

The requested \$210M in FY24 will allow the program to recover from draconian, self-inflicted cuts by NASA, and help NASA carry out congressional direction to expedite the launch of NEO Surveyor.