

**First Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

PREAMENDED

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 25-0424.02 Jennifer Berman x3286

HOUSE BILL 25-1115

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

McCluskie and Soper,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Roberts and Catlin,

House Committees

Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources
Appropriations

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING THE COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD'S**
102 **ADMINISTRATION OF A WATER SUPPLY MEASUREMENT**
103 **PROGRAM, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN**
104 **APPROPRIATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill authorizes the Colorado water conservation board (board) to administer a water supply measurement and forecasting program to collect and disseminate data on snowpack levels, investigate

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

technological advances in snowpack measurement and water supply forecasting, and collect other data that the board determines will assist in those efforts.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds that:

4 (a) Colorado's snowpack serves as a significant natural reservoir,
5 holding winter precipitation until spring and summer when it is released
6 as snow melt;

7 (b) Given the major role that snowpack plays in Colorado's water
8 system, snowpack measurement is a critical tool for water managers
9 statewide;

10 (c) Every year, water managers are challenged with balancing
11 water supply needs and uncertainty regarding the flows into the water
12 system, while relying on uncertain runoff forecasts. Experience shows
13 that forecast reliability and the use of available water supplies can be
14 optimized when snowpack and runoff can be accurately predicted.

15 (d) New technologies are emerging and currently available,
16 including light detection and ranging (LiDAR) technology, that can
17 collect highly accurate and timely data on snowpack from an airplane;

18 (e) Because such snow surveys require significant financial
19 resources from multiple sources, current snowpack measurement
20 protocols are generally decentralized and are being done by a variety of
21 water entities across the state and without a formal program through
22 which to coordinate efforts;

23 (f) The Colorado water conservation board (CWCB) within the
24 department of natural resources is governed by a 15-member board,

1 representing each major water basin in the state;

2 (g) The CWCB is well positioned to lead the management of a
3 statewide snowpack measurement and forecasting program to:

4 (I) Create a more streamlined process;

5 (II) Provide more transparent dissemination of data to water users
6 statewide;

7 (III) Provide information to the division of water resources dam
8 safety branch regarding risk management of dams; and

9 (IV) Strengthen the state's and water users' position for the
10 procurement of contract measurement services;

11 (h) This centralized approach would not only improve the
12 reliability of water supply forecasts, but also position Colorado to better
13 adapt to climate change impacts on snowpack and water resources,
14 including extreme events such as rapid runoff and floods, ultimately
15 benefitting all water stakeholders across the state; and

16 (i) As a result, water managers statewide will also be better
17 equipped to make informed decisions as they balance reservoir operations
18 and streamflow.

19 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that the creation of
20 a water supply measurement and forecasting program will assist the state
21 in planning for population growth and environmental changes, while
22 building resilience in the mitigation of severe floods.

23 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 37-60-106, **amend**
24 (1) introductory portion; and **add** (1)(v) as follows:

25 **37-60-106. Duties of the board - legislative declaration.** (1) ~~It~~
26 ~~is the duty of~~ The board ~~to~~ SHALL promote the conservation of the waters
27 of the state of Colorado in order to secure the greatest utilization of such

1 waters and the utmost prevention of floods. ~~and~~ In particular, and without
2 limiting the general character of this section, the board has the power and
3 it is its duty:

4 (v) TO ADMINISTER A WATER SUPPLY MEASUREMENT AND
5 FORECASTING PROGRAM TO:

6 (I) COLLECT AND DISSEMINATE DATA ON SNOWPACK LEVELS;

7 (II) INVESTIGATE THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES IN
8 SNOWPACK MEASUREMENT AND WATER SUPPLY FORECASTING; AND

9 (III) COLLECT OTHER DATA THAT THE BOARD DETERMINES WILL
10 ASSIST IN SNOWPACK MEASUREMENT, WATER SUPPLY FORECASTING, OR
11 FLOOD HAZARD MAPPING.

12 **SECTION 3. Appropriation.** (1) For the 2025-26 state fiscal
13 year, \$104,608 is appropriated to the department of natural resources.
14 This appropriation is from the Colorado water conservation board
15 construction fund created in section 37-60-121 (1)(a), C.R.S. To
16 implement this act, the department may use this appropriation as follows:

17 (a) \$75,926 for use by the colorado water conservation board for
18 personal services, which amount is based on an assumption that the board
19 will require an additional 0.9 FTE;

20 (b) \$12,722 for use by the board for operating expenses; and

21 (c) \$15,960 for the purchase of information technology services.

22 (2) For the 2025-26 state fiscal year, \$15,960 is appropriated to
23 the office of the governor for use by the office of information technology.

24 This appropriation is from reappropriated funds received from the
25 department of natural resources under subsection (1)(c) of this section. To
26 implement this act, the office may use this appropriation to provide
27 information technology services for the department of natural resources.

1 **SECTION 4. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
2 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
3 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except
4 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V
5 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this
6 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take
7 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
8 November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
9 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.