

Public Law 109–320
109th Congress

An Act

Oct. 11, 2006
[H.R. 2720]

To further the purposes of the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992 by directing the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation, to carry out an assessment and demonstration program to control salt cedar and Russian olive, and for other purposes.

Salt Cedar and
Russian Olive
Control
Demonstration
Act.
7 USC 7781 note.

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 “Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act”.

7 USC 7781 note.

SEC. 2. SALT CEDAR AND RUSSIAN OLIVE CONTROL DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”), acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation and the Director of the United States Geological Survey and in cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Defense, shall carry out a salt cedar (*Tamarix* spp) and Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) assessment and demonstration program—

(1) to assess the extent of the infestation by salt cedar and Russian olive trees in the western United States;

(2) to demonstrate strategic solutions for—

(A) the long-term management of salt cedar and Russian olive trees; and

(B) the reestablishment of native vegetation; and

(3) to assess economic means to dispose of biomass created as a result of removal of salt cedar and Russian olive trees.

(b) **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.**—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Secretary of Agriculture shall enter into a memorandum of understanding providing for the administration of the program established under subsection (a).

(c) **ASSESSMENT.**—

Deadline.

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this Act, the Secretary shall complete an assessment of the extent of salt cedar and Russian olive infestation on public and private land in the western United States.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In addition to describing the acreage of and severity of infestation by salt cedar and Russian olive trees in the western United States, the assessment shall—

(A) consider existing research on methods to control salt cedar and Russian olive trees;

(B) consider the feasibility of reducing water consumption by salt cedar and Russian olive trees;

(C) consider methods of and challenges associated with the revegetation or restoration of infested land; and

(D) estimate the costs of destruction of salt cedar and Russian olive trees, related biomass removal, and revegetation or restoration and maintenance of the infested land.

(3) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives a report that includes the results of the assessment conducted under paragraph (1).

Reports.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall identify—

(i) long-term management and funding strategies identified under subsection (d) that could be implemented by Federal, State, tribal, and private land managers and owners to address the infestation by salt cedar and Russian olive;

(ii) any deficiencies in the assessment or areas for additional study; and

(iii) any field demonstrations that would be useful in the effort to control salt cedar and Russian olive.

(d) LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall identify and document long-term management and funding strategies that—

(A) could be implemented by Federal, State, tribal, and private land managers in addressing infestation by salt cedar and Russian olive trees; and

(B) should be tested as components of demonstration projects under subsection (e).

(2) GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may provide grants to eligible entities to provide technical experience, support, and recommendations relating to the identification and documentation of long-term management and funding strategies under paragraph (1).

(B) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations with an established background and expertise in the public policy issues associated with the control of salt cedar and Russian olive trees shall be eligible for a grant under subparagraph (A).

(C) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant provided under subparagraph (A) shall be not less than \$250,000.

(e) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this Act, the Secretary shall establish a program that selects and funds not less than 5 projects proposed by and implemented in collaboration with Federal agencies, units of State and local government, national laboratories, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, individuals, organizations, or soil and water conservation districts to demonstrate and evaluate the most

Deadline.

effective methods of controlling salt cedar and Russian olive trees.

(2) PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.—The demonstration projects under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) be carried out over a time period and to a scale designed to fully assess long-term management strategies;

(B) implement salt cedar or Russian olive tree control using 1 or more methods for each project in order to assess the full range of control methods, including—

(i) airborne application of herbicides;

(ii) mechanical removal; and

(iii) biocontrol methods, such as the use of goats or insects;

(C) individually or in conjunction with other demonstration projects, assess the effects of and obstacles to combining multiple control methods and determine optimal combinations of control methods;

(D) assess soil conditions resulting from salt cedar and Russian olive tree infestation and means to revitalize soils;

(E) define and implement appropriate final vegetative states and optimal revegetation methods, with preference for self-maintaining vegetative states and native vegetation, and taking into consideration downstream impacts, wildfire potential, and water savings;

(F) identify methods for preventing the regrowth and reintroduction of salt cedar and Russian olive trees;

(G) monitor and document any water savings from the control of salt cedar and Russian olive trees, including impacts to both groundwater and surface water;

(H) assess wildfire activity and management strategies;

(I) assess changes in wildlife habitat;

(J) determine conditions under which removal of biomass is appropriate (including optimal methods for the disposal or use of biomass); and

(K) assess economic and other impacts associated with control methods and the restoration and maintenance of land.

(f) DISPOSITION OF BIOMASS.—

Deadline.

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this Act, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall complete an analysis of economic means to use or dispose of biomass created as a result of removal of salt cedar and Russian olive trees.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The analysis shall—

(A) determine conditions under which removal of biomass is economically viable;

(B) consider and build upon existing research by the Department of Agriculture and other agencies on beneficial uses of salt cedar and Russian olive tree fiber; and

(C) consider economic development opportunities, including manufacture of wood products using biomass resulting from demonstration projects under subsection (e) as a means of defraying costs of control.

(g) COSTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to projects and activities carried out under this Act—

(A) the assessment under subsection (c) shall be carried out at a cost of not more than \$4,000,000;

(B) the identification and documentation of long-term management strategies under subsection (d)(1) and the provision of grants under subsection (d)(2) shall be carried out at a cost of not more than \$2,000,000;

(C) each demonstration project under subsection (e) shall be carried out at a Federal cost of not more than \$7,000,000 (including costs of planning, design, implementation, maintenance, and monitoring); and

(D) the analysis under subsection (f) shall be carried out at a cost of not more than \$3,000,000.

(2) COST-SHARING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The assessment under subsection (c), the identification and documentation of long-term management strategies under subsection (d), a demonstration project or portion of a demonstration project under subsection (e) that is carried out on Federal land, and the analysis under subsection (f) shall be carried out at full Federal expense.

(B) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS CARRIED OUT ON NON-FEDERAL LAND.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of the costs of any demonstration project funded under subsection (e) that is not carried out on Federal land shall not exceed 75 percent.

(ii) FORM OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share of the costs of a demonstration project that is not carried out on Federal land may be provided in the form of in-kind contributions, including services provided by a State agency or any other public or private partner.

(h) COOPERATION.—In carrying out the assessment under subsection (c), the demonstration projects under subsection (e), and the analysis under subsection (f), the Secretary shall cooperate with and use the expertise of Federal agencies and the other entities specified in subsection (e)(1) that are actively conducting research on or implementing salt cedar and Russian olive tree control activities.

(i) INDEPENDENT REVIEW.—The Secretary shall subject to independent review—

(1) the assessment under subsection (c);

(2) the identification and documentation of long-term management strategies under subsection (d);

(3) the demonstration projects under subsection (e); and

(4) the analysis under subsection (f).

(j) REPORTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit to Congress an annual report that describes the results of carrying out this Act, including a synopsis of any independent review under subsection (I) and details of the manner and purposes for which funds are expended.

(2) PUBLIC ACCESS.—The Secretary shall facilitate public access to all information that results from carrying out this Act.

(k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act—

(A) \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2006; and

(B) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2010.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than 15 percent of amounts made available under paragraph (1) shall be used to pay the administrative costs of carrying out the program established under subsection (a).

(l) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—This Act and the authority provided by this Act terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Approved October 11, 2006.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 2720:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 109–341, Pt. 1 (Comm. on Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 152 (2006):

May 2, considered and passed House.

Sept. 29, considered and passed Senate.