

S 714

Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Phase III Act of 2017

Congress: 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Water Resources Development

Introduced: Mar 23, 2017

Current Status: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 143.

Latest Action: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 143. (Jun 13, 2017)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/714>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Cantwell, Maria [D-WA]

Party: Democratic • **State:** WA • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (1 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Murray, Patty [D-WA]	D · WA		Mar 23, 2017

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Energy and Natural Resources Committee	Senate	Reported By	Jun 13, 2017

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Water Resources Development

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
115 S 1460	Related bill	Sep 19, 2017: Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 115-485.

(This measure has not been amended since it was introduced. The summary has been expanded because action occurred on the measure.)

Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Phase III Act of 2017

(Sec. 2) This bill expands the purposes of the Yakima River Basin Water Conservation Program to include:

- protection, mitigation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife and the recovery and maintenance of self-sustaining harvestable populations of fish and other aquatic life, both anadromous and resident species, throughout their historic distribution range in the Yakima River Basin;
- improving the reliability of municipal, industrial, and domestic water supply and use purposes, especially during drought years;
- implementation of the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan to realize water savings of not less than 85,000 acre feet, in addition to the 165,000 acre feet of water savings targeted through the Basin Conservation Program, as authorized on October 31, 1994;
- encouraging an increase in the use of water transfers, leasing, markets, and other voluntary transactions among public and private entities to enhance water management in the Yakima River Basin;
- improving the resilience of the ecosystems, economies, and communities in the Basin as they face drought and other changes; and
- authorizing and implementing the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan as Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project.

The bill defines "Integrated Plan" and "Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Plan" as the plan and activities authorized by the Yakima River Basin Enhancement Project Phase III Act of 2015 to be carried out in cooperation with, and in addition to, activities of the state of Washington and the Yakama Nation.

(Sec. 3) The bill directs the Conservation Advisory Group to provide recommendations to advance the purposes and programs of the Yakima River Basin Enhancement Project. Federal and state governments may fund up to the 17.5% of the local cost share of the Basin Conservation Program in exchange for the long-term use of the conserved water. The bill also allows water acquisition efforts to continue as needed to provide water to be used by the Yakima Project Manager for instream flow purposes and to allow voluntary water acquisitions to provide improved instream flows for anadromous and resident fish and other aquatic life.

(Sec. 4) The bill increases funding for: (1) the Wapato Irrigation Project, (2) development of additional storage capacity at Lake Cle Elum, (3) the Interim Comprehensive Basin Operating Plan, and (4) environmental compliance activities in the Yakima River.

The Yakima Indian Nation is redesignated as the Yakama Nation.

The Department of the Interior may conduct studies to evaluate measures to further Yakima Project purposes on tributaries to the Yakima River.

(Sec. 5) The bill directs Interior to:

- implement the Integrated Plan as Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project, subject to

feasibility studies, environmental reviews, cost-benefit analyses, and available appropriations;

- implement an initial development phase of the Integrated Plan and develop plans for the intermediate and final development phases of the Integrated Plan;
- complete upstream and downstream fish passage facilities at Cle Elum Reservoir and another Yakima Project reservoir;
- negotiate long-term agreements for a pump plan and associated facilities to access and deliver inactive storage at Kachess Reservoir and a conveyance system to allow water transfers from Keechelus Reservoir to Kachess Reservoir ("K to K Pipeline");
- participate in, provide funding for, and accept non-federal financing for water conservation projects intended to conserve 85,000 acre feet of water and for aquifer storage and recovery projects;
- conduct studies, feasibility analyses and environmental reviews of fish passage, water supply, conservation, habitat restoration projects, and other alternatives for the initial and future phases of the Integrated Plan;
- coordinate with and assist the state of Washington in implementing a robust water market to enhance water management in the Yakima River Basin;
- enter into cooperative agreements with, or make grants to, the Yakama Nation, the state of Washington, or other entities subject to a 50% non-federal cost-sharing requirement; and
- retain authority and discretion over the management of project supplies to optimize operational use and flexibility to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and treaty rights of the Yakama Nation.

Interior, in conjunction with the state of Washington and in consultation with the Yakama Nation, must submit to specified congressional committees, not later than five years after the enactment of this bill, a progress report on the development and implementation of the Integrated Plan.

Actions Timeline

- **Jun 13, 2017:** Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Reported by Senator Murkowski without amendment. With written report No. 115-107.
- **Jun 13, 2017:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 143.
- **Mar 30, 2017:** Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.
- **Mar 23, 2017:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 23, 2017:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.