

TITLE II--VERDE RIVER BASIN
PARTNERSHIP

SEC. 201. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to authorize assistance for a collaborative and science-based water resource planning and management partnership for the Verde River Basin in the State of Arizona, consisting of members that represent--

- (1) Federal, State, and local agencies; and
- (2) economic, environmental, and community water interests in the Verde River Basin.

SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

- (1) DIRECTOR.--The term ``Director'' means the Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources.
- (2) PARTNERSHIP.--The term ``Partnership'' means the Verde River Basin Partnership.
- (3) PLAN.--The term ``plan'' means the plan for the Verde River Basin required by section 204(a)(1).
- (4) SECRETARY.--The term ``Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture.
- (5) STATE.--The term ``State'' means the State of Arizona.
- (6) VERDE RIVER BASIN.--The term ``Verde River Basin'' means the land area designated by the Arizona Department of Water Resources as encompassing surface water and ground-water resources, including drainage and recharge areas with a hydrologic connection to the Verde River.
- (7) WATER BUDGET.--The term ``water budget'' means the accounting of--
 - (A) the quantities of water leaving the Verde River Basin--
 - (i) as discharge to the Verde River and tributaries;
 - (ii) as subsurface outflow;
 - (iii) as evapotranspiration by riparian vegetation;
 - (iv) as surface evaporation;
 - (v) for agricultural use; and
 - (vi) for human consumption; and
 - (B) the quantities of water replenishing the Verde River Basin by precipitation, infiltration, and subsurface inflows.

SEC. 203. VERDE RIVER BASIN PARTNERSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.--The Secretary may participate in the establishment of a partnership, to be known as the ``Verde River Basin Partnership'', made up of Federal, State, local governments, and other entities with responsibilities and expertise in water to coordinate and cooperate in the identification and implementation of comprehensive science-based policies, projects, and management activities relating to the Verde River Basin.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.--On establishment of the Partnership, there are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior such sums as are necessary to carry out the activities of the Partnership for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2010.

SEC. 204. VERDE RIVER BASIN STUDIES.

(a) STUDIES.--

(1) IN GENERAL.--The Partnership shall prepare a plan for conducting water resource studies in the Verde River Basin that identifies--

(A) the primary study objectives to fulfill water resource planning and management needs for the Verde River Basin; and

(B) the water resource studies, hydrologic models, surface and groundwater monitoring networks, and other analytical tools helpful in the identification of long-term water supply management options within the Verde River Basin.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.--At a minimum, the plan shall--

(A) include a list of specific studies and analyses that are needed to support Partnership planning and management decisions;

(B) identify any ongoing or completed water resource or riparian studies that are relevant to water resource planning and management for the Verde River Basin;

(C) describe the estimated cost and duration of the proposed studies and analyses; and

(D) designate as a study priority the compilation of a water budget analysis for the Verde Valley.

(b) VERDE VALLEY WATER BUDGET ANALYSIS.--

(1) IN GENERAL.--Subject to the availability of appropriations, not later than 14 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the United States Geological Survey, in cooperation with the Director, shall prepare and submit to the Partnership a report that provides a water budget analysis of the portion of the Verde River Basin within the Verde Valley.

(2) COMPONENTS.--The report submitted under paragraph

(1) shall include--

(A) a summary of the information available on the hydrologic flow regime for the portion of the Middle Verde River from the Clarkdale streamgauging station to the city of Camp Verde at United States Geological Survey Stream Gauge 09506000;

(B) with respect to the portion of the Middle Verde River described in subparagraph (A), estimates of--

(i) the inflow and outflow of surface water and groundwater;

(ii) annual consumptive water use; and

(iii) changes in groundwater storage; and

(C) an analysis of the potential long-term consequences of various water use scenarios on groundwater levels and Verde River flows.

(c) PRELIMINARY REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.--

(1) IN GENERAL.--Not later than 16 months after the date of enactment of this Act, using the information provided in the report submitted under subsection (b) and any other relevant information, the Partnership shall submit to the Secretary, the Governor of Arizona, and representatives of the Verde Valley communities, a preliminary report that sets forth the findings and recommendations of the Partnership regarding the long-term available water supply within the Verde Valley.

(2) CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.--The Secretary may take into account the recommendations included in the report submitted under paragraph (1) with respect to decisions affecting land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary, including any future sales or exchanges of Federal land in the Verde

River Basin after the date of enactment of this Act.

(3) EFFECT.--Any recommendations included in the report submitted under paragraph (1) shall not affect the land exchange process or the appraisals of the Federal land and non-Federal land conducted under sections 103 and 104.

SEC. 205. VERDE RIVER BASIN PARTNERSHIP FINAL REPORT.

Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Partnership shall submit to the Secretary and the Governor of Arizona a final report that--

(1) includes a summary of the results of any water resource assessments conducted under this title in the Verde River Basin;

(2) identifies any areas in the Verde River Basin that are determined to have groundwater deficits or other current or potential water supply problems;

(3) identifies long-term water supply management options for communities and water resources within the Verde River Basin; and

(4) identifies water resource analyses and monitoring needed to support the implementation of management options.

SEC. 206. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

The Secretary (acting through the Chief of the Forest Service) and the Secretary of the Interior, shall enter into a memorandum of understanding authorizing the United States Geological Survey to access Forest Service land (including stream gauges, weather stations, wells, or other points of data collection on the Forest Service land) to carry out this title.

SEC. 207. EFFECT.

Nothing in this title diminishes or expands State or local jurisdiction, responsibilities, or rights with respect to water resource management or control.