

COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF THE RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
SPOKANE VALLEY AQUIFER

JUNE 5, 2002.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. HANSEN, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 4609]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 4609) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a comprehensive study of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer, located in Idaho and Washington, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 4609 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a comprehensive study of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer, located in Idaho and Washington.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

About one third of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer lies under Spokane County, Washington, and the remaining two thirds lies under Kootenai County, Idaho. Even though the two States share the aquifer, they manage the resource differently. For example, requests for new water permits are treated differently in the two States. It takes up to 10 years for permit consideration in Washington while a similar permit in Idaho would be considered within months.

This legislation will provide authorization for the funding of tools to better coordinate and understand the various factors that influence the quantity and quality of the aquifer. The information gathered and the modeling capability will help provide better management of this shared resource.

This legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to work with the State of Idaho and the State of Washington to conduct a comprehensive study of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer by preparing a groundwater model to help establish a mutually acceptable understanding of the aquifer as a ground water resource.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 4609 was introduced on April 25, 2002, by Congressman George Nethercutt (R-WA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Water and Power. On May 22, 2002, the Full Resources Committee met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Water and Power was discharged from further consideration of the bill by unanimous consent. No amendments were offered and the bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a comprehensive study of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer, located in Idaho and Washington.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, May 31, 2002.

Hon. JAMES V. HANSEN,
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 4609, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a comprehensive study of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer, located in Idaho and Washington.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Julie Middleton.

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

H.R. 4609—A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a comprehensive study of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer, located in Idaho and Washington

H.R. 4609 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study in conjunction with the states of Idaho and Washington of the Rathdrum Prairie/Spokane Valley Aquifer, a groundwater source for both states. This bill would authorize the appropriation of funds to develop a model of the aquifer so that the resource could be better managed.

Based on information from the Bureau of Reclamation, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4609 would cost \$3.5 million over the 2003–2005 period, assuming the availability of appropriated funds. H.R. 4609 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. H.R. 4609 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Julie Middleton. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104–4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.