

Sen. Bingaman's "SECURE Water Act" – Summary of Provisions (9-25-07 Draft)
(Science and Engineering to Comprehensively Understand & Responsibly Enhance Water Act)

Purpose: To increase water use efficiency; to expand data acquisition & analysis of the Nation's water resources to improve its management; and to enhance the understanding of climate change impacts on water availability and energy production in the U.S. The SECURE Water Act consists of the following specific activities:

- Reclamation Climate Change Adaptation Program – Reclamation is to assess the risks of climate change to water resources in its service area and develop strategies and conduct feasibility studies to address water shortages, conflicts & other impacts to water users and the environment.
- Reclamation Water Management Improvement – Reclamation may provide financial assistance to States, Tribes, & local entities to construct improvements or take actions to increase water-use efficiency to address drought, climate change, or other water-related crises.
- Hydroelectric Power Assessment – The Secretary of Energy & the Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs) are to assess the effects of climate change on the water available for facilities producing hydropower marketed by the PMAs.
- Climate Change & Water Intra-Governmental (I-G) Panel – The Interior Secretary is to establish an I-G Panel to review the science on climate change and water, and develop strategies to better forecast impacts to water availability. The Secretary may fund demonstration projects to help implement the strategies.
- USGS Water Data Enhancement & Planning –
 - USGS, consistent with National Research Council (NRC) recommendations, is to expand the National Streamflow Information Program in accordance with specific objectives--e.g., establishing and maintaining a minimum of 4,700 measuring sites over the next 10 years.
 - USGS is to work with federal, state, and local entities to implement a systematic groundwater monitoring program for major aquifer systems in the U.S., and to support the Groundwater Climate Response Network.
 - USGS is directed to work with appropriate state and local entities to conduct a study identifying significant brackish aquifers in the U.S.
 - The Secretary may provide grants to develop new methods & technologies to estimate or measure water resources data in a cost-efficient manner.
- National Water Use & Availability Assessment Program – USGS, consistent with NRC recommendations, is to implement a Program to provide better information on water resources in the U.S.; identify trends in use & availability; and help forecast water availability for future needs. USGS is also to maintain a national inventory on water and provide grants to States to enable locally-generated data to be integrated with national datasets.