



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
441 G STREET, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20314-1000

CECW-NWD

OCT 20, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, NORTHWESTERN DIVISION (CENWD-PDD  
AND CENWD-PDR)

SUBJECT: Implementation Guidance for Section 4003(a) of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) - Upper Missouri Basin Flood and Drought Monitoring

1. Section 4003(a) of WRRDA 2014 directs the Secretary, in coordination with the Administrator of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Chief of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Director of the United States Geologic Survey (USGS), and Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) to carry out activities in the Upper Missouri River Basin to improve and support management of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects, including improved soil moisture and snow pack monitoring as outlined in the February 2013 report entitled "Upper Missouri Basin Monitoring Committee - Snow Sampling and Instrumentation Recommendations"; restoring and maintaining existing mid- and high-elevation snowpack monitoring sites operated under the NRCS snow telemetry program, known as SNOTEL; and operating streamflow gages and related interpretive studies under the cooperative water program and the national streamflow information program of the USGS. It further provides that funds made available to Secretary to carry out activities under this authority shall be used to supplement but not supplant other related activities of other Federal agencies for activities within the Missouri River Basin. In addition, it authorizes the Secretary to enter into agreements with these other Federal agencies, subject to certain conditions. Finally, it provides that the Comptroller General of the United States, in consultation with the Secretary, shall complete a report that, among other requirements, documents the progress that has been made to implement the recommendations to enhance soil moisture and snowpack monitoring as outlined in the February 2013 report and includes recommendations on enhancements to soil moisture and snowpack monitoring and efficient ways to collect and share data with Federal agencies with water resource management responsibilities. A copy of Section 4003(a) of WRRDA 2014 is enclosed.

2. Activities under Section 4003(a) may not be undertaken until funds are specifically appropriated for such purpose. To ensure the long term viability of efforts under this authority, sufficient funds must be provided to cover the initial capital costs to install the required equipment as well as the operation and maintenance costs to maintain the equipment or an agreement with another federal agency to assume the operation and maintenance of this equipment. In accordance with USACE policy, and if funds are specifically appropriated, the Secretary will consider entering into agreements with

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NOAA, NRCS, USGS, and BuRec to carry out activities under Section 4003(a). In accordance with Section 4003(a), the agreement must specify that the other Federal agency will maintain aggregate expenditures in the Missouri River Basin for existing programs that implement activities as described in Section 4003(a) at a level that equals or exceeds the aggregate expenditures for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year of the signing of the agreement.

3. The report required by Section 4003(a) is being prepared by the Government Accountability Office and is scheduled to be published in 2015.

4. Please direct any questions to Mr. Steven Kopecky, Deputy Chief, Northwestern Division, Regional Integration Team, at 202-761-4527 or [Steven.Kopecky@usace.army.mil](mailto:Steven.Kopecky@usace.army.mil).



KAREN DURHAM-AGUILERA, P.E.  
Chief, Northwestern Division  
Regional Integration Team  
Directorate of Civil Works

Encl

**SEC. 4003. MISSOURI RIVER.**

**(a) UPPER MISSOURI BASIN FLOOD AND DROUGHT MONITORING.—**

**(1) IN GENERAL.—**The Secretary, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Director of the United States Geological Survey, and the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, shall carry out activities to improve and support management of Corps of Engineers water resources development projects, including—

(A) soil moisture and snowpack monitoring in the Upper Missouri River Basin to reduce flood risk and improve river and water resource management in the Upper Missouri River Basin, as outlined in the February 2013 report entitled “Upper Missouri Basin Monitoring Committee—Snow Sampling and Instrumentation Recommendations”;

(B) restoring and maintaining existing mid- and high elevation snowpack monitoring sites operated under the SNOTEL program of the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and

(C) operating streamflow gages and related interpretive studies in the Upper Missouri River Basin under the cooperative water program and the national streamflow information program of the United States Geological Service.

**(2) USE OF FUNDS.—**Amounts made available to the Secretary to carry out activities under this subsection shall be used to supplement but not supplant other related activities of Federal agencies that are carried out within the Missouri River Basin.

**(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—**

**(A) IN GENERAL.—**The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with other Federal agencies to carry out this subsection.

**(B) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—**The Secretary may only enter into a cooperative agreement with another Federal agency under this paragraph if such agreement specifies that the agency will maintain aggregate expenditures in the Missouri River Basin for existing programs that implement activities described in paragraph (1) at a level that is equal to or exceeds the aggregate expenditures for the fiscal year immediately preceding the fiscal year in which such agreement is signed.

**(4) REPORT.—**Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States, in consultation with the Secretary, shall submit to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that—

(A) identifies progress made by the Secretary and other Federal agencies in implementing the recommendations contained in the report described in paragraph (1)(A) with respect to enhancing soil moisture and snowpack monitoring in the Upper Missouri Basin;

(B) includes recommendations—

(i) to enhance soil moisture and snowpack monitoring in the Upper Missouri Basin that would enhance water resources management, including managing flood risk, in that basin; and

(ii) on the most efficient manner of collecting and sharing data to assist Federal agencies with water resources management responsibilities;

(C) identifies the expected costs and timeline for implementing the recommendations described in subparagraph (B)(i); and

(D) identifies the role of States and other Federal agencies in gathering necessary soil moisture and snowpack monitoring data.  
paragraph (1).