

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2512

To establish a National Resources Institute at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 23, 1998

Mr. KEMPTHORNE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To establish a National Resources Institute at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory.

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 “Natural Resources In-
5 stitute Act of 1998”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 As used in this Act:

8 (1) ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES.—The term
9 “environmental sciences” means the full range of
10 fields of study (including biological, physical, chemi-

1 cal, geological, and social sciences, engineering, and
 2 humanities) relevant to the understanding of envi-
 3 ronmental problems.

4 (2) INTERMOUNTAIN WEST.—The term “Inter-
 5 mountain West” means Montana, Idaho, Wyoming,
 6 Utah, and the far eastern areas of Oregon and
 7 Washington.

8 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

9 The Congress finds the following:

10 (1) In order to maintain quality of life, eco-
 11 nomic growth should be balanced with environmental
 12 protection and incorporate collaborative scientific in-
 13 quiry, technology development, and public policy.

14 (2) The environmental science data and knowl-
 15 edge fail to adequately support long-term policy
 16 leading to questions of science quality, credibility,
 17 and utility, resulting in an atmosphere of adversarial
 18 science.

19 (3) Individuals affected by decisions regarding
 20 natural resources are not effectively involved in de-
 21 termining the needs, setting the agenda, and partici-
 22 pating in environmental research and development.

23 (4) Coordinated environmental research and de-
 24 velopment of Federal and State agencies is nec-

1 essary to support effective policy and environmental
 2 and economic sustainability.

3 (5) Decisions regarding the management of nat-
 4 ural resources can significantly impact a region's
 5 economy and its residents' quality of life.

6 (6) The Idaho National Engineering and Envi-
 7 ronmental Laboratory is the only multiprogrammatic
 8 federally funded research and development labora-
 9 tory in the Intermountain West region of the United
 10 States, a region which will be greatly impacted by
 11 future natural resource decisions.

12 (7) The creation of a Natural Resources Insti-
 13 tute that focuses the scientific strengths of govern-
 14 ment, universities, and industry in collaboration with
 15 a wide variety of individuals affected by decisions re-
 16 garding natural resources will expedite sustainable
 17 environmental and natural resource decisionmaking,
 18 which will result in the creation and retention of
 19 jobs and savings to taxpayers.

20 **SEC. 4. PURPOSE.**

21 The purpose of this Act is to create a Natural Re-
 22 sources Institute to—

23 (1) coordinate research and develop appropriate
 24 and systematic approaches to managing natural re-

1 sources and the specific tools and mechanisms nec-
 2 essary to implement these approaches;

3 (2) support public policy development by facili-
 4 tating the creation of public-private partnerships
 5 necessary to implement systematic approaches to
 6 natural resource use and management;

7 (3) provide education and training regarding
 8 natural resources for a wide variety of users, includ-
 9 ing the public, local and regional government, and
 10 industry, by developing training programs and edu-
 11 cational curricula using modern information systems
 12 such as the Internet and video conferencing;

13 (4) facilitate the creation of commercial enter-
 14 prises by involving local economic development agen-
 15 cies, technology incubators, research institutes, and
 16 the private sector to apply derived use science and
 17 technology; and

18 (5) transfer information and analyses regarding
 19 natural resources to persons and organizations to
 20 allow informed decisionmaking and eliminate dupli-
 21 cation of environmental studies.

22 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES INSTI-**
 23 **TUTE.**

24 There is hereby established a Natural Resources In-
 25 stitute (in this Act referred to as the “Institute”), the pur-

1 pose of which shall be to provide a neutral forum to de-
2 velop scientific solutions that improve the economic and
3 environmental viability of the Intermountain West region
4 of the United States. The Institute shall be located at the
5 Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Labora-
6 tory.

7 **SEC. 6. DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS.**

8 The duties and functions of the Institute shall be as
9 follows:

10 (1) To initiate and perform multidisciplinary,
11 solution-oriented, focused, and needs-driven research
12 regarding natural resources, including—

13 (A) coordination of research activities to
14 minimize duplication of effort and maximize sci-
15 entific advancement;

16 (B) maintenance of meaningful public in-
17 volvement in the development and implementa-
18 tion of research activities;

19 (C) performance of research by accessing
20 high-quality scientific talent through private
21 partners of the Institute; and

22 (D) performance of research and develop-
23 ment on understanding and predicting regional
24 ecosystem dynamics, developing methodologies
25 and tools for environmental stewardship, and

1 developing and understanding the science asso-
2 ciated with the natural resource issues in the
3 Intermountain West region of the United
4 States.

5 (2) To support formulation and implementation
6 of natural resources public policy through—

7 (A) consideration of the balance of socio-
8 economic concerns and quality of life issues
9 with environmental remediation, cost, and
10 schedule concerns; and

11 (B) involvement of the public with the re-
12 search and development activities of the Insti-
13 tute.

14 (3) To act as an information resource center
15 by—

16 (A) serving as a centralized repository for
17 environmental data, data management, and an-
18 alytical tools for the Intermountain West region
19 of the United States;

20 (B) entering into partnership agreements
21 with private entities to access or acquire and
22 maintain regional environmental data sets, in-
23 cluding monitoring data, Geographical Informa-
24 tion System coverages, satellite data, and data
25 from local and regional ecological studies;

1 (C) providing quick and affordable access
 2 to all existing public databases, such as those
 3 maintained by the Federal and State agencies,
 4 and, as appropriate, access to private databases
 5 developed to support specific models or deci-
 6 sions; and

7 (D) maintaining trained personnel to assist
 8 the public and researchers in gaining access to
 9 information on natural resources.

10 (4) To provide education and training, includ-
 11 ing—

12 (A) education for the public, future sci-
 13 entists, and educators; and

14 (B) seminars and training aids for the
 15 public and collaborating with universities in the
 16 Intermountain West region of the United States
 17 to provide resources, internships, and research
 18 opportunities.

19 **SEC. 7. BOARD OF STAKEHOLDERS.**

20 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There shall be a Board of
 21 Stakeholders for the Institute, which shall incorporate the
 22 vested interests and stakeholder prospectuses into the de-
 23 sign and operation of the Institute.

24 (b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

1 (1) APPOINTMENT.—The Board of Stakehold-
 2 ers shall be composed of 11 members who shall be
 3 appointed by the Secretary of Energy.

4 (2) REPRESENTATION.—The Board of Stake-
 5 holders shall be comprised of representatives from
 6 government, industry, the private sector, univer-
 7 sities, and interest groups.

8 (3) TERMS.—Members of the Board of Stake-
 9 holders shall serve for a term of 5 years.

10 (4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the
 11 Board of Stakeholders shall be elected by the Board
 12 from among its members.

13 **SEC. 8. DIRECTOR; STAFF.**

14 (a) DIRECTOR.—(1) The Board of Stakeholders shall
 15 appoint, and define the requirements of, the Director of
 16 the Institute. The Director of the Institute shall exercise
 17 all authority granted to the Institute in this Act, including
 18 powers delegated by the Board.

19 (2) The Director of the Institute shall be a nonvoting,
 20 ex officio member of the Board of Stakeholders.

21 (3) The Director shall be responsible for the integra-
 22 tion of the duties and functions of the Institute as de-
 23 scribed in section 6, and for ensuring the full involvement
 24 of all relevant environmental sciences and the full range
 25 of users in these duties.

1 (b) STAFF.—The Director of the Institute shall hire
 2 such staff as necessary to carry out the functions of the
 3 Institute under this Act.

4 **SEC. 9. SCIENCE ADVISORY PANEL.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a
 6 Science Advisory Panel which shall—

7 (1) oversee development and implementation of
 8 the technical strategy of the Institute; and

9 (2) provide oversight of the quality of science,
 10 and provide recommendations for the research and
 11 development portfolio structure of the Institute.

12 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

13 (1) APPOINTMENT.—The Science Advisory
 14 Panel shall be composed of 15 members who shall be
 15 appointed by the Board of Stakeholders, in consulta-
 16 tion with the Director of the Idaho National Engi-
 17 neering and Environmental Laboratory.

18 (2) REPRESENTATION.—The Science Advisory
 19 Panel shall be composed of members representing
 20 multiple disciplines of science and engineering.

21 (3) TERMS.—Members of the Science Advisory
 22 Panel shall serve for a term of 2 years.

23 (4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the
 24 Science Advisory Panel shall be selected by the
 25 Science Advisory Panel from among its members.

1 **SEC. 10. ACQUISITION OF INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL**
2 **AGENCIES.**

3 The Institute may acquire from any Federal agency
4 unclassified data and nonproprietary knowledge and infor-
5 mation obtained by Federal departments and agencies to
6 assist the Institute in carrying out its duties under this
7 Act.

8 **SEC. 11. ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION.**

9 The Institute shall work with Federal and State
10 agencies, universities, the public, and the private sector
11 to ensure that the information and products of the Insti-
12 tute are useful and accessible.

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