

106TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 1761

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 28, 2000

Referred to the Committee on Resources

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## AN ACT

To direct the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Reclamation, to conserve and enhance the water supplies of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

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 “Lower Rio Grande Val-  
5       ley Water Resources Conservation and Improvement Act  
6       of 2000”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) STATE.—The term “State” means the  
4 Texas Water Development Board and any other au-  
5 thorized entity of the State of Texas.

6 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
7 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the  
8 Commissioner.

9 (3) COMMISSIONER.—The term “Commis-  
10 sioner” means the Commissioner of the Bureau of  
11 Reclamation.

12 (4) COUNTIES.—The term “counties” means  
13 the counties in the State of Texas in the Rio Grande  
14 Regional Water Planning Area known as Region  
15 “M” as designated by the Texas Water Development  
16 Board and the counties of Hudspeth and El Paso,  
17 Texas.

18 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

19 The Congress finds the following:

20 (1) Drought conditions over the last decade  
21 have made citizens of the Lower Rio Grande Valley  
22 region of Texas aware of the significant impacts a  
23 dwindling water supply can have on a region.

24 (2) As a result of the impacts, that region has  
25 devised an integrated water resource plan to meet

1 the critical water needs of the Lower Rio Grande  
2 Valley through the end of the year 2050.

3 (3) Implementation of an integrated water re-  
4 source plan to meet the critical water needs of the  
5 Lower Rio Grande Valley is in the national interest.

6 (4) The Congress should authorize and provide  
7 Federal technical and financial assistance to con-  
8 struct improved irrigation canal delivery systems to  
9 help meet the critical water needs of the Lower Rio  
10 Grande Valley through the end of the year 2050.

11 **SEC. 4. LOWER RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION AND**  
12 **IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.**

13 (a) The Secretary is authorized to undertake a pro-  
14 gram to improve the supply of water for the counties as  
15 provided in this Act.

16 (b) In cooperation with the State, water users in the  
17 counties, and other non-Federal entities, the Secretary  
18 shall conduct feasibility studies for the purpose of con-  
19 serving and transporting raw water, including the  
20 following—

- 21 (1) irrigation canals;
- 22 (2) pipelines;
- 23 (3) flow control structures;
- 24 (4) meters; and
- 25 (5) all associated appurtenances.

1       (c) If the Secretary determines that the following  
2 projects satisfy the eligibility criteria in subsection (d)  
3 (1)–(3), the Secretary, in cooperation with the State,  
4 water users in the counties, and other non-Federal enti-  
5 ties, is authorized to conduct engineering work, infrastruc-  
6 ture construction and improvements for the purpose of  
7 conserving and transporting raw water through the fol-  
8 lowing projects—

9           (1) in the Hidalgo County, Texas Irrigation  
10 District #1, a pipeline project identified in the  
11 Melden & Hunt, Inc. engineering study dated July  
12 6, 2000 as the Curry Main Pipeline Project;

13           (2) in the Cameron County, Texas La Feria Ir-  
14 rigation District #3, a distribution system improve-  
15 ment project identified by the 1993 engineering  
16 study by Sigler, Winston, Greenwood and Associates,  
17 Inc.;

18           (3) in the Cameron County, Texas Irrigation  
19 District #2 canal rehabilitation and pumping plant  
20 replacement as identified as Job Number 48–05540–  
21 002 in a report by Turner Collie & Braden, Inc.  
22 dated August 12, 1998; and

23           (4) in the Harlingen Irrigation District Cam-  
24 eron #1 Irrigation District a project of meter instal-  
25 lation and canal lining as identified in a proposal

1 submitted to the Texas Water Development Board  
2 dated April 28, 2000.

3 (d) PROJECT ELIGIBILITY.—(1) Within six months  
4 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in  
5 consultation with the State, shall develop criteria for de-  
6 termining eligible projects under this Act. Such criteria  
7 shall include, but need not be limited to the following  
8 requirements—

9 (A) the project plan includes an engineer's esti-  
10 mate of the amount of water to be conserved;

11 (B) the design for the project includes a cost of  
12 project to water saved ratio; and

13 (C) there is a cost sharing agreement in place  
14 between all relevant parties delineating the propor-  
15 tionate share of costs to be paid on an annual basis.

16 (2) Within one year of the date a project is submitted  
17 to the Secretary for approval, the Secretary shall deter-  
18 mine whether the project meets the criteria established  
19 pursuant to this section.

20 **SEC. 5. COST SHARING.**

21 The non-Federal share of the costs of any activity  
22 carried out under, or with assistance provided under, this  
23 Act shall be 50 percent. Not more than 40 percent of the  
24 costs of such an activity may be paid by the State and  
25 the remainder of the non-Federal share may include in-

1 kind contributions of goods and services, and funds pre-  
2 viously spent on feasibility and engineering studies.

3 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4       There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-  
5 retary to carry out this Act such sums as may be nec-  
6 essary, but not to exceed \$7,500,000 for the purposes of  
7 section 4(c).

      Passed the Senate October 27 (legislative day, Sep-  
tember 22), 2000.

Attest:

GARY SISCO,  
*Secretary.*