

**Issue Brief**  
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## Senate urged to pass Reclamation Site Security Costs Act

Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ramped up site security at most federal multi-purpose dams.

At the same time, agency determined that the increased cost of security would be a federal responsibility, consistent with legislative precedent set during World War II.

However, in 2005 the agency changed its position and sought reimbursement for the added cost of guards and patrols from water and power customers, even though the federal dam system provides benefits such as flood control, recreation and fish and wildlife mitigation to many other users.

In November 2007, the House approved HR 1662, the “Reclamation Site Security Costs Act,” which would cap the cost of guards and security-related operation and maintenance at federal dams for water and power customers at \$18.9 million annually, indexed for inflation.

It also would require Reclamation to consult with its customers – including public power – on the implementation of site security measures. In addition, it would require the bureau to formulate a five-year spending plan for site security and to make annual reports to Congress on expenditures.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee approved the bill on Jan. 30, 2008, as part of a package of lands bills that has been sent to the Senate floor. Unfortunately, election-year conflicts unrelated to HR 1662 now appear to be keeping the legislation from final passage.



We believe that the Bureau of Reclamation’s costly and non-transparent record of administering the enhanced dam site security program warrants greater customer involvement and congressional oversight.

We also object to Reclamation recovering the added costs for increased security at these multi-purpose federal dams solely from water and power customers.

Following introduction of the bill in 2006, water and power customers from across the West agreed to many changes sought by the bureau, including making the legislation revenue neutral despite considerable cost to themselves.

The Washington PUD Association strongly supports HR 1662 and is urging the Senate to act on the bill as soon as possible.