

(2) Frequency

Such estimates—

(A) shall be conducted not less frequently than once every 10 years; and

(B) may be conducted more frequently if determined appropriate by the Administrator.

(3) Publication

Such estimates and methodologies used to conduct such estimates shall be—

(A) subject to an appropriate, scientific process, as determined by the Administrator; and

(B) published on a publicly accessible website of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(e) Partnerships

The Administrator may partner with other Federal agencies, members of the private sector, academic cooperative partnerships, or non-government associations to assist in carrying out the functions described in subsection (c).

(f) Consultation

In carrying out this section, the Administrator may consult with relevant Federal, State, local, Tribal, and Territorial government agencies, research institutions, and the private sector, as the Administrator determines necessary.

(g) Coordination

In carrying out this section, the Administrator may coordinate with other Federal agencies.

(h) Authorization of appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, from amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator to carry out this chapter, \$3,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2030.

(Pub. L. 117-316, §12, Dec. 27, 2022, 136 Stat. 4413.)

Editorial Notes**REFERENCES IN TEXT**

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (h), was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 117-316, Dec. 27, 2022, 136 Stat. 4406, known as the Flood Level Observation, Operations, and Decision Support Act, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 9701 of this title and Tables.

§ 9708. Interagency Committee on Water Management and Infrastructure**(a) Establishment**

There is established a committee, to be known as the “Interagency Committee on Water Management and Infrastructure” (in this section referred to as the “Water Policy Committee”).

(b) Membership

The Water Policy Committee shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) The Administrator.
- (2) The Secretary of the Interior.
- (3) The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.
- (4) The Secretary of Agriculture.

(5) The Secretary of Commerce.

(6) The Secretary of Energy.

(7) The Secretary of the Army.

(8) The heads of such other agencies as the co-chairs consider appropriate.

(c) Co-chairs

The Water Policy Committee shall be co-chaired by the Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(d) Meetings

The Water Policy Committee shall meet not less frequently than 6 times each year, at the call of the co-chairs.

(e) General purpose and duties

The Water Policy Committee shall ensure that agencies and departments across the Federal Government that engage in water-related matters, including water storage and supplies, water quality and restoration activities, water infrastructure, transportation on United States rivers and inland waterways, and water forecasting, work together where such agencies and departments have joint or overlapping responsibilities to—

(1) improve interagency coordination among Federal agencies and departments on water resource management and water infrastructure issues;

(2) coordinate existing water-related Federal task forces, working groups, and other formal cross-agency initiatives, as appropriate;

(3) prioritize managing the water resources of the United States and promoting resilience of the water-related infrastructure of the United States, including—

(A) increasing water storage, water supply reliability, and drought resiliency;

(B) improving water quality, source water protection, and nutrient management;

(C) promoting restoration activities;

(D) improving water systems, including with respect to drinking water, desalination, water reuse, wastewater, and flood control; and

(E) improving water data management, research, modeling, and forecasting;

(4) improve interagency coordination of data management, access, modeling, and visualization with respect to water-related matters;

(5) promote integrated planning for Federal investments in water-related infrastructure to enhance coordination and protect taxpayer investment; and

(6) support workforce development and efforts to recruit, train, and retain professionals to operate and maintain essential drinking water, wastewater, flood control, hydropower, water delivery, and water storage facilities in the United States.

(f) Cross-agency priority research needs

Not later than 1 year after December 27, 2022, the Water Policy Committee shall develop and submit to Congress a list of research needs that includes needs for cross-agency research and coordination.

(Pub. L. 117-316, §13, Dec. 27, 2022, 136 Stat. 4414.)

§ 9709. National Weather Service hydrologic research fellowship program

(a) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Assistant Administrator

The term “Assistant Administrator” means the Assistant Administrator for Weather Services of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) Decision support services

The term “decision support services” means information, including data and refined products, that supports water resources-related decision-making processes.

(3) Institution of higher education

The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given that term in section 1001 of title 20.

(4) NOAA line offices

The term “NOAA line offices” means the following offices of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:

- (A) The National Ocean Service.
- (B) The National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service.
- (C) The National Marine Fisheries Service.
- (D) The Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research.
- (E) The Office of Marine and Aviation Operations.

(b) Hydrologic research fellowship program

(1) Establishment

The Administrator shall establish a hydrologic research fellowship program (in this section referred to as the “program”) for qualified individuals.

(2) Qualified individual

For purposes of this section, a qualified individual is an individual who is—

- (A) a citizen of the United States; and
- (B) enrolled in a research-based graduate program, at an institution of higher education, in a field that advances the research priorities developed by the Assistant Administrator under paragraph (7), such as—
 - (i) hydrology;
 - (ii) earth sciences;
 - (iii) atmospheric sciences;
 - (iv) computer sciences;
 - (v) engineering;
 - (vi) environmental sciences;
 - (vii) geosciences;
 - (viii) urban planning; or
 - (ix) related social sciences.

(3) Award guidelines

Fellowships under the program shall be awarded pursuant to guidelines established by the Assistant Administrator.

(4) Selection preference

In selecting qualified individuals for participation in the program, the Assistant Administrator shall give preference to applicants from historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions.

(5) Placement

The program shall support the placement of qualified individuals in positions within the executive branch of the Federal Government where such individuals can address and advance the research priorities developed by the Assistant Administrator under paragraph (7).

(6) Fellowship term

A fellowship under the program shall be for a period of up to 2 years.

(7) Fellowship research priorities

The Assistant Administrator, in consultation with representatives from the NOAA line offices, the United States Geological Survey, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Army Corps of Engineers, as appropriate, shall develop and publish priorities for the conduct of research by fellows, which may include the following:

- (A) Advance the collaborative development of a flexible community-based water resources modeling system.
- (B) Apply artificial intelligence and machine learning capabilities to advance existing hydrologic modeling capabilities.
- (C) Support the evolution and integration of hydrologic modeling within an Earth Systems Modeling Framework.
- (D) Improve visualizations of hydrologic model outputs.
- (E) Advance the state of coupled freshwater and salt water modeling and forecasting capabilities.
- (F) Advance understanding and process representation of water quality parameters.
- (G) Advance the assimilation of in-situ and remotely sensed observations and data.
- (H) Support the integration of social science to advance decision support services.
- (I) Develop methods to study groundwater sustainability and estimate the efficiency of recharge management.

(c) Direct hiring

(1) Authority

During fiscal year 2022 and any fiscal year thereafter, the head of any Federal agency may appoint, without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, other than sections 3303 and 3328 of that title, to a position with the Federal agency a recipient of a fellowship under the program who—

- (A) earned a degree from a program described in subsection (b)(2)(B);
- (B) successfully fulfilled the requirements of the fellowship within the executive branch of the Federal Government; and
- (C) meets qualification standards established by the Office of Personnel Management.

(2) Exercise of authority

The direct hire authority provided by this subsection shall be exercised with respect to an individual described in paragraph (1) not later than 2 years after the date on which the individual completed the fellowship under the program.

(Pub. L. 117-316, §14, Dec. 27, 2022, 136 Stat. 4415.)