

106TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1031

To direct the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, to take certain actions to protect the White Bluffs, located on the Columbia River in the State of Washington.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 9, 1999

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

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## A BILL

To direct the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, to take certain actions to protect the White Bluffs, located on the Columbia River in the State of Washington.

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 “White Bluffs Protec-  
5       tion Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       The Congress finds the following:

1           (1) The White Bluffs, located on the Columbia  
2           River from river mile 354 to river mile 376 in the  
3           State of Washington, are a scenic example of pris-  
4           tine landscapes that should be protected.

5           (2) The White Bluffs have been eroding at a  
6           more rapid rate since the construction of the Colum-  
7           bia Basin Project by the Bureau of Reclamation.

8           (3) Federal and local officials have identified  
9           the erosive action of the Columbia River and return  
10          flows associated with the Columbia Basin Project as  
11          two of the factors contributing to the movement of  
12          ancient landslide masses in the White Bluffs area.

13          (4) The movement of large landslide masses of  
14          the White Bluffs may change the course of the Co-  
15          lumbia River to some degree, damaging the opposite  
16          south shore and degrading the quality of Columbia  
17          River water by slide debris and aggradation of the  
18          Columbia River channel downstream, both of which  
19          could endanger salmon spawning grounds of the  
20          Hanford Reach.

21          (5) The largest, closest source of Columbia  
22          Basin Project water to the White Bluffs is the prod-  
23          uct of two canal wasteways.

24          (6) These two canal wasteways can be modified  
25          to reduce the standing water above the White Bluffs.

1 **SEC. 3. ACTIONS BY BUREAU OF RECLAMATION TO PRO-**  
2 **TECT WHITE BLUFFS, WASHINGTON.**

3 (a) WASTEWAY MODIFICATIONS.—The Secretary of  
4 the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation—

5 (1) may construct a channel for the Wahluke  
6 Branch 10 Wasteway of the Columbia Basin Project,  
7 that will effectively drain all standing water above  
8 the White Bluffs within the Wahluke Slope Habitat  
9 Management Area, Washington; and

10 (2) may take such steps as are necessary to  
11 eliminate the White Bluffs Wasteway.

12 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
13 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the  
14 Interior, to remain available until expended—

15 (1) \$4,000,000 to carry out subsection (a)(1);  
16 and

17 (2) \$1,000,000 to carry out subsection (a)(2).

18 **SEC. 4. STUDY OF THE WAHLUKE SLOPE.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the  
20 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior  
21 shall enter into an agreement with the National Academy  
22 of Sciences to conduct a study of the land use options for  
23 the land owned by the Department of Energy within the  
24 Hanford Reservation known as Wahluke Slope in the  
25 State of Washington.

1 (b) STUDY CONTENTS.—The study under subsection  
2 (a) shall include the following:

3 (1) Examination of the potential environmental,  
4 economic, and cultural impacts of various land use  
5 options for the Wahluke Slope region, such as agri-  
6 culture (including grazing, mining, and farming), in-  
7 dustry, recreation, specific preservation, and use as  
8 a buffer zone for the Department of Energy’s radio-  
9 active waste management efforts.

10 (2) Review of existing land use plans, environ-  
11 mental impact studies, and scientific and technical  
12 literature.

13 (3) Convening of workshops, as necessary, to  
14 assess the following impacts (positive or negative)  
15 for each option:

16 (A) The impact on current water rights,  
17 future water needs, and water management al-  
18 ternatives.

19 (B) The impact on habitat and federally  
20 protected species.

21 (C) The impact on the White Bluffs.

22 (D) The impact on the local economy.

23 (E) The Impact of existing archeological  
24 resources.

25 (c) REPORT.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after  
2           the date on which the Secretary of the Interior en-  
3           ters into the agreement under subsection (a), the  
4           National Academy of Sciences shall submit a report  
5           concerning the study to the Committee on Resources  
6           of the House of Representatives and the Committee  
7           on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

8           (2) USE OF PREVIOUS STUDIES.—The report  
9           under paragraph (1) may be based in part on, but  
10          may not be limited to, the work and scope of pre-  
11          vious studies, including any of the following:

12                 (A) The Hanford Reach of the Columbia  
13                 River comprehensive conservation study and en-  
14                 vironmental impact statement.

15                 (B) The Hanford Reach protection and  
16                 management program’s interim action plan.

17                 (C) The study known as the “Red Zone”  
18                 study.

19                 (D) The Hanford remedial action and land  
20                 use.

21                 (E) The Wapinitia 2000 proposal.

22                 (F) The Nature Conservancy biological in-  
23                 ventories.

24           (3) REQUIREMENT.—The report under para-  
25          graph (1) shall set forth the findings, conclusions,

1       and recommendations of the National Academy of  
2       Sciences regarding future land use options, including  
3       the need for any congressional action.

4       (d) SUSPENSION OF CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT OR  
5       USE OF WAHLUKE SLOPE.—No change may be made in  
6       the management or use of the Wahluke Slope before the  
7       expiration of the one-year period beginning on the date  
8       of the submission of the report under subsection (c).

9       (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
10      are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the  
11      Interior \$600,000 for the study under this section.

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