

HOUSE BILL NO. 354
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

Introduced: 5/21/91

Referred: Resources, Finance

Funding Information:	General Fund	\$242,000
	Other Funds	<u>-0-</u>
		\$242,000

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act making an appropriation to the Department of Natural Resources for payment
 2 as a matching grant for completion of a surface-water data network evaluation for Alaska;
 3 and providing for an effective date."

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 * **Section 1. FINDINGS.** The legislature finds that

- 6 (1) streamflow data are needed for a wide variety of purposes, including
- 7 (A) municipal water supply;
- 8 (B) mining, forestry, oil and gas, hydroelectric power, navigation, transportation,
 9 fish hatcheries, fish processing, agriculture, irrigation, recreation, and other industrial uses;
- 10 (C) design of highways, bridges, culverts, and drainage facilities;
- 11 (D) land use planning, mapping of flood plains, and predicting floods;
- 12 (E) evaluation of the movement of toxic substances and spills in the environment;
- 13 (F) fish and wildlife management;
- 14 (G) adjudication of water rights;

1 (H) monitoring and enforcement of water rights;
2 (2) streamflow data are obtained from
3 (A) a statewide network of stream gages; and
4 (B) mathematical formulas that estimate how much water flows in a river or
5 stream that is ungaged;
6 (3) over 99 percent of the rivers and streams in the state are ungaged; this lack of
7 streamflow data can result in the loss of millions of dollars through the construction of underdesigned
8 and oversized structures and their repair; without streamflow data, delays in major projects can occur
9 while needed data are being collected and can result in legal conflicts among users of water resources,
10 especially when water rights are not being monitored and enforced; insufficient hydrological data can
11 also result in unnecessary and negative effects on fish and wildlife;
12 (4) a surface-water data network evaluation will
13 (A) address adequacy of the existing stream gage network and databases; and
14 (B) evaluate adequacy of existing mathematical formulas for estimating
15 streamflows for ungaged sites;
16 (5) the results of this information will be used for prioritizing the location and need for
17 establishing and maintaining stream gages;
18 (6) technical representatives from state, federal, and local agencies and the private sector
19 must cooperate in the completion of a surface-water data network evaluation for Alaska that will
20 prioritize the need and location for maintaining and establishing stream gages and determine how well
21 streamflow can be predicted in areas of the state where stream gages do not exist; this information is
22 required for those who depend on the reliability of available stream flow data; and
23 (7) the Alaska Water Resources Board has repeatedly urged the state to improve its water
24 data collection program and to expand its cooperative stream gage program with the United States
25 Geological Survey as expressed in resolutions throughout the past decade.
26 * Sec. 2. The sum of \$242,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Natural
27 Resources for payment as a pass through grant under AS 37.05.316 to the United States Department of
28 the Interior, Geological Survey, Water Resources Division, to match the contribution of the federal
29 government for the completion of a surface-water data network evaluation for Alaska.
30 * Sec. 3. This Act takes effect July 1, 1992.