

§ 2003. Congressional policy and declaration of purpose

(a) Responsiveness to long-term needs

In order to further the conservation of soil, water, and related resources, it is declared to be the policy of the United States and purpose of this chapter that the conduct of programs administered by the Secretary of Agriculture for the conservation of such resources shall be responsive to the long-term needs of the Nation, as determined under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) Full utilization of cooperative arrangements with State and tribal agencies

Recognizing that the arrangements under which the Federal Government cooperates with State and tribal soil and water conservation agencies and other appropriate State and tribal natural resource agencies such as those concerned with forestry and fish and wildlife and, through conservation districts, with other local units of government and land users, have effectively aided in the protection and improvement of the Nation's basic resources, including the restoration and maintenance of resources damaged by improper use, it is declared to be the policy of the United States that these arrangements and similar cooperative arrangements should be utilized to the fullest extent practicable to achieve the purpose of this chapter consistent with the roles and responsibilities of the non-Federal agencies, landowners and land users.

(c) Attainment of policies and purposes

The Secretary shall promote the attainment of the policies and purposes expressed in this chapter by—

- (1) appraising on a continuing basis the soil, water, and related resources of the Nation;
- (2) developing and updating periodically a program for furthering the conservation, protection, and enhancement of the soil, water, and related resources of the Nation consistent with the roles and program responsibilities of other Federal agencies and State, tribal, and local governments; and
- (3) providing to Congress and the public, through reports, the information developed pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection, and by providing Congress with an annual evaluation report as provided in section 2006 of this title.

(Pub. L. 95-192, § 4, Nov. 18, 1977, 91 Stat. 1407; Pub. L. 113-79, title II, § 2508(a), Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 756.)

AMENDMENTS

2014—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 113-79, § 2508(a)(1), inserted “and tribal” after “State” in two places in text.

Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 113-79, § 2508(a)(2), inserted “, tribal,” after “State”.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of certain enforcement functions of Secretary or other official in Department of Agriculture under this chapter to Federal Inspector, Office of Federal Inspector for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, and subsequent transfer to Secretary of Energy, then to Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural

Gas Transportation Projects, see note set out under section 2002 of this title.

§ 2004. Continuing appraisal of soil, water, and related resources

(a) Data

In recognition of the importance of and need for obtaining and maintaining information on the current status of soil, water, and related resources, the Secretary is authorized and directed to carry out a continuing appraisal of the soil, water, and related resources of the Nation. The appraisal shall include, but not be limited to—

- (1) data on the quality and quantity of soil, water, and related resources, including fish and wildlife habitats;
- (2) data on the capability and limitations of those resources for meeting current and projected demands on the resource base;
- (3) data on the changes that have occurred in the status and condition of those resources resulting from various past uses, including the impact of farming technologies, techniques, and practices;
- (4) data on current Federal, State, and tribal laws, policies, programs, rights, regulations, ownerships, and their trends and other considerations relating to the use, development, and conservation of soil, water, and related resources;
- (5) data on the costs and benefits of alternative soil and water conservation practices;
- (6) data on alternative irrigation techniques regarding their costs, benefits, and impact on soil and water conservation, crop production, and environmental factors; and
- (7) data on conservation plans, conservation practices planned or implemented, environmental outcomes, economic costs, and related matters under conservation programs administered by the Secretary.

(b) Collection of data

The appraisal shall utilize data collected under this chapter and pertinent data and information collected by the Department of Agriculture and other Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies and organizations. The Secretary shall establish an integrated system capable of using combinations of resource data to determine the quality and capabilities for alternative uses of the resource base and to identify areas of local, State, tribal, and National concerns and related roles pertaining to soil and water conservation, resource use and development, and environmental improvement.

(c) Public participation

The appraisal shall be made in cooperation with conservation districts, State and tribal soil and water conservation agencies, and other appropriate citizen groups, and local, tribal, and State agencies under such procedures as the Secretary may prescribe to insure public participation.

(d) Evaluation of appraisal

In conducting the appraisal described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall concurrently solicit and evaluate recommendations for improving the appraisal, including the content, scope,