

HR 5633

Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Native Americans

Introduced: Jul 6, 2016

Current Status: Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Unanimous Consent.

Latest Action: Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Unanimous Consent. (Nov 16, 2016)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/5633>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Zinke, Ryan K. [R-MT-At Large]

Party: Republican • **State:** MT • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Natural Resources Committee	House	Discharged from	Nov 16, 2016

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Native Americans

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 S 612	Related bill	Dec 16, 2016: Became Public Law No: 114-322.
114 S 2848	Related bill	Sep 19, 2016: Held at the desk.
114 S 1125	Related bill	Feb 3, 2016: Committee on Indian Affairs. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.

Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act

This bill authorizes, ratifies, and confirms the water rights compact between the Blackfeet Tribe and Montana dated April 15, 2009, as modified to be consistent with this bill.

The tribe and the Fort Belknap Indian Community must agree on their Milk River water rights.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) must: (1) enter into at least one water delivery contract with the Blackfeet Tribe for water from the St. Mary River water right, (2) review the final project design of the Swiftcurrent Creek Bank Stabilization Project and work with the tribe to carry out the project, and (3) carry out specified maintenance projects.

The tribe must grant the United States certain easements and rights-of-way.

The USBR is granted exclusive jurisdiction to authorize the development of St. Mary Unit hydroelectric power. The tribe is granted the exclusive right to develop and market such power.

Interior must allocate water stored in Lake Elwell for the tribe.

Ownership of Birch Creek water delivery facilities is transferred to the tribe.

The tribe must establish a tribal water code, subject to Interior approval.

The water rights of the tribe within the Lewis and Clark National Forest and Glacier National Park are confirmed.

The tribe and the United States must waive certain claims to water rights.

The tribe must: (1) waive claims against the United States regarding specified land and facilities, and (2) withdraw objections to U.S. water rights claims for the benefit of the Milk River Project.

The provisions of this bill expire and related actions and agreements are void if Interior does not publish specified findings or appropriations are not made.

Actions Timeline

- **Nov 16, 2016:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Nov 16, 2016:** Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans Discharged.
- **Nov 16, 2016:** Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Unanimous Consent.
- **Nov 15, 2016:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Jul 11, 2016:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans.
- **Jul 6, 2016:** Introduced in House
- **Jul 6, 2016:** Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.