

**§ 1475b. Volunteer authority****(a) In general**

The Secretary of the Interior may recruit, train, and accept, without regard to the civil service classification laws, rules, or regulations, the services of individuals, contributed without compensation as volunteers, for aiding in or facilitating the activities administered by the Secretary through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the United States Geological Survey, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Office of the Secretary.

**(b) Restrictions on activities of volunteers****(1) In general**

In accepting such services of individuals as volunteers, the Secretary shall not permit the use of volunteers in law enforcement work, in regulatory and enforcement work, in policy-making processes, or to displace any employee.

**(2) Private property**

No volunteer services authorized by this Act may be conducted on private property unless the officer or employee charged with supervising the volunteer obtains appropriate consent to enter the property from the property owner.

**(3) Hazardous duty**

The Secretary may accept the services of individuals in hazardous duty only upon a determination by the Secretary that such individuals are skilled in performing hazardous duty activities.

**(4) Supervision**

The Secretary shall ensure that an appropriate officer or employee of the United States provides adequate and appropriate supervision of each volunteer whose services the Secretary accepts.

**(c) Provision of services and costs**

The Secretary may provide for services and costs incidental to the utilization of volunteers, including transportation, supplies, uniforms, lodging, subsistence (without regard to place of residence), recruiting, training, supervision, and awards and recognition (including nominal cash awards).

**(d) Federal employment status of volunteers**

(1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a volunteer shall not be deemed a Federal employee and shall not be subject to the provisions of law relating to Federal employment, including those provisions relating to hours of work, rates of compensation, leave, unemployment compensation, and Federal employee benefits.

(2) Volunteers shall be deemed employees of the United States for the purposes of—

(A) the tort claims provisions of title 28;

(B) subchapter I of chapter 81 of title 5; and

(C) claims relating to damage to, or loss of, personal property of a volunteer incident to volunteer service, in which case the provisions of section 3721 of title 31 shall apply.

(3) Volunteers under this Act shall be subject to chapter 11 of title 18, unless the Secretary,

with the concurrence of the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, determines in writing published in the Federal Register that the provisions of that chapter, except section 201, shall not apply to the actions of a class or classes of volunteers who carry out only those duties or functions specified in the determination.

(Pub. L. 109–125, §3, Dec. 7, 2005, 119 Stat. 2544.)

**Editorial Notes**

## REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsecs. (b)(2) and (d)(3), is Pub. L. 109–125, Dec. 7, 2005, 119 Stat. 2544, known as the Department of the Interior Volunteer Recruitment Act of 2005, which enacted this section and provisions set out as notes under this section and section 1451 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 2005 Amendment note set out under section 1451 of this title and Tables.

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

## PURPOSE

Pub. L. 109–125, §2, Dec. 7, 2005, 119 Stat. 2544, provided that: “The purpose of this Act [enacting this section and provisions set out as a note under section 1451 of this title] is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to recruit and use volunteers to assist with, or facilitate, the programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the United States Geological Survey, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Office of the Secretary.”

**§ 1476. Elimination of oaths for written statements; discretion of Secretary of the Interior**

Written statement in public land matters within the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, heretofore required by law to be made under oath, need no longer be made under oath unless the Secretary of the Interior shall, in his discretion, so require.

(June 3, 1948, ch. 392, §1, 62 Stat. 301.)

**Editorial Notes**

## CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1211 of this title prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**§ 1476a. Unsworn written statements subject to penalties of presenting false claims**

Unsworn written statements made in public land matters within the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior shall remain subject to section 1001 of title 18.

(June 3, 1948, ch. 392, §2, 62 Stat. 301.)

**Editorial Notes**

## CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1212 of this title prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

“Section 1001 of title 18” substituted in text for “section 35(A) of the Criminal Code (35 Stat. 1095, 18 U.S.C. sec. 80), as amended” on authority of act June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 683, the first section of which enacted Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

EXEMPTION OF DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR FROM  
RESTRICTIONS ON NOTARY PUBLIC

Act June 3, 1948, ch. 392, §3, 62 Stat. 301, provided: "That part of section 558 of the Act of March 3, 1901, entitled 'An Act to establish a code of law for the District of Columbia' (31 Stat. 1279), as amended December 15, 1944 (58 Stat. 810, D.C. Code, 1951 edition, sec. 1-501 [now sec. 1-1201(a)]), which reads as follows: '*And provided further*, That no notary public shall be authorized to take acknowledgments, administer oaths, certify papers, or perform any official acts in connection with matters in which he is employed as counsel, attorney or agent or in which he may be in any way interested before any of the Departments aforesaid' shall not apply to matters before the Department of the Interior."

**§ 1477. Snow water supply forecasting**

**(a) Short title**

This section may be cited as the "Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Authorization Act".

**(b) Definition of program**

In this section, the term "program" means the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program established by subsection (c).

**(c) Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program**

**(1) Program establishment**

The Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program is hereby established within the Department of the Interior.

**(2) Program implementation**

To implement the program, the Secretary shall—

(A) develop the program framework in coordination with other Federal agencies pursuant to subsection (d), culminating in the report required under subsection (d)(3); and

(B) after submitting the report required by subsection (d)(3), implement activities to improve snowpack measurement in particular watersheds pursuant to subsection (e).

**(d) Development of program framework in coordination with other Federal agencies**

**(1) Snowpack measurement data**

When determining water supply forecasts or allocations to Federal water contractors, the Secretary, acting through the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, shall incorporate, to the greatest extent practicable, information from emerging technologies for snowpack measurement, such as—

(A) synthetic aperture radar;

(B) laser altimetry; and

(C) other emerging technologies that the Secretary determines are likely to provide more accurate or timely snowpack measurement data.

**(2) Coordination**

In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary shall coordinate data use and collection efforts with other Federal agencies that use or may benefit from the use of emerging technologies for snowpack measurement.

**(3) Emerging technologies report**

Not later than October 1, 2021, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that—

(A) summarizes the use of emerging technologies pursuant to this section;

(B) describes benefits derived from the use of technologies summarized under subparagraph (A) related to the environment and increased water supply reliability; and

(C) describes how Federal agencies will coordinate to implement emerging technologies.

**(e) Program implementation**

**(1) Activities implementing framework**

After submitting the report required under subsection (d)(3), the Secretary shall participate with program partners in implementing activities to improve snowpack measurement in particular watersheds.

**(2) Focus**

The program shall focus on activities that will maintain, establish, expand, or advance snowpack measurement consistent with the report required by subsection (d)(3), with an emphasis on—

(A) enhancing activities in river basins to achieve improved snow and water supply forecasting results;

(B) activities in river basins where snow water supply forecasting related activities described in this section are not occurring on December 27, 2020; and

(C) demonstrating or testing new, or improving existing, snow and water supply forecasting technology.

**(3) Information sharing**

The Secretary may provide information collected and analyzed under this section to program partners through appropriate mechanisms, including interagency agreements with Federal agencies, States, State agencies, or a combination thereof, leases, contracts, cooperative agreements, grants, loans, and memoranda of understanding.

**(4) Program partners**

Program partners with whom the Secretary enters into cooperative agreements pursuant to paragraph (5) may include water districts, irrigation districts, water associations, universities, State agencies, other Federal agencies, private sector entities, non-governmental organizations, and other entities, as determined by the Secretary.

**(5) Cooperative agreements**

The Secretary may—

(A) enter into cooperative agreements with program partners to allow the program to be administered efficiently and cost effectively through cost-sharing or by providing additional in-kind resources necessary for program implementation; and

(B) provide nonreimbursable matching funding for programmatic and operational activities under this section in consultation with program partners.

**(6) Environmental laws**

Nothing in this section shall modify any obligation of the Secretary to comply with applicable Federal and State environmental laws in carrying out this section.