

the United States the Secretary determines appropriate in addition to and in the same manner as each of the States to which the original depredation order applied; and

(B) lake managers and pond managers in addition to and in the same manner as each of the entities to which the original depredation order applied;

(2) incorporate modern terminology;

(3) simplify the provisions contained in the original depredation order related to compliance with other Federal law;

(4) modernize the recordkeeping requirements contained in the original depredation order; and

(5) remove the June 30, 2014, expiration date contained in the original depredation order.

(c) RENEWAL.—Not less than once every 5 years after the date on which the Secretary reissues the original depredation order under subsection (a), the Secretary shall renew the depredation order reissued under subsection (a).

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act may be construed to waive the obligation of the Secretary to comply with the—

(1) National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); or

(2) Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.).

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) LAKE MANAGER.—The term “lake manager” means a person that is licensed by a State regulatory agency to manage a private lake.

(2) ORIGINAL DEPREDATION ORDER.—The term “original depredation order” means the depredation order for double-crested cormorants at aquaculture facilities contained in section 21.47 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on January 1, 2016).

(3) POND MANAGER.—The term “pond manager” means a person that is licensed by a State regulatory agency to manage a private pond.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HURD) and the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. RANDALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2293, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2293, the Cormorant Relief Act of 2025, sponsored by Representative EZELL from Mississippi. This legislation would require the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reinstate the Aquaculture Depredation Order for double-crested cormorants, which was in place from 1998 until 2016, until it was vacated by a judge in response to yet another activist lawsuit.

Double-crested cormorants are waterbirds common to the Great Lakes States and the Southeast. They are opportunistic and intelligent predators that often feed at aquaculture facilities,

where fish are easy to catch. A variety of studies have determined that predation from double-crested cormorants costs the aquaculture industry nearly \$65 million annually in economic losses.

This legislation would streamline the permitting process to take double-crested cormorants, restoring protections for aquaculture producers without negatively impacting cormorant populations.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Representative EZELL for his continued leadership and urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2293. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to speak on H.R. 2293, the Cormorant Relief Act of 2025.

Aquaculture facilities nationwide are facing issues with predatory birds. We experience it in Washington State as well, along with the pinnipeds that we spent some time discussing last week.

Double-crested cormorants consume large quantities of fish from these operations, negatively impacting businesses that provide jobs and support their local communities.

From 2003 to 2014, the Fish and Wildlife Service implemented the 2003 proposed rule adopting the Aquaculture Depredation Order and the Public Resource Depredation Order, a Federal program that allowed aquaculture operators, States, and Tribes to manage cormorant populations in a controlled way with proper oversight. That program was found to be unlawful by the courts.

This bill would lawfully reinstate the depredation order for aquaculture facilities. Further, it would expand coverage to 12 States and allow the Secretary to add others as appropriate. The bill would also include aquaculture lake managers and pond managers who face similar challenges.

I am pleased we were able to work out a bipartisan solution that maintains environmental safeguards under bedrock environmental protections like NEPA and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. This approach will provide a reasonable regulatory framework with proper oversight and require renewal every 5 years to ensure that it is working as intended and that, moving forward, the Fish and Wildlife Service conducts proper environmental assessments as it renews the program.

This bill will help U.S.-based aquaculture producers deliver healthy and affordable protein for American families.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a workable approach we can support, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. EZELL), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2293, the Cormorant Relief Act of 2025, which reinstates the Aquaculture Depredation Order for double-crested cormorants. The double-crested cormorant is a nuisance, plain and simple.

A single cormorant can eat up to 1½ pounds of fish every day. Even the Fish and Wildlife Service has classified them as opportunistic and generalist feeders that prey on a wide range of species.

Yet, farmers are still forced to jump through needless hoops to prevent these birds from wiping out their stock. The Aquaculture Depredation Order is nothing new. It is the same commonsense tool that was easily reinstated in 2003, 2009, and 2014.

Aquaculture farmers have been struggling for years with the importation of nonindigenous catfish flooding the market. Every year, American catfish farmer communities lose up to \$64 million in stock to the cormorants alone.

For far too long, catfish farmers in Mississippi and across the Southeast have been weighed down by burdensome permits and processes created by people too far removed from the realities of everyday, working-class Americans.

It is past time we restore a commonsense approach to this and ensure that our farmers can finally defend their ponds without any Federal red tape in the way.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN, Leader SCALISE, the Gulf Coast officials, and numerous Mississippians who have worked hard to bring this bill to the floor. I urge my colleagues to vote “yes.”

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, this commonsense bill allows aquaculture producers to effectively manage the overpopulation of double-crested cormorants, which threatens their way of life and harms coastal economies. I once again thank Mr. EZELL for his diligent work and attention to this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 2293 and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HURD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2293, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SNOW WATER SUPPLY FORECASTING REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2025

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3857) to amend the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Authorization Act, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3857

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Snow Water Supply Forecasting Reauthorization Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. SNOW WATER SUPPLY FORECASTING PROGRAM.

The Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Authorization Act (43 U.S.C. 1477) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (c)(2)—
 - (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “culminating in the report required under subsection (d)(3)” and inserting “with an emphasis on deployment of technologies that provide integration of snowpack measuring and modeling”; and
 - (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “after submitting the report required by subsection (d)(3),”;
 - (2) in subsection (d)—
 - (A) in paragraph (1)—
 - (i) in the heading, by adding “WITH INTEGRATED MODELING” after “DATA”;
 - (ii) by striking “emerging technologies for snowpack measurement, such as” and inserting “technologies that provide complete integration of accurate, timely, and spatially complete snowpack measurements and models, including the integration of”; and
 - (iii) by striking subparagraphs (A) through (C) and inserting the following:

“(A) airborne laser altimetry;

“(B) imaging spectroscopy;

“(C) integrated physics-based snowpack and hydrologic modeling; and

“(D) other technologies that the Secretary determines are likely to provide more accurate or timely snowpack measurement data commensurate with operational water management needs.”;
 - (B) in paragraph (2) by inserting “, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Natural Resources Conservation Service,” after “other Federal agencies”; and
 - (C) by striking paragraph (3);
 - (3) in subsection (e)—
 - (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “After submitting the report required under subsection (d)(3), the” and inserting “The”; and
 - (B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) FOCUS.—The program shall focus on activities that will maintain, establish, expand, or advance snowpack measurement and integrated modeling, with an emphasis on—

“(A) enhancing activities to achieve improved snow and water supply forecasting results that are more responsive to changing weather and watershed conditions;

“(B) real-time integration of activities described in this section with water supply forecasts;

“(C) activities in river basins where activities described in this section can produce snow and water supply data to inform water management decisions, including interstate water management decisions; and

“(D) building program partners’ capacity to implement and adapt to the new measurement and forecast capabilities enabled under this program.”;
 - (4) in subsection (f)—
 - (A) by striking “of this Act” and inserting “of the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Reauthorization Act of 2025”;
 - (B) in paragraph (1)—
 - (i) by striking “and sub-basins”;
 - (ii) by striking “technologies” and inserting “and integrated modeling technologies”;

(iii) by striking “technology used” and inserting “application, outcome, and data resources used”; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking “or sub-basin”; and

(5) in subsection (g), by striking “\$15,000,000, in the aggregate, for fiscal years 2022 through 2026” and inserting “\$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HURD) and the gentleman from Washington (Ms. RANDALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3857, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3857, the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Reauthorization Act.

In Colorado and in the West, we don’t measure water by what comes out of a faucet. We measure it by what falls on our mountains. Snowpack is our reservoir, our lifeline, and our future, but water managers are still forced to make major decisions with incomplete data and outdated tools.

This bill reauthorizes the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program so that we can use modern technology, lidar, satellite imagery, and other remote-sensing tools to build accurate 3D models of snowpack across entire watersheds. Better data means better reservoir planning, better support for agriculture, better protection for our cities and towns, and better management across every industry that depends upon water in the West.

We cannot manage what we can’t measure. H.R. 3857 gives Western communities what they need to plan ahead and protect the water resources that sustain our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in enthusiastic support of H.R. 3857, the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Reauthorization Act, brought forward by my colleague and fellow freshman, JEFF HURD.

This legislation, as he described, would extend the Bureau of Reclamation’s Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program through 2031, ensuring that communities have accurate water supply forecasting.

This program plays a critical role in advancing new technologies, expanding snow monitoring areas, and improving the accuracy of water supply forecasts.

This work is extremely vital to supporting Western communities facing growing challenges of climate change, persistent drought, and growing demands from communities that are growing in our States.

Across the West, communities are experiencing changing precipitation patterns, diminished snowpack, earlier runoff, and changing water availability. I certainly look to the mountains, the Olympics and the Cascades, every time I drive around my district, using a very nontechnological approach to assessing the snowpack on the mountains.

□ 1530

Mr. Speaker, there are definitely scientists using much better tools, but this legislation authorizes even better tools to allow us to plan for our communities’ safety and our access to clean water, agriculture, and a thriving economy.

Paired with the growing demand for water, these changes we have seen create uncertainty for water managers and users who rely on accurate data for planning.

By reauthorizing the Snow Water Supply Forecasting program, we ensure water managers and users have the information that they need to make informed decisions and support the continued collaboration between agencies and expanding snowpack data collection and forecasting capabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, this bill reauthorizes a vital program that helps water managers promptly and effectively plan for and respond to drought.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HURD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3857, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

MAKE STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLANS EFFICIENT ACT OF 2025

Mr. CRANK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1676) to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to