

Wednesday, September 19, 2012

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico’s Third District applauded the passage of important legislation in the House to extend funding for the Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Basin fish recovery programs. H.R. 6060, the Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Improvement Act, extends these important programs through fiscal year 2019, authorizing \$42 million over the next seven years to fund efforts to protect fish species that have seriously declined or are listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.

“Managing our water resources is critical to the future of New Mexico and is vital to protecting our rivers and fish that depend on these resources,” Congressman Luján said. “These programs have always had bipartisan support in Congress and their success in fish recovery has made them models for other recovery projects across the country. It is important that we take proactive steps to ensure these programs will continue and accomplish their goals.”

The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program is tasked to recover the humpback chub, bonytail, Colorado pikeminnow, and razorback sucker in the Colorado River and its tributaries in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. The recovery program was initiated in 1988 with the signing of a cooperative agreement by the Governors of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Administrator of Western Area Power Administration. The cooperative agreement was extended through September 30, 2023.

The San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program is recovering the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker in the San Juan River and its tributaries in Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. The recovery program was established in 1992 with the signing of a cooperative agreement by the Governors of Colorado and New Mexico, the Secretary of the Interior, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and the Jicarilla Apache Nation. The cooperative agreement was extended through September 30, 2023.

Similar legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Jeff Bingaman. The Senate version authorizes the program through fiscal year 2023.

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