

right. The Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan, or DCP, consists of the Agreement Concerning Colorado River Drought Contingency Management and Operations and additional agreements that appear as attachments A1, A2, and B to that agreement. It is an emergency response to 19 years of severe drought and is designed to get us to 2026 without a serious crisis. In the lower basin, this will be done by increasing the contributions and providing incentives to leave water banked in Lake Mead as intentionally created surplus, among other things. My bill reflects the urgency of the situation through its directive that the Secretary of the Interior act without delay to sign the agreements upon execution by the seven Colorado River Basin States.

As Chairman MURKOWSKI mentioned, it is expected that the Secretary will sign these agreements without delay since the actions to be undertaken are within the analyses and range of effects reviewed in the environmental documents prepared pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, ESA, and in the 2007 final environmental impact statement, EIS, on Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead; and the EISs and ESA documents prepared for operation of the Colorado River Storage Project Act initial storage unit reservoirs. Additional environmental compliance is only applicable should Federal actions be undertaken that are outside the range of effects analyzed in those documents or the applicable records of decision.

I ask Senator CORTEZ MASTO, does she agree with this characterization of our bill?

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. I thank my colleague from Arizona. I agree with her assessment. I would also add that this legislation was developed to ensure water conservation activities in the Colorado River Basin are able to begin in 2019 and be built into the planning of operations for 2020. For this to happen, there can be no delay between execution of the DCP by the States and the signing and implementation by the Secretary of the Interior.

I ask Senator GARDNER, is this also his understanding from the upper basin perspective?

Mr. GARDNER. Yes, the statements Senator CORTEZ MASTO and Senator MCSALLY have made regarding the existing environmental compliance documents and actions contemplated in the DCP agreements and the Secretary's expected immediate implementation of those agreements once acted upon by the basin states are consistent with my understanding.

This legislation is an important steppingstone to helping assure the long-term sustainability of the Colorado River. It enables the seven Colorado River Basin States to take advantage of flexible water management tools they have created under the Upper and

Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plans to address variable water supply conditions in the face of an almost two-decades-long drought that has no end in sight.

The Upper Basin Drought Contingency Plan involves planning for how to move water from the Initial Units of the Colorado River Storage Project Act, otherwise known as the CRSP Initial Units, to protect critical elevations at Lake Powell and subsequently recover storage at the Units. It also provides a mechanism for the upper basin to conserve water to help assure continued compliance with the Colorado River Compact which will improve the resiliency of the entire Colorado River System. In the Upper Basin DCP, the "applicable Colorado River System reservoirs" include and are limited to the Initial Units of the Colorado River Storage Project Act, which include the Glen Canyon, Flaming Gorge, Aspinall, and Navajo facilities.

This legislation enables the goals of the DCP to be met by authorizing the storage and release of water in CRSP initial units, without charge, for a demand management plan approved by the Upper Division states and the Upper Colorado River Commission. This water will be delivered into such storage pursuant to the law of, and at the direction and control of, the State from which the water is delivered, subject to approval of the Upper Colorado River Commission. Development of the Demand Management Plan, which will include water accounting mechanisms and other operational factors, will require hard work by all four upper basin States, but once completed will be a critical tool for these states to improve their water security.

I ask Senator BENNET, who has been involved throughout the development of this bill, does he agree with my characterization?

Mr. BENNET. I thank Senator GARDNER. I agree with his assessment and those of Chairman MURKOWSKI, Senator MCSALLY, and Senator CORTEZ MASTO, about the urgency and path forward for DCP implementation. I would like to reiterate that this bill does not exempt or waive any environmental laws. In drafting the DCPs, both the upper and lower basin carefully considered the environment and the existing environmental analyses and compliance documents. Additional NEPA compliance would be needed if Federal actions are outside the scope of effects analyzed in the existing compliance and decision documents.

I ask Senator SINEMA, if this is also her understanding?

Ms. SINEMA. I agree with my colleagues' statements and am proud to continue the legacy of water policy leadership in Arizona. Water plays a pivotal role for the environment, economic development, and cultural heritage of Arizona, and I am proud to have worked closely with the State of Arizona and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to keep this process moving

forward. Arizona takes a huge step towards securing its water future under the Drought Contingency Plan. The plan provides all Arizona communities, from Native American tribes to rural and agricultural regions to metropolitan cities, with greater certainty for reliable and secure water supplies. It shows what can be accomplished when stakeholders work together. I thank my colleagues for the discussion here today and urge passage of this legislation to ensure all Colorado River Basin States are able to implement the DCP as soon as possible.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I thank all of the Senators for providing their views on the language and for sponsoring this important legislation.

I ask Senator MANCHIN, has he heard the discussion among the sponsors of this bill? Is what he has heard from them about the intent of the legislation in line with his understanding?

Mr. MANCHIN. It is. I thank my colleagues for their support of this critical legislation and for participating in the discussion here today.

Ms. MCSALLY. I would like to thank Chairman MURKOWSKI and Ranking Member MANCHIN for their time, attention, and support of this critical legislation. I also associate myself with the comments added by the bill cosponsors and thank them all for their work on this issue and their comments about this bill's effect.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I thank my colleagues for this clarification and explanation of the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan Authorization Act. As we have just explained, the bill sponsors, along with the chair and ranking member of committee of jurisdiction are unified in the expectation that enactment of this bill will lead to immediate action by the Secretary of the Interior, and the DCP will be signed and implemented upon execution by the States.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING JEROME COUNTY

- Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, my colleagues Senator MIKE CRAPO and Representative MIKE SIMPSON join me today in recognizing the 100th anniversary of Jerome County, ID.

Established February 8, 1919, by the Idaho Legislature, the county was named for either Jerome Kuhn, son of William S. Kuhn, or Jerome Hill, who was commissioned by Kuhn to find a suitable town site north of the Snake River Canyon. With the city of Jerome as the county seat, the small farming communities of Eden and Hazelton also make up the eastern portion of Jerome County.

One of the early pioneers of Jerome County, I.B. Perrine, was looking for a place to winter his cattle, and Charles Walgamott showed him a spot with beautiful clear blue lakes bubbling up from an underground aquifer. Mr.

Perrine settled this area and called it the Blue Lakes Ranch. These blue lakes continue to provide water for irrigation, raising rainbow trout, and pristine drinking water to the residents of this area. It also features the beautiful Blues Lakes Country Club with one of the most scenic 18-hole golf courses in the State.

Although not officially recognized, local historians have documented the Hudson Bay Trail as an alternate route of the Oregon Trail, which goes through Jerome County. The traders of the Hudson Bay Company seemed to have preferred the trail going north of the Snake River Canyon to make their way to Fort Boise in the West and Fort Hall in the East.

With water, Mr. Perrine saw the magic this area produced and, with the help of Eastern United States Financiers, created the Milner Dam along the Snake River. The Milner Dam and subsequent irrigation system opened the Southern Snake River Plain to farmers, ranchers, and new communities. As a result, the communities of Jerome, Eden, Hazelton, and Greenwood were established between 1905 and 1911.

In 1919, the Idaho Legislature took the south portion of Lincoln County and the western portion of Minidoka County to carve out Jerome County. As one of the youngest counties in Idaho, it is the 43rd county, out of 44, in the 43rd State.

A notorious part of Jerome County is the Minidoka Relocation Center north of Eden; it is one of the 10 Japanese internment camps created by the U.S. Government during World War II. Currently, it stands as the Minidoka National Historic Site as a memorial of the sacrifice and suffering of the Japanese-Americans during this period of our history.

Today, Jerome County boasts a thriving economy lead by the dairy industry, producing more than 100 million pounds of cheese, whey protein, and other dairy products. They also produce the agricultural commodities of alfalfa hay, silage corn, barley, winter wheat, sugar beets, potatoes, beans, and spring wheat.

Senator CRAPO, Representative SIMPSON, and I are proud to recognize this landmark anniversary. We congratulate Jerome County residents on this centennial, and we wish its communities many more years of success.●

REMEMBERING LEON E. BRAXTON

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the memory of Leon E. "Bill" Braxton, a World War II veteran and teacher who dedicated his life in service to our Nation and educated countless students throughout his career.

Bill Braxton was born near Hope Hills, NC, on May 1, 1917. After graduating high school in 1934, he enlisted with the U.S. Army in April 1935, serving in Panama, Austria, Germany,

Japan, and Korea. He was an honor graduate of the Coast Artillery School, European Air Transport Service's Flight Captain's School, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. Bill flew combat missions in Indo China in 1954 and aided the French at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu.

In 1959, he retired from the U.S. Air Force and enrolled at the University of Miami, graduating magna cum laude with a degree in German. He then received a fellowship under the National Defense Education Act to attend Kent State University, earning a master's degree in German in 1964.

Bill's first teaching position was at Hialeah High School, teaching German and English. He taught at Stetson University before moving to Satellite Beach in 1971, where he joined Satellite High School. While there, he developed the school's German Student Program and was named teacher of the year for southern Brevard County. His proudest achievement was establishing the school's Fulbright Student Exchange program for German students before retiring from the school in 1979.

In retirement, he continued to teach French, German, and Spanish at Brevard Community College and co-authored four nonfiction books based on his life experiences, people he met at home and abroad, and events he witnessed while serving in the military.

Bill Braxton lived a full life and made a difference for his community and his country. I express my sincerest condolences to his four children—Thomas Braxton, Douglas Braxton, Patty Braxton, and Susan Braxton—his seven grandchildren, and his three great-grandchildren. May God bless his family during this time of sorrow, and may they be strengthened by the memory of his life's service.●

TRIBUTE TO JEFF BECKER

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Jeff Becker, the Lee County Teacher of the Year from Island Coast High School in Cape Coral, FL.

Jeff believes building trust with his students is important for their future success. Every morning, Jeff greets students as they walk into the building and spends his lunch break in the cafeteria getting to know everyone.

Jeff is the digital media technology teacher, where he strives for his students to learn video skills. He is credited with transforming the school's news program, winning Best High School News Show at the Lee County Film Festival Awards in his first year of teaching.

He was previously in sales for 4 years and noted that, while he was having a fun time, he felt as though he should be doing something else with his life. He became a guidance counselor at Cape Coral High School in 2011 after earning his master's degree in elementary and secondary school counseling at Wilmington University.

I extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to Jeff for his dedication to the

students at his school and look forward to hearing of his continued good work in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO CAROLINE BUECHNER

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Caroline Buechner, the Santa Rosa County Teacher of the Year from Navarre High School in Navarre, FL.

Caroline was named teacher of the year after being selected among 33 teachers nominated from each school in her district. Santa Rosa superintendent, Tim Wyrosdick, visited her classroom during one of her chorus lessons to present the award. Caroline was humbled to receive this honor and wished to convey a message to all educators: "Join together to better the educational experience for students."

Caroline considers her students the best she could ever ask for, many of them are training for an upcoming singing competition. While she was shocked at the honor, her students knew she deserved the award and gave her a round of applause. She is credited for marrying academia and the performing arts and growing the school's choir program.

Caroline has been a choral music educator at Navarre High School for the past 9 years and is the coordinator of the 2019 All State High School Concern Choir. Her chorus program is considered one of the more prestigious programs in Florida.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Caroline for her dedication to teaching her choir students and look forward to hearing of her continued good work in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO EVAN GOULD

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Evan Gould, the Clay County Teacher of the Year from Lake Asbury Junior High School in Green Cove Springs, FL.

Evan regards it a tremendous honor to represent all school employees as teacher of the year. He believes support staff play a critical role in the success of students and teachers. His colleagues note he leads, inspires, and coaches his students to perform at the highest level. Evan believes every student can succeed academically, artistically, and socially.

Evan currently teaches chorus and drama classes at Lake Asbury Junior High School. He has been a teacher for 30 years, with 22 years in Clay County. His chorus and drama programs are highly regarded in Florida, winning awards and superior ratings at district and State competitions. He also serves as chair of District 1 Junior Thespians, hosting more than 500 drama students from across the region for their annual festival.

I express my sincere thanks and best wishes to Evan for his work to educate his students in chorus and drama. I look forward to learning of his continued success in the years ahead.●