

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8041

To establish a Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program within the
Department of the Interior, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 14, 2020

Mr. HARDER of California (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MCNERNEY,
Mr. COX of California, Ms. DEGETTE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BERA, Mr.
NEGUSE, and Mr. COSTA) introduced the following bill; which was re-
ferred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To establish a Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program
within the Department of the Interior, and for other
purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Snow Water Supply
5 Forecasting Program Authorization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means
2 the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program estab-
3 lished by section 3.

4 (2) RECLAMATION STATE.—The term “Rec-
5 lamation State” means a State or territory described
6 in the first section of the Act of June 17, 1902 (32
7 Stat. 388, chapter 1093; 43 U.S.C. 391).

8 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
9 the Secretary of the Interior.

10 **SEC. 3. SNOW WATER SUPPLY FORECASTING PROGRAM.**

11 (a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT.—The Snow Water
12 Supply Forecasting Program is hereby established within
13 the Department of the Interior.

14 (b) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—To implement the
15 program, the Secretary shall—

16 (1) develop the program framework in coordina-
17 tion with other Federal agencies pursuant to section
18 4, culminating in the report required under section
19 4(c); and

20 (2) after submitting the report required by sec-
21 tion 4(c), implement activities to improve snowpack
22 measurement in particular watersheds pursuant to
23 section 5.

1 **SEC. 4. DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM FRAMEWORK IN CO-**
2 **ORDINATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGEN-**
3 **CIES.**

4 (a) SNOWPACK MEASUREMENT DATA.—When deter-
5 mining water supply forecasts or allocations to Federal
6 water contractors, the Secretary, acting through the Com-
7 missioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, shall incorporate,
8 to the greatest extent practicable, information from
9 emerging technologies for snowpack measurement, such
10 as—

11 (1) synthetic aperture radar;

12 (2) laser altimetry; and

13 (3) other emerging technologies that the Sec-
14 retary determines are likely to provide more accurate
15 or timely snowpack measurement data.

16 (b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out subsection (a),
17 the Secretary shall coordinate data use and collection ef-
18 forts with other Federal agencies that use or may benefit
19 from the use of emerging technologies for snowpack meas-
20 urement.

21 (c) EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES REPORT.—Not later
22 than October 1, 2021, the Secretary shall submit to Con-
23 gress a report that—

24 (1) summarizes the use of emerging tech-
25 nologies pursuant to this section;

1 (2) describes benefits derived from the use of
2 technologies summarized under paragraph (1) re-
3 lated to the environment and increased water supply
4 reliability; and

5 (3) describes how Federal agencies will coordi-
6 nate to implement emerging technologies.

7 **SEC. 5. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.**

8 (a) **ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTING FRAMEWORK.**—After
9 submitting the report required under section 4(c), the Sec-
10 retary shall participate with program partners in imple-
11 menting activities to improve snowpack measurement in
12 particular watersheds.

13 (b) **FOCUS.**—The program shall focus on activities
14 that will maintain, establish, expand, or advance snowpack
15 measurement consistent with the report required by sec-
16 tion 4(c), with an emphasis on—

17 (1) enhancing activities in river basins to
18 achieve improved snow and water supply forecasting
19 results;

20 (2) activities in river basins where snow water
21 supply forecasting related activities described in this
22 section are not occurring on the of the date of the
23 enactment of this Act; and

1 (3) demonstrating or testing new, or improving
2 existing, snow and water supply forecasting tech-
3 nology.

4 (c) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Secretary may
5 provide information collected and analyzed under this Act
6 to program partners through appropriate mechanisms, in-
7 cluding interagency agreements with Federal agencies,
8 States, State agencies, or a combination thereof, leases,
9 contracts, cooperative agreements, grants, loans, and
10 memoranda of understanding.

11 (d) PROGRAM PARTNERS.—Program partners with
12 whom the Secretary enters into cooperative agreements
13 pursuant to subsection (e) may include water districts, ir-
14 rigation districts, water associations, universities, State
15 agencies, other Federal agencies, private sector entities,
16 nongovernmental organizations, and other entities, as de-
17 termined by the Secretary.

18 (e) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary
19 may—

20 (1) enter into cooperative agreements with pro-
21 gram partners to allow the program to be adminis-
22 tered efficiently and cost effectively through cost
23 sharing or by providing additional in-kind resources
24 necessary for program implementation; and

1 (2) provide nonreimbursable matching funding
2 for programmatic and operational activities under
3 this section in consultation with program partners.

4 (f) ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS.—Nothing in this Act
5 shall modify any obligation of the Secretary to comply with
6 applicable Federal and State environmental laws in car-
7 rying out this Act.

8 **SEC. 6. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.**

9 Not later than 4 years after the date of the enact-
10 ment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to
11 the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee
12 on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the
13 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the
14 Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, that in-
15 cludes—

16 (1) a list of basins and sub-basins for which
17 snowpack measurement technologies are being used
18 under the program, including a description of each
19 technology used; and

20 (2) a list of Federal agencies and program part-
21 ners participating in each basin or sub-basin listed
22 in paragraph (1).

1 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
3 retary to carry out this Act \$15,000,000, in the aggregate,
4 for fiscal years 2022 through 2026.

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