

**Statement of David Palumbo,  
Deputy Commissioner of Operations  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Before the  
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
On**

**S. 1242, Watershed Results Act; S. 2437, Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Reauthorization Act; S. 2753, Urban Canal Modernization Act; S. 3409, Lower Yellowstone River Native Fish Conservation Act; S. 3635, Fort Peck Water System Reauthorization Act; S. 3693, A bill to extend the authorization for a large-scale water recycling and reuse grant program; S. 3723, Western South Dakota Water Supply Project Feasibility Act; S. 3725, Lewis & Clark Regional Water System Expansion Feasibility Act; S. 3732, Water Security and Drought Resilience Act; S. 3736, A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a project to supply municipal, rural, and industrial water to the Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System service area in the States of South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota, and for other purposes; S. 3737, Growing Resilient Operations from Water Saving and Municipal-Agricultural Reciprocally-beneficial Transactions (GROW SMART) Act; S. 3738, Making Our communities Resilient through Enhancing Water for Agriculture, Technology, the Environment, and Residences (MORE WATER) Act; S. 3743, A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a feasibility study on a selective water withdrawal system at Glen Canyon Dam, and for other purposes; S. 3792, Water Project Navigators Act; S. 4040, Dakota Water Resources Act Amendments of 2026**

**March 17, 2026**

Chair Hoeven, Ranking Member Wyden, and members of the Subcommittee, I am David Palumbo, Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) within the Department of the Interior (Department). Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this Committee to discuss these bills.

**S. 1242, Watershed Results Act**

Through its WaterSMART and Cooperative Watershed Management programs, the Bureau of Reclamation provides funding to watershed groups to help address local water management needs. Since 2017, Reclamation has provided cost-shared financial assistance to watershed groups to implement watershed management projects. These on-the-ground projects, collaboratively developed by members of a watershed group, address critical water supply and quality issues, helping water users meet competing demands and avoid conflicts over water.

If enacted, S. 1242 would establish a new Reclamation watershed pilot program to meet specific watershed goals, such as realizing increases in water quantity or improvements to the quality of aquatic habitats. The bill authorizes \$17 million in annual appropriations through 2031, which

may be used to support up to five pilot projects. Each project would follow a five-year plan that must incorporate watershed analytics and follow a multi-agency funding strategy that utilizes a pay-for-performance contract to incentivize results.

While the Department appreciates the goal of this bill, the desired outcomes are already met through existing programs and opportunities, such as Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program and Enhanced Water Resources Projects. In addition, S. 1242 includes a 75 percent federal cost share and authorizes additional federal spending.

### **S. 2437, Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Reauthorization Act**

Reclamation's Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program (SWSFP) was authorized in 2020. Reclamation implements SWSFP on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior to enhance snow monitoring to improve water supply forecasting for the benefit of water management. The original program achieved this objective in four ways: 1) Demonstrating and/or deploying emerging snow monitoring technologies; 2) Demonstrating and/or deploying improvements to existing snow monitoring technologies; 3) Deploying existing snow monitoring technologies in less covered areas; and 4) Improving the use of snow monitoring data to enhance water supply forecasts. SWSFP has worked with partners on a variety of projects using ground-based technologies, aircraft and satellite-based technologies, and advanced modeling. Recent efforts have included the use of data generated through aerial LiDAR snow surveys. Reclamation has observed that the application of multiple complementary technologies can result in successful outcomes for improving forecasting for water management. For example, advanced modeling can be done across the west, but confidence in results increase dramatically when in-situ and remote measurements are integrated. Airborne LiDAR surveys are known for high accuracy, but measurements are infrequent due to the logistics of deploying aircraft. The value of these surveys is increased when combined with ground or space-based measurements and modeling that provides higher frequency snowpack measurements or estimates. Due to its role in managing water supply reservoirs, hydropower facilities, and water distribution systems, Reclamation has a strong interest in obtaining accurate snow monitoring and forecasting across the West.

S. 2437 would reauthorize and expand, but also could restrict, the program for fiscal years 2027 through 2031. For example, Reclamation now uses commercially available technologies where that is the best way to advance snow water supply forecasting. The bill, as introduced, would direct the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation, to incorporate "to the greatest extent practicable" the use of information from commercially available technologies including airborne snow surveys and associated modeling when determining water supply forecasts or allocations to Federal water contractors, rather than "emerging technologies" as provided in the original authorization. The bill would also allow for consideration of other technologies as there is continued need for on-the-ground snow measurements, satellite-derived earth observations, and technologies that can integrate a range of different sources of snow measurements in water supply forecasting. The bill would increase the authorized level of appropriations from a total of \$15 million for fiscal years 2022 through 2026 to a total of \$32.5 million for fiscal years 2027 to 2031, at \$6.5 million annually.

The bill would increase the authorized annual level of federal spending by Reclamation, and does not sufficiently account for related efforts undertaken by other Federal agencies.

### **S. 2753, Urban Canal Modernization Act**

At the time of their construction, the canals managed by Reclamation were mostly in relatively unpopulated areas in the western United States. Since then, some of these canals have been surrounded by urban development, and could potentially pose a risk to populated areas in the event of failure. Reclamation currently classifies and monitors approximately 880 miles of such canals in its Urban Canal Hazard Program.

S. 2753 would provide that 35 percent of the cost of extraordinary maintenance on defined reaches of canals are non-reimbursable. This provision applies to extraordinary maintenance work on “urban canals of concern,” which are canals Reclamation designates as “urban canal reaches” for its emergency risk management purposes, where there is a population at risk of more than 100 people. The bill does not apply to emergency extraordinary maintenance on the same canal reaches, leaving those instances to the existing emergency extraordinary maintenance reimbursement determinations. This would reduce operating partners’ maintenance costs for these urban canals, which could encourage preventative maintenance, by passing on eligible project costs to Reclamation for extraordinary maintenance work that would have otherwise been funded by the project beneficiaries.

Additionally, section 2(e) would allow any reimbursable funds provided under S. 2753 to serve as a non-federal source of funds for the purposes of any cost-sharing requirement for a federal grant. This language may lead to some confusion with water managers. Specifically, this section may limit the amount of funding made available under section 9603 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Title XI, Subtitle F, Public Law 111-11) for extraordinary operations and maintenance that could be applied as a non-federal match.

Reclamation works collaboratively with its partners to ensure the safe and exceptional stewardship of our infrastructure, and recognizes the additional risk that canals may pose in populated areas. While some operating partners may face high costs to maintain their canals, it is not apparent that the best way to address this concern would be to expand the non-reimbursable share of the cost of this work.

### **S. 3409, Lower Yellowstone River Native Fish Conservation Act**

Reclamation’s Lower Yellowstone Project (LYP) is 58,000-acre irrigation project located in eastern Montana and western North Dakota. The project is operated and maintained by the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation District Board of Control under contract with Reclamation. The Lower Yellowstone Project includes the Intake Diversion Dam, a screened headworks structure, 71 miles of main canal, 225 miles of laterals and 118 miles of drains, three pumping plants on the Main Canal, four supplemental pumps on the Yellowstone River and one supplemental pump on the Missouri River.

Since the early 2000s, Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have been working cooperatively as joint lead agencies to address threats to pallid sturgeon associated with Reclamation's LYP in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). Entrainment protection was completed in 2012 with the construction of a new screened headworks structure and passage was established with the completion of the Intake Bypass Channel in 2022. The adaptive management and monitoring program (AMMP) kicked off in the spring of 2022, which includes monitoring of established biological and hydraulic criteria. Monitoring efforts begin May 1st and continue until September 30th each year. Reclamation has agreed to pay for Operations, Maintenance & Replacement (OM&R) for the Intake Bypass Channel for the first eight years of operation during the AMMP period (2022 – 2029). This OM&R funding approach was established primarily because the Intake Bypass Channel is a novel fish passage concept and as a result there are anticipated to be several design iterations which require field refinements, including those related to erosion. It will likely take several more years of adjustments to get the channel stabilized and functioning as required. The intent of the design changes and repairs is to ensure the long-term viability of the Intake Bypass Channel and compliance with Endangered Species Act (ESA) obligations. Ensuring sufficient fish passage enables migration and spawning further upstream, improves survival and supports increased recruitment of the endangered pallid sturgeon.

The Lower Yellowstone Intake Diversion Fish Passage Project was completed at federal expense, with no capital construction obligations on the irrigators, to maintain irrigation deliveries from the Yellowstone River, where ESA-listed sturgeon are present. To ensure continued ability to irrigate from the Lower Yellowstone Project, the bypass feature must be operated and maintained by project beneficiaries consistent with the LYP and bypass channel authorization.

S. 3409 would reaffirm federal ownership and responsibility for the Lower Yellowstone Fish Bypass Channel in perpetuity. The net impact of this provision would be to shift long-term operating responsibility from the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation District to Reclamation and require Reclamation to continue to fund OM&R beyond the currently agreed to AMMP Period concluding in 2029. S. 3409 also prohibits transferring, delegating, or assigning any financial, operational, or maintenance responsibilities for the bypass to any non-federal entity, including the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation District. The bill ensures that Reclamation and the Service would continue to be exclusively responsible for meeting ESA requirements for the bypass channel and pallid sturgeon and that conservation efforts are coordinated with state agencies without burdening non-federal irrigation operations. Finally, the legislation authorizes \$1 million annually beginning in FY2026.

Should the Subcommittee advance S. 3409, we would like to work with the Sponsor to ensure funding levels are consistent with the President's budget and to address some technical concerns, including clarifying that the Intake Diversion Dam is not federally operated as the bill currently states. Additionally, the Department does not support a statutory requirement to continue to fund OM&R beyond the currently agreed to AMMP Period concluding in 2029.

### **S. 3635, Fort Peck Water System Reauthorization Act**

The Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-382) authorized the development of the interconnected Montana Assiniboine and Sioux Rural Water System and the Dry Prairie Rural Water System in northeastern Montana. Together, these systems form the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System project, which is intended to treat and deliver water from the Missouri River to the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes at Fort Peck Reservation, local communities, and rural customers, and will provide potable water to an estimated population of 27,500 upon completion. Once project assets or segments are constructed, the operation, maintenance, and replacement costs for the non-Tribal portion of the system will be funded by the Dry Prairie Rural Water System without federal assistance. Operation, maintenance, and replacement costs for the Tribal portion of the system will be funded through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Authorization of appropriations has been extended several times and are currently authorized through fiscal year 2026. Although the project is expected to be complete before the end of fiscal year 2026, proponents are seeking an extension of the project's authorization to allow for the full processing of construction-related payments.

S. 3635 would reauthorize the project for an additional two years through 2028. Reclamation is committed to continuing its work with project proponents to define the costs and scope of the project to accurately account for its funding through its completion.

### **S. 3693, Large-Scale Water Recycling Reauthorization Act**

Water recycling is a valuable tool for maximizing the available water supplies in the west. Authorized in 2021, Reclamation's Large-Scale Water Recycling Program has provided funding to water recycling projects in Reclamation states as part of its WaterSMART Program. Project funding has been provided at a 25 percent federal cost share with no per-project maximum to projects that have a total project cost greater than or equal to \$500 million. These large-scale projects play an important role in helping communities develop reliable water supplies by turning unusable water sources into a new sources of water supply that are less vulnerable to drought.

S. 3693 would reauthorize the Large-Scale Water Recycling Program for an additional five years. S. 3693 would provide Reclamation additional time to fully implement this program.

### **S. 3723, Western South Dakota Water Supply Project Feasibility Study Act**

Western South Dakota is currently experiencing rapid growth in population and water needs. Concerns about future water supplies prompted the creation of the Western Dakota Regional Water System (WDRWS) in September 2021 to evaluate and plan for the long-term water needs of western South Dakota. The stated goal of WDRWS is to ensure reliable ongoing access to drinking water in western South Dakota that accounts for future population growth and drought conditions.

S. 3723 authorizes appropriations of \$10 million for a feasibility study with a federal share not exceeding 50 percent. The study would evaluate the benefits and costs of options to expand the existing project.

## **S. 3725, Lewis & Clark Project Rural Water Project Expansion Feasibility Study Act**

The Lewis and Clark Regional Water System (LCRWS) is a non-profit entity that provides reliable drinking water to 20 member cities and rural water systems in southeast South Dakota, northwest Iowa, and southwest Minnesota. The LCRWS was incorporated in 1990 and authorized by Congress in 2000. Today, the system draws from the Missouri River aquifer through wells and pipelines to provide water to over 350,000 people, with ongoing expansions and planning efforts for future growth utilizing federal, state, and local funding over several decades.

Future plans for the LCRWS include increasing its original capacity of 23.5 million-gallons-per-day (MGD) to 45 MGD by 2028, with a future goal of providing 60 MGD of water throughout the region. Reclamation's involvement with LCRWS includes managing federal funds, providing technical analysis and guidance, and ensuring the project aligns with federal law, making it an example of federal-local partnership for water infrastructure.

S. 3725 authorizes appropriations of \$10 million for the feasibility study with a federal share not exceeding 50 percent. The study would evaluate the benefits and costs of options to expand the existing project. Since all 20 city and rural water system members of the LCRWS entity are connected to the project as of October 2024, the study would need to clearly identify the scope and scale of any proposed expansions.

## **S. 3732, Water Security and Drought Resilience Act**

S. 3732 would expand federal funding eligibility for certain water storage projects. The bill also authorizes grant funding for natural water retention and release projects, among other provisions.

Section 2 of the legislation authorizes a specific water storage project in Arizona, the Verde Reservoirs Sediment Mitigation Project, to be eligible for planning, design, and construction funding under the WIIN Act, notwithstanding the WIIN Act's feasibility and construction deadlines. To be eligible for construction funding, certain requirements must be met, including a determination by the Secretary that the recommended project is feasible. While section 2 requires funding to be distributed among projects in multiple Reclamation states, only one project, the Verde Reservoirs Sediment Mitigation Project, meets the bill's funding requirements. Prior funding allocations under Section 4007 of the WIIN Act have already been distributed to other projects in multiple Reclamation states. This project should be viewed as part of a larger legislative package to address drought and promote water security in the Colorado River Basin, while enabling Reclamation to better meet trust obligations to tribes.

Section 3 of the bill reauthorizes and expands the Small Storage Program for an additional five years, and directs the Secretary to distribute grants across multiple Reclamation states. The required distribution of grant awards could run counter to the statutorily required competitive nature of the program. In addition, the program authority and the authorization of appropriations are not aligned in terms of expiration date.

Section 4 of S. 3732 creates a new discretionary grant program for natural water retention and release projects with a federal cost share of up to 90 percent of the total cost of the project. The section also authorizes appropriations of \$15 million per year from FY 2027 through FY 2031, for a total of \$90 million. It is unclear whether the goal of the bill is consistent with a competitive grant program. This bill's focus on new grant programs would increase federal spending with a limited range of impact.

**S. 3736, A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a project to supply municipal, rural, and industrial water to the Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System service area in the States of South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota, and for other purposes**

The Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System is a proposed water system that would bring water to South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, and the Santee Reservation of the Santee Sioux Tribe, which shares a border with South Dakota. Over 50 independent water providers are currently pursuing this project, which aims to improve community resilience, address health and safety concerns with water scarcity and quality, support new population and economic development, and provide agricultural sustainability for the region.

S. 3736 authorizes appropriations of \$10 million for a feasibility study with a federal share not exceeding 50 percent. The study would evaluate the benefits and costs of options to expand the existing project.

**S. 3737, GROW SMART Act**

S. 3737 amends Title II of the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 (43 U.S.C. 2221) by authorizing Reclamation to fund the development of voluntary agricultural water efficiency projects with a stated goal of keeping agricultural land in production. Specifically, the bill authorizes \$5 million per year in appropriations for fiscal years 2028 through 2034 for Reclamation to fund the projects. In addition, S. 3737 provides for federal cost sharing, not to exceed 75 percent of the cost of project activities, and also authorizes the Secretary to waive the non-Federal share of the cost for Tribal entities.

The Administration appreciates the Sponsor's interest in supporting new efforts to address drought conditions and keeping agricultural land in production. However, the projects and activities specified in S. 3737 are beyond the scope of Reclamation's core mission of developing, managing, and protecting water and related resources in the American west.

**S. 3738, MORE WATER Act**

S. 3738 reauthorizes several expiring Reclamation programs and authorizes a new program supporting federal and non-federal water conveyance projects. The bill also proposes offsets for the new program and program reauthorizations directed by the bill by extending voluntary repayment of capital debts and establishing a process to deauthorize projects that have not received funding in the past seven years.

Reclamation programs reauthorized by S. 3738 include the Large-Scale Water Recycling program from Section 40905 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the water recycling program from Sec. 4009(c) of the Water Infrastructure Investments for the Nation (WIIN) Act, and environmental restoration from Sec. 4010 of the WIIN Act. The reauthorization of Large-Scale Water Recycling also includes new language giving Reclamation the authority to fund feasibility studies. As currently written, the bureau may still be constrained under this bill by the requirements of section 40905(d) of the IIJA, which requires the Secretary to concur with a feasibility study before providing grants. It is unclear whether this could be interpreted as requiring a feasibility study before Reclamation can fund feasibility studies.

The reauthorization of the water recycling program and environmental restoration program under the bill would extend the WIIN Act authority for water recycling projects eligible under section 4009(c), but not desalination projects eligible under section 4009(a). The reauthorization of the water recycling program also includes a significant increase to the per-project federal funding cap, and requires the cap to be adjusted for inflation on an annual basis.

The new program for federal and non-federal water conveyance projects established by S. 3738 would authorize the issuance of grants for up to 50 percent of project costs, with an authorized appropriations level of \$500 million over five years. In addition, section 3(e) of the bill establishes federal cost-share requirements for the new program, determined by the costs of a project. For half of the projects authorized by the program that are under \$800 million in costs, all federal funding may be used for the water supply benefit of the project. For the other half of projects costing less than \$800 million, and all projects over \$800 million in costs, a federal funding share of up to 30 percent of the project cost may be used for water supply benefits, and federal funding of up to 20 percent of the project's costs may be used for environmental benefits. S. 3738 further prohibits the Secretary from imposing a total dollar cap for the funding of conveyance projects under the section.

Reclamation has traditionally operated under a "beneficiary pays" model, and converting more funding to grants, as directed by the bill, would be a departure from this approach, which would result in federal taxpayers paying for benefits largely limited to beneficiaries in specific localities. The new conveyance program would also overlap with and expand on existing programs, as it grants Reclamation the ability to fund any new conveyance project under \$5 billion in a Reclamation state. This would be a significant expansion of Reclamation's portfolio. The new program would also allow other federal funding, including funds from Reclamation's Aging Infrastructure Account (AIA), to be used towards the non-federal cost share, which would alter existing programs by allowing applicants to use AIA funding to compete for grant funding.

The Department appreciates the Sponsor's interest in Reclamation's work across the west, but cannot support S. 3738, as it would significantly increase the size and scope of Reclamation's responsibilities to the detriment of the American taxpayer. Moving to a grants-based funding approach also runs counter to the "beneficiary pays" framework, since the benefits will be largely focused on the water users in localities served by the project.

**S. 3743, A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a feasibility study on a selective water withdrawal system at Glen Canyon Dam, and for other purposes**

Glen Canyon Dam, located near the city of Page in northern Arizona, was constructed to harness the power of the Colorado River to provide for the water and power needs of millions of people in the west. At 710 feet in height, Glen Canyon Dam is the second highest concrete-arch dam in the United States, second only to Hoover Dam, which stands at 726 feet. The 25.16 million acre-feet of water storage capacity in Lake Powell, created by Glen Canyon Dam, provides additional water storage for the Colorado River System. This stored water has made it possible to successfully weather extended dry periods by sustaining the needs of cities, industries, and agriculture throughout the region.

Hydroelectric power produced by the dam's eight generators helps meet the electrical needs of the west's rapidly growing population. With a total capacity of 1,320 megawatts, the Glen Canyon Powerplant produces around five billion kilowatt-hours of hydroelectric power annually, which is distributed by the Western Area Power Administration to Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and Nebraska. In addition, revenues from production of hydropower help fund many important environmental compliance programs associated with the Glen and Grand Canyons.

S. 3743 would authorize Reclamation to conduct a feasibility study into whether a selective water withdrawal system or other potential options at Glen Canyon Dam could improve hydropower generation during cold water releases, and if the system could help reduce the risk of invasive species entrainment. The bill directs implementation of a preferred solution, if determined to be feasible under existing Reclamation laws, which may – or may not – be the best solution when viewed from a national perspective.

Reclamation notes that under the Glen Canyon Dam Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan, cold water releases from Lake Powell have already been conducted as a proactive measure to disrupt the establishment of nonnative fish that pose a danger to the threatened humpback chub. This option is a short-term tool to use for environmental compliance purposes while Reclamation pursues longer-term solutions, including the slough modification project completed last year.

The Administration supports the goal of S. 3743 to explore opportunities to improve hydropower and reduce invasive species entrainment in the Colorado River Basin, but believes that funds provided for such a study should be fully reimbursable rather than borne by the taxpayers.

**S. 3792, Water Project Navigators Act**

S. 3792 directs the Secretary to establish a program that funds “navigator” positions at partner non-federal organizations, including state and local governments, Tribes, special districts, and non-governmental organizations, to help develop and implement multi-benefit water projects. The bill authorizes five years of funding for staffing these positions placed at partner organizations, but does not specify the terms for employment of the navigator positions. Multi-benefit projects are defined by the bill as proposals to enhance the overall resilience of water

supplies to climate-related impacts and to provide benefits to communities and ecosystems, including conserving or enhancing fish and wildlife habitat and promoting rural economic development.

In addition, S. 3792 grants the Secretary authority to award grants or cooperative agreements to eligible entities to support the creation or continuation of multi-benefit water project navigator positions. The grants or cooperative agreements are limited to a period of three years, but may be extended for an additional two years at the Secretary's discretion. The duties of the navigator positions defined by the bill include grant writing, project management, technical assistance, and any other necessary activities.

S. 3792 also provides that the federal share of the cost of an activity awarded a grant or cooperative agreement under this program shall not exceed 75 percent, but allows the Secretary of the Interior to reduce or waive the non-federal share of the cost in some cases. The bill prioritizes applications from eligible entities that would directly serve Indian Tribes, disadvantaged communities, rural communities, and other eligible entities with limited resources and capacity to develop multi-benefit water projects. In addition, S. 3792 requires the Secretary, within five years of enactment, to submit to Congress a report with an analysis of the multiple benefits advanced under the program. Lastly, the bill authorizes \$15 million in funding annually between fiscal years 2027 and 2032.

Congress has already provided the authority to address these issues through the strengthening of the WaterSMART program. As such, the Department encourages the Sponsor to continue working with the Department on increasing the effectiveness of existing programs and expanding the potential applicant pool.

#### **S. 4040, Dakota Water Resources Act Amendments of 2026**

The Garrison Diversion Unit originally authorized in 1965, amended in 1986 by the Garrison Reformulation Act, and again in 2000 by the Dakotas Water Resource Act (DWRA), is associated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Garrison Dam of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program. The Garrison Diversion Unit originally focused primarily on irrigation development as part of compensation to the State of North Dakota (State) for the loss of 550,000 acres of Missouri River bottom land due to the construction of Garrison Dam and Oahe Dam, that also included the inundation of a significant amount of land within the Fort Berthold and the Standing Rock Indian Reservations, forcing several Tribal communities to move.

However, the Garrison Diversion Unit faced numerous issues and challenges, resulting in repeated modification of the project, and in 2000, the DWRA deauthorized all but approximately 75,000 acres of the irrigation originally included in the project and increased construction ceilings for Tribal and non-Tribal Municipal, Rural, and Industrial (MR&I) water supplies. Currently the Garrison Diversion Unit is a multipurpose project principally providing Tribal and non-Tribal MR&I water supply projects along with fish and wildlife, recreation, and flood control benefits in the State of North Dakota.

S. 4040 would authorize additional appropriations for several sections of the Garrison Diversion Unit, primarily to support drinking water systems within the State. The bill would authorize an additional \$637 million (indexed) for the State Municipal, Rural and Industrial (MR&I) system for the Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) Project, the Eastern North Dakota Alternate Water Supply (ENDAWS) Project, the Southwest Pipeline Project, as well as \$63 million for various other North Dakota rural water districts throughout the State. The bill would also authorize \$743 million (indexed) for Tribal rural water system construction and for the water systems within the Fort Totten Indian Reservation, the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation, and the Lake Traverse Indian Reservation. Finally, this Act would further authorize an additional \$50 million for the Natural Resources Trust fund.

The Department supports the bill's goal of furthering reliable access to clean water for rural and Tribal communities, but notes that S. 4040 would increase the authorization of appropriations for several parts of the Garrison Diversion Unit, Missouri River Basin project. Should the Subcommittee advance this bill, we would like to work with the Sponsor to address technical issues.