AMENDMENT TO
RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 117–9
OFFERED BY MR. VARGAS OF CALIFORNIA

Page 1549, after line 8, insert the following:

SEC. 12022. CALIFORNIA NEW RIVER RESTORATION.

(a) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) Administrator.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) Mexican.—The term “Mexican” refers to the Federal, State, and local governments of the United Mexican States.

(3) New River.—The term “New River” means that portion of the New River, California, that flows north within the United States from the border of Mexico through Calexico, California, passes through the Imperial Valley, and drains into the Salton Sea.

(4) Program.—The term “program” means the California New River restoration program established under subsection (b).

(5) Restoration and Protection.—The term “restoration and protection” means the con-
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reservation, stewardship, and enhancement of habitat
for fish and wildlife to preserve and improve eco-
systems and ecological processes on which they de-
pend.

(b) CALIFORNIA NEW RIVER RESTORATION PRO-
GRAM ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days
after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
trator shall establish a program to be known as the
“California New River restoration program”.

(2) DUTIES.—In carrying out the program, the
Administrator shall—

(A) implement projects, plans, and initia-
tives for the restoration and protection of the
New River that are supported by the California-
Mexico Border Relations Council, in consulta-
tion with applicable management entities, in-
cluding representatives of the Calexico New
River Committee, the California-Mexico Border
Relations Council, the New River Improvement
Project Technical Advisory Committee, the Fed-
eral Government, State and local governments,
and regional and nonprofit organizations;

(B) undertake activities that—
(i) support the implementation of a shared set of science-based restoration and protection activities identified in accordance with subparagraph (A);

(ii) target cost-effective projects with measurable results; and

(iii) maximize conservation outcomes with no net gain of Federal full-time equivalent employees; and

(C) provide grants and technical assistance in accordance with subsection (c).

(3) COORDINATION.—In establishing the program, the Administrator shall consult, as appropriate, with—

(A) the heads of Federal agencies, including—

(i) the Secretary of the Interior;

(ii) the Secretary of Agriculture;

(iii) the Secretary of Homeland Security;

(iv) the Administrator of General Services;

(v) the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection;
(vi) the Commissioner of the International Boundary Water Commission; and
(vii) the head of any other applicable agency;
(B) the Governor of California;
(C) the California Environmental Protection Agency;
(D) the California State Water Resources Control Board;
(E) the California Department of Water Resources;
(F) the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board;
(G) the Imperial Irrigation District; and
(H) other public agencies and organizations with authority for the planning and implementation of conservation strategies relating to the New River.

(4) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the program include—

(A) coordinating restoration and protection activities, among Mexican, Federal, State, local, and regional entities and conservation partners, relating to the New River; and
(B) carrying out coordinated restoration and protection activities, and providing for technical assistance relating to the New River—

(i) to sustain and enhance fish and wildlife habitat restoration and protection activities;

(ii) to improve and maintain water quality to support fish and wildlife, as well as the habitats of fish and wildlife;

(iii) to sustain and enhance water management for volume and flood damage mitigation improvements to benefit fish and wildlife habitat;

(iv) to improve opportunities for public access to, and recreation in and along, the New River consistent with the ecological needs of fish and wildlife habitat;

(v) to maximize the resilience of natural systems and habitats under changing watershed conditions;

(vi) to engage the public through outreach, education, and citizen involvement, to increase capacity and support for coordinated restoration and protection activities relating to the New River;
(vii) to increase scientific capacity to support the planning, monitoring, and research activities necessary to carry out coordinated restoration and protection activities; and

(viii) to provide technical assistance to carry out restoration and protection activities relating to the New River.

(e) Grants and Assistance.—

(1) In general.—In carrying out the program, the Administrator shall provide grants and technical assistance to State and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and institutions of higher education, to carry out the purposes of the program.

(2) Criteria.—The Administrator, in consultation with the organizations described in subsection (b)(3), shall develop criteria for providing grants and technical assistance under this subsection to ensure that such activities accomplish one or more of the purposes identified in subsection (b)(4)(B).

(3) Cost sharing.—

(A) Federal share.—The Federal share of the cost of a project for which a grant is provided under this subsection shall not exceed 55
percent of the total cost of the activity, as determined by the Administrator.

(B) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share of the cost of a project for which a grant is provided under this subsection may be provided in the form of an in-kind contribution of services or materials that the Administrator determines are integral to the activity carried out using assistance authorized by this section.

(4) REQUIREMENTS.—Sections 513 and 608 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1372; 1388) shall apply to the construction of any project or activity carried out, in whole or in part, under this section in the same manner those sections apply to a treatment works for which a grant is made available under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

(5) ADMINISTRATION.—The Administrator may enter into an agreement to manage the implementation of this subsection with the North American Development Bank or a similar organization that offers grant management services.

(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a
report on the implementation of this section, including a description of each project that has received funding under this section and the status of all such projects that are in progress on the date of submission of the report.