

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

December 6, 2006.

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 214) entitled “An Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to cooperate with the States on the border with Mexico and other appropriate entities in conducting a hydrogeologic characterization, mapping, and modeling program for priority transboundary aquifers, and for other purposes”, do pass with the following

AMENDMENT:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

1 ***SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.***

2 *This Act may be cited as the “United States-Mexico*
3 *Transboundary Aquifer Assessment Act”.*

4 ***SEC. 2. PURPOSE.***

5 *The purpose of this Act is to direct the Secretary of*
6 *the Interior to establish a United States-Mexico*
7 *transboundary aquifer assessment program to systemati-*
8 *cally assess priority transboundary aquifers.*

9 ***SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.***

10 *In this Act:*

1 (1) *AQUIFER*.—The term “aquifer” means a sub-
 2 surface water-bearing geologic formation from which
 3 significant quantities of water may be extracted.

4 (2) *IBWC*.—The term “IBWC” means the Inter-
 5 national Boundary and Water Commission, an agen-
 6 cy of the Department of State.

7 (3) *INDIAN TRIBE*.—The term “Indian tribe”
 8 means an Indian tribe, band, nation, or other orga-
 9 nized group or community—

10 (A) that is recognized as eligible for the spe-
 11 cial programs and services provided by the
 12 United States to Indians because of their status
 13 as Indians; and

14 (B) the reservation of which includes a
 15 transboundary aquifer within the exterior bound-
 16 aries of the reservation.

17 (4) *PARTICIPATING STATE*.—The term “Partici-
 18 pating State” means each of the States of Arizona,
 19 New Mexico, and Texas.

20 (5) *PRIORITY TRANSBOUNDARY AQUIFER*.—The
 21 term “priority transboundary aquifer” means a
 22 transboundary aquifer that has been designated for
 23 study and analysis under the program.

1 (6) *PROGRAM.*—The term “program” means the
 2 United States-Mexico transboundary aquifer assess-
 3 ment program established under section 4(a).

4 (7) *RESERVATION.*—The term “reservation”
 5 means land that has been set aside or that has been
 6 acknowledged as having been set aside by the United
 7 States for the use of an Indian tribe, the exterior
 8 boundaries of which are more particularly defined in
 9 a final tribal treaty, agreement, executive order, Fed-
 10 eral statute, secretarial order, or judicial determina-
 11 tion.

12 (8) *SECRETARY.*—The term “Secretary” means
 13 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
 14 rector of the United States Geological Survey.

15 (9) *TRANSBOUNDARY AQUIFER.*—The term
 16 “transboundary aquifer” means an aquifer that
 17 underlies the boundary between a Participating State
 18 and Mexico.

19 (10) *TRI-REGIONAL PLANNING GROUP.*—The term
 20 “Tri-Regional Planning Group” means the binational
 21 planning group comprised of—

22 (A) the Junta Municipal de Agua y
 23 Saneamiento de Ciudad Juarez;

24 (B) the El Paso Water Utilities Public
 25 Service Board; and

1 (C) the Lower Rio Grande Water Users Or-
 2 ganization.

3 (11) WATER RESOURCES RESEARCH INSTI-
 4 TUTES.—The term “water resources research insti-
 5 tutes” means the institutes within the Participating
 6 States established under section 104 of the Water Re-
 7 sources Research Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10303).

8 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation and
 10 cooperation with the Participating States, the water re-
 11 sources research institutes, Sandia National Laboratories,
 12 and other appropriate entities in the United States and
 13 Mexico, and the IBWC, as appropriate, shall carry out the
 14 United States-Mexico transboundary aquifer assessment
 15 program to characterize, map, and model priority
 16 transboundary aquifers along the United States-Mexico bor-
 17 der at a level of detail determined to be appropriate for
 18 the particular aquifer.

19 (b) OBJECTIVES.—The objectives of the program are
 20 to—

21 (1) develop and implement an integrated sci-
 22 entific approach to identify and assess priority
 23 transboundary aquifers, including—

(A) for purposes of subsection (c)(2), specifying priority transboundary aquifers for further analysis by assessing—

(i) the proximity of a proposed priority transboundary aquifer to areas of high population density;

(ii) the extent to which a proposed priority transboundary aquifer would be used;

(iii) the susceptibility of a proposed priority transboundary aquifer to contamination; and

(iv) any other relevant criteria;

(B) evaluating all available data and publications as part of the development of study plans for each priority transboundary aquifer;

(C) creating a new, or enhancing an existing, geographic information system database to characterize the spatial and temporal aspects of each priority transboundary aquifer; and

(D) using field studies, including support for and expansion of ongoing monitoring and metering efforts, to develop—

(i) the additional data necessary to adequately define aquifer characteristics; and

1 (ii) scientifically sound groundwater
 2 flow models to assist with State and local
 3 water management and administration, in-
 4 cluding modeling of relevant groundwater
 5 and surface water interactions;

6 (2) consider the expansion or modification of ex-
 7 isting agreements, as appropriate, between the United
 8 States Geological Survey, the Participating States,
 9 the water resources research institutes, and appro-
 10 priate authorities in the United States and Mexico,
 11 to—

12 (A) conduct joint scientific investigations;

13 (B) archive and share relevant data; and

14 (C) carry out any other activities consistent
 15 with the program; and

16 (3) produce scientific products for each priority
 17 transboundary aquifer that—

18 (A) are capable of being broadly distributed;

19 and

20 (B) provide the scientific information need-
 21 ed by water managers and natural resource
 22 agencies on both sides of the United States-Mex-
 23 ico border to effectively accomplish the missions
 24 of the managers and agencies.

1 (c) *DESIGNATION OF PRIORITY TRANSBOUNDARY*
 2 *AQUIFERS.*—

3 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*For purposes of the program,*
 4 *the Secretary shall designate as priority*
 5 *transboundary aquifers—*

6 (A) *the Hueco Bolson and Mesilla aquifers*
 7 *underlying parts of Texas, New Mexico, and*
 8 *Mexico;*

9 (B) *the Santa Cruz River Valley aquifers*
 10 *underlying Arizona and Sonora, Mexico; and*

11 (C) *the San Pedro aquifers underlying Ari-*
 12 *zona and Sonora, Mexico.*

13 (2) *ADDITIONAL AQUIFERS.*—*The Secretary may,*
 14 *using the criteria under subsection (b)(1)(A), evaluate*
 15 *and designate additional priority transboundary*
 16 *aquifers which underlie New Mexico or Texas.*

17 (d) *COOPERATION WITH MEXICO.*—*To ensure a com-*
 18 *prehensive assessment of priority transboundary aquifers,*
 19 *the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable,*
 20 *work with appropriate Federal agencies and other organi-*
 21 *zations to develop partnerships with, and receive input*
 22 *from, relevant organizations in Mexico to carry out the pro-*
 23 *gram.*

24 (e) *GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.*—*The*
 25 *Secretary may provide grants or enter into cooperative*

1 *agreements and other agreements with the water resources*
 2 *research institutes and other Participating State entities to*
 3 *carry out the program.*

4 **SEC. 5. IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM.**

5 (a) *COORDINATION WITH STATES, TRIBES, AND*
 6 *OTHER ENTITIES.*—*The Secretary shall coordinate the ac-*
 7 *tivities carried out under the program with—*

8 (1) *the appropriate water resource agencies in*
 9 *the Participating States;*

10 (2) *any affected Indian tribes;*

11 (3) *any other appropriate entities that are con-*
 12 *ducting monitoring and metering activity with re-*
 13 *spect to a priority transboundary aquifer; and*

14 (4) *the IBWC, as appropriate.*

15 (b) *NEW ACTIVITY.*—*After the date of enactment of this*
 16 *Act, the Secretary shall not initiate any new field studies*
 17 *or analyses under the program before consulting with, and*
 18 *coordinating the activity with, any Participating State*
 19 *water resource agencies that have jurisdiction over the aqi-*
 20 *fer.*

21 (c) *STUDY PLANS; COST ESTIMATES.*—

22 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary shall work*
 23 *closely with appropriate Participating State water*
 24 *resource agencies, water resources research institutes,*
 25 *and other relevant entities to develop a study plan,*

1 *timeline, and cost estimate for each priority*
 2 *transboundary aquifer to be studied under the pro-*
 3 *gram.*

4 (2) *REQUIREMENTS.—A study plan developed*
 5 *under paragraph (1) shall, to the maximum extent*
 6 *practicable—*

7 (A) *integrate existing data collection and*
 8 *analyses conducted with respect to the priority*
 9 *transboundary aquifer;*

10 (B) *if applicable, improve and strengthen*
 11 *existing groundwater flow models developed for*
 12 *the priority transboundary aquifer; and*

13 (C) *be consistent with appropriate State*
 14 *guidelines and goals.*

15 **SEC. 6. EFFECT.**

16 (a) *IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act affects—*

17 (1) *the jurisdiction or responsibility of a Partici-*
 18 *parting State with respect to managing surface or*
 19 *groundwater resources in the Participating State;*

20 (2) *the water rights of any person or entity*
 21 *using water from a transboundary aquifer; or*

22 (3) *State water law, or an interstate compact or*
 23 *international treaty governing water.*

24 (b) *TREATY.—Nothing in this Act shall delay or alter*
 25 *the implementation or operation of any works constructed,*

1 *modified, acquired, or used within the territorial limits of*
 2 *the United States relating to the waters governed by the*
 3 *Treaty Between the United States and Mexico Regarding*
 4 *Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers*
 5 *and of the Rio Grande, Treaty Series 994 (59 Stat. 1219).*

6 **SEC. 7. REPORTS.**

7 *Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of*
 8 *this Act, and on completion of the program in fiscal year*
 9 *2016, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate water*
 10 *resource agency in the Participating States, an interim and*
 11 *final report, respectively, that describes—*

12 *(1) any activities carried out under the program;*

13 *(2) any conclusions of the Secretary relating to*
 14 *the status of priority transboundary aquifers; and*

15 *(3) the level of participation in the program of*
 16 *entities in Mexico.*

17 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

18 *(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-*
 19 *priated to carry out this Act \$50,000,000 for the period of*
 20 *fiscal years 2007 through 2016.*

21 *(b) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—Of the amounts made*
 22 *available under subsection (a), 50 percent shall be made*
 23 *available to the water resources research institutes to pro-*
 24 *vide funding to appropriate entities in the Participating*
 25 *States (including Sandia National Laboratories, State*

1 agencies, universities, the Tri-Regional Planning Group,
 2 and other relevant organizations) and to implement cooper-
 3 ative agreements entered into with appropriate entities in
 4 Mexico to conduct specific authorized activities in further-
 5 ance of the program, including the binational collection and
 6 exchange of scientific data.

7 (c) *CRITERIA.*—Funding provided to an appropriate
 8 entity in Mexico pursuant to subsection (b) shall be contin-
 9 gent on that entity providing 50 percent of the necessary
 10 resources (including in-kind services) to further assist in
 11 carrying out the authorized activity.

12 **SEC. 9. SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.**

13 The authority of the Secretary to carry out any provi-
 14 sions of this Act shall terminate 10 years after the date of
 15 enactment of this Act.

Attest:

Clerk.

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 214

AMENDMENT