

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To modify and improve provisions relating to environmental requirements for agriculture and agricultural producers, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. ROBERTS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To modify and improve provisions relating to environmental requirements for agriculture and agricultural producers, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Agriculture Creates
5 Real Employment Act” or the “ACRE Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
2 trator” means the Administrator of the Environ-
3 mental Protection Agency.

4 (2) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
5 the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife
6 Service.

7 **SEC. 3. PREDATORY AND OTHER WILD ANIMALS.**

8 Section 1 of the Act of March 2, 1931 (7 U.S.C.
9 8351), is amended—

10 (1) in the second sentence, by striking “The
11 Secretary” and inserting the following:

12 “(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary”;

13 (2) in the first sentence, by striking “The Sec-
14 retary” and inserting the following:

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”; and

16 (3) by adding at the end the following:

17 “(c) ACTION BY FWS.—The Director of the United
18 States Fish and Wildlife Service shall use the most expedi-
19 tious procedure practicable to process and administer per-
20 mits for take of—

21 “(1) a depredating eagle under the Act of June
22 8, 1940 (commonly known as the ‘Bald Eagle Pro-
23 tection Act’) (54 Stat. 250, chapter 278; 16 U.S.C.
24 668 et seq.), or sections 22.11 through 22.32 of title
25 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regu-

1 lations) (including depredation of livestock, wildlife,
2 and species protected under the Endangered Species
3 Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) or any other
4 Federal management program); or

5 “(2) a migratory bird included on the list under
6 section 10.13 of title 50, Code of Federal Regula-
7 tions (or successor regulations) that is posing a con-
8 flict.”.

9 **SEC. 4. EXEMPTION OF EXPORTATION OF CERTAIN**
10 **ECHINODERMS FROM PERMISSION AND LI-**
11 **CENSING REQUIREMENTS.**

12 (a) EXEMPTION.—Not later than 30 days after the
13 date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall amend
14 section 14.92 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, to
15 clarify that—

16 (1) fish or wildlife described in subsection (b)
17 are fishery products exempt from the export permis-
18 sion requirements of section 9(d)(1) of the Endan-
19 gered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1538(d)(1));
20 and

21 (2) any person may engage in business as an
22 exporter of fish or wildlife described in subsection
23 (b) without procuring—

1 (A) permission under section 9(d)(1) of the
2 Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C.
3 1538(d)(1)); or

4 (B) an export license under subpart I of
5 part 14 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations
6 (or successor regulations).

7 (b) COVERED FISH OR WILDLIFE.—The fish or wild-
8 life referred to in subsection (a) are members of the phy-
9 lum Echinodermata that are commonly known as sea ur-
10 chins and sea cucumbers (including any products of those
11 members of the phylum Echinodermata) that—

12 (1) do not require a permit under part 16, 17,
13 or 23 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or
14 successor regulations);

15 (2)(A) are harvested in waters under the juris-
16 diction of the United States; or

17 (B) are processed in the United States; and

18 (3) are—

19 (A) exported for purposes of human or ani-
20 mal consumption; or

21 (B) taken in waters under the jurisdiction
22 of the United States or on the high seas for
23 recreational purposes.

1 **SEC. 5. BAITING OF MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS.**

2 Section 3 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16
3 U.S.C. 704) is amended by striking subsection (b) and in-
4 serting the following:

5 “(b) PROHIBITION OF BAITING.—

6 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

7 “(A) BAITED AREA.—

8 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘baited
9 area’ means—

10 “(I) any area on which salt,
11 grain, or other feed has been placed,
12 exposed, deposited, distributed, or
13 scattered, if the salt, grain, or feed
14 could lure or attract migratory game
15 birds; and

16 “(II) in the case of waterfowl,
17 cranes (family Gruidae), and coots
18 (family Rallidae), a standing,
19 unharvested crop that has been ma-
20 nipulated through activities such as
21 mowing, discing, or rolling, unless the
22 activities are normal agricultural prac-
23 tices.

24 “(ii) EXCLUSIONS.—An area shall not
25 be considered to be a ‘baited area’ if the
26 area—

1 “(I) has been treated with a nor-
2 mal agricultural practice;

3 “(II) has standing crops that
4 have not been manipulated; or

5 “(III) has standing crops that
6 have been or are flooded.

7 “(B) BAITING.—The term ‘baiting’ means
8 the direct or indirect placing, exposing, depos-
9 iting, distributing, or scattering of salt, grain,
10 or other feed that could lure or attract migra-
11 tory game birds to, on, or over any areas on
12 which a hunter is attempting to take migratory
13 game birds.

14 “(C) MIGRATORY GAME BIRD.—The term
15 ‘migratory game bird’ means migratory bird
16 species—

17 “(i) that are within the taxonomic
18 families of Anatidae, Columbidae, Gruidae,
19 Rallidae, and Scolopacidae; and

20 “(ii) for which open seasons are pre-
21 scribed by the Secretary of the Interior.

22 “(D) NORMAL AGRICULTURAL PRAC-
23 TICE.—

1 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘normal
2 agricultural practice’ means any practice in
3 1 annual growing season that—

4 “(I) is carried out in order to
5 produce a marketable crop, including
6 planting, harvest, post-harvest, or soil
7 conservation practices; and

8 “(II) is recommended for the
9 successful harvest of a given crop by
10 the applicable State office of the Co-
11 operative Extension System of the De-
12 partment of Agriculture, in consulta-
13 tion with, and if requested, the con-
14 currence of, the head of the applicable
15 State department of fish and wildlife.

16 “(ii) INCLUSIONS.—

17 “(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to
18 subclause (II), the term ‘normal agri-
19 cultural practice’ includes the destruc-
20 tion of a crop in accordance with
21 practices required by the Federal
22 Crop Insurance Corporation for agri-
23 cultural producers to obtain crop in-
24 surance under the Federal Crop In-
25 surance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.)

1 on land on which a crop during the
2 current or immediately preceding crop
3 year was not harvestable due to a nat-
4 ural disaster (including any hurricane,
5 storm, tornado, flood, high water,
6 wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsu-
7 nami, earthquake, volcanic eruption,
8 landslide, mudslide, drought, fire,
9 snowstorm, or other catastrophe that
10 is declared a major disaster by the
11 President in accordance with section
12 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
13 aster Relief and Emergency Assist-
14 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170)).

15 “(II) LIMITATIONS.—The term
16 ‘normal agricultural practice’ only in-
17 cludes a crop described in subclause
18 (I) that has been destroyed or manip-
19 ulated through activities that include
20 (but are not limited to) mowing,
21 discing, or rolling if the Federal Crop
22 Insurance Corporation certifies that
23 flooding was not an acceptable method
24 of destruction to obtain crop insur-

1 ance under the Federal Crop Insur-
2 ance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

3 “(E) WATERFOWL.—The term ‘waterfowl’
4 means native species of the family Anatidae.

5 “(2) PROHIBITION.—It shall be unlawful for
6 any person—

7 “(A) to take any migratory game bird by
8 baiting or on or over any baited area, if the
9 person knows or reasonably should know that
10 the area is a baited area; or

11 “(B) to place or direct the placement of
12 bait on or adjacent to an area for the purpose
13 of causing, inducing, or allowing any person to
14 take or attempt to take any migratory game
15 bird by baiting or on or over the baited area.

16 “(3) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the In-
17 terior may promulgate regulations to implement this
18 subsection.

19 “(4) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary of Ag-
20 riculture shall submit to the Secretary of the Inte-
21 rior an annual report that describes any changes to
22 normal agricultural practices across the range of
23 crops grown by agricultural producers in each region
24 of the United States in which the recommendations
25 are provided to agricultural producers.”.

1 **SEC. 6. USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES; DISCHARGES OF**
2 **PESTICIDES; REPORT.**

3 (a) USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES.—Section 3(f)
4 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act
5 (7 U.S.C. 136a(f)) is amended by adding at the end the
6 following:

7 “(5) USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES.—Ex-
8 cept as provided in subsection (s) of section 402 of
9 the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
10 1342), the Administrator or a State shall not re-
11 quire a permit under that Act for a discharge from
12 a point source into navigable waters of—

13 “(A) a pesticide authorized for sale, dis-
14 tribution, or use under this Act; or

15 “(B) the residue of the pesticide, resulting
16 from the application of the pesticide.”.

17 (b) DISCHARGES OF PESTICIDES.—Section 402 of
18 the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342)
19 is amended by adding at the end the following:

20 “(s) DISCHARGES OF PESTICIDES.—

21 “(1) NO PERMIT REQUIREMENT.—Except as
22 provided in paragraph (2), a permit shall not be re-
23 quired by the Administrator or a State under this
24 Act for a discharge from a point source into navi-
25 gable waters of—

1 “(A) a pesticide authorized for sale, dis-
2 tribution, or use under the Federal Insecticide,
3 Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136
4 et seq.); or

5 “(B) the residue of the pesticide, resulting
6 from the application of the pesticide.

7 “(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Paragraph (1) shall not
8 apply to the following discharges of a pesticide or
9 pesticide residue:

10 “(A) A discharge resulting from the appli-
11 cation of a pesticide in violation of a provision
12 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and
13 Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.) relevant
14 to protecting water quality if—

15 “(i) the discharge would not have oc-
16 curred without the violation; or

17 “(ii) the quantity of pesticide or pes-
18 ticide residue in the discharge is greater
19 than would have occurred without the vio-
20 lation.

21 “(B) Stormwater discharges subject to reg-
22 ulation under subsection (p).

23 “(C) The following discharges subject to
24 regulation under this section:

1 “(i) Manufacturing or industrial efflu-
2 ent.

3 “(ii) Treatment works effluent.

4 “(iii) Discharges incidental to the nor-
5 mal operation of a vessel, including a dis-
6 charge resulting from ballasting operations
7 or vessel biofouling prevention.”.

8 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
9 of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consulta-
10 tion with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall submit a re-
11 port to the Committee on Environment and Public Works
12 and the Committee on Agriculture of the Senate and the
13 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the
14 Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives
15 that includes—

16 (1) the status of intra-agency coordination be-
17 tween the Office of Water and the Office of Pes-
18 ticide Programs of the Environmental Protection
19 Agency regarding streamlining information collec-
20 tion, standards of review, and data use relating to
21 water quality impacts from the registration and use
22 of pesticides;

23 (2) an analysis of the effectiveness of current
24 regulatory actions relating to pesticide registration
25 and use aimed at protecting water quality; and

1 (3) any recommendations on how the Federal
2 Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7
3 U.S.C. 136 et seq.) can be modified to better protect
4 water quality and human health.

5 **SEC. 7. FARMER IDENTITY PROTECTION.**

6 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) AGENCY.—The term “Agency” means the
8 Environmental Protection Agency.

9 (2) LIVESTOCK OPERATION.—The term “live-
10 stock operation” includes any operation involved in
11 the raising or finishing of livestock and poultry.

12 (b) PROCUREMENT AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMA-
13 TION.—

14 (1) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in para-
15 graph (2), the Administrator, any officer or em-
16 ployee of the Agency, or any contractor or coop-
17 erator of the Agency, shall not disclose the informa-
18 tion of any owner, operator, or employee of a live-
19 stock operation provided to the Agency by a live-
20 stock producer or a State agency in accordance with
21 the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
22 1251 et seq.) or any other law, including—

23 (A) names;

24 (B) telephone numbers;

25 (C) email addresses;

1 (D) physical addresses;

2 (E) Global Positioning System coordinates;

3 (F) financial information, including busi-
4 ness records and production data; or

5 (G) other identifying information regarding
6 the location of the owner, operator, livestock, or
7 employee.

8 (2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section affects—

9 (A) the disclosure of information described
10 in paragraph (1) if—

11 (i) the information has been trans-
12 formed into a statistical or aggregate form
13 at the county level or higher without any
14 information that identifies the agricultural
15 operation or agricultural producer; or

16 (ii) the livestock producer consents to
17 the disclosure;

18 (B) the authority of any State agency to
19 collect information on livestock operations; or

20 (C) the authority of the Agency to disclose
21 the information on livestock operations to State
22 or other Federal governmental agencies.

23 (3) CONDITION OF PERMIT OR OTHER PRO-
24 GRAMS.—The approval of any permit, practice, or
25 program administered by the Administrator shall not

1 be conditioned on the consent of the livestock pro-
2 ducer under paragraph (2)(A)(ii).

3 **SEC. 8. PRIVACY OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS.**

4 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
6 trator” means—

7 (A) the Administrator; and

8 (B) in the case of an action taken pursu-
9 ant to a permit program approved under section
10 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act
11 (33 U.S.C. 1342), the head of the State agency
12 administering the program.

13 (2) AERIAL SURVEILLANCE.—The term “aerial
14 surveillance” means any surveillance from the air,
15 including—

16 (A) surveillance conducted from manned or
17 unmanned aircraft; or

18 (B) the use of aerial or satellite images, re-
19 gardless of whether the images are publicly
20 available.

21 (3) AGRICULTURAL LAND.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “agricultural
23 land” means land used primarily for agricul-
24 tural production.

1 (B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “agricultural
2 land” includes—

3 (i) cropland;

4 (ii) grassland;

5 (iii) prairie land;

6 (iv) improved pastureland;

7 (v) rangeland;

8 (vi) cropped woodland;

9 (vii) marshes;

10 (viii) reclaimed land;

11 (ix) fish or other aquatic species habi-
12 tat;

13 (x) land used for—

14 (I) agroforestry; or

15 (II) the production of livestock;

16 and

17 (xi) land that contains existing infra-
18 structure used for—

19 (I) the production of livestock; or

20 (II) another agricultural oper-
21 ation.

22 (b) LIMITATION ON USE OF AERIAL SURVEIL-
23 LANCE.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), in
25 exercising any authority under the Federal Water

1 Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), the
2 Administrator may not conduct aerial surveillance of
3 agricultural land.

4 (2) EXCEPTIONS.—The Administrator may con-
5 duct aerial surveillance of agricultural land under
6 the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
7 1251 et seq.) if the Administrator—

8 (A) has obtained the voluntary written
9 consent of the owner or operator of the land to
10 be surveilled in accordance with subsection (c);
11 or

12 (B) has obtained a certification of reason-
13 able suspicion in accordance with subsection
14 (d).

15 (c) VOLUNTARY WRITTEN CONSENT.—

16 (1) CONSENT REQUIRED.—In order to conduct
17 aerial surveillance under subsection (b)(2)(A), the
18 Administrator shall obtain from the owner or oper-
19 ator of the land to be surveilled written consent to
20 such surveillance.

21 (2) CONTENTS.—The Administrator shall en-
22 sure that any written consent required under para-
23 graph (1)—

1 (A) specifies the period during which the
2 consent is effective, which may not exceed 1
3 year;

4 (B) contains a specific description of the
5 geographical area to be surveilled; and

6 (C) on the request of the owner or oper-
7 ator of the land to be surveilled, contains limi-
8 tations on the days and times during which the
9 surveillance may be conducted.

10 (3) ASSURANCE OF VOLUNTARY CONSENT.—

11 The Administrator—

12 (A) shall ensure that any written consent
13 required under paragraph (1) is granted volun-
14 tarily by the owner or operator of the land to
15 be surveilled; and

16 (B) may not threaten additional, more de-
17 tailed, or more thorough inspections, or other-
18 wise coerce or entice the owner or operator, in
19 order to obtain written consent.

20 (d) CERTIFICATION OF REASONABLE SUSPICION.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—In order to conduct aerial
22 surveillance under subsection (b)(2)(B), the Admin-
23 istrator shall obtain from a United States district
24 court of competent jurisdiction (referred to in this

1 subsection as a “Court”) a certification of reason-
2 able suspicion in accordance with this subsection.

3 (2) CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—A Court
4 may issue to the Administrator a certification of rea-
5 sonable suspicion if—

6 (A) the Administrator submits to the
7 Court an affidavit setting forth specific and
8 articulable facts that would indicate to a rea-
9 sonable person that a violation of the Federal
10 Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et
11 seq.) exists in the area to be surveilled; and

12 (B) the Court finds that the Administrator
13 has shown reasonable suspicion that an owner
14 or operator of agricultural land in the area to
15 be surveilled has violated the Federal Water
16 Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.).

17 (e) DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
19 graph (3), or for the purposes of an investigation or
20 prosecution by the Administrator as described in
21 subsection (f), the Administrator may not disclose
22 information collected through aerial surveillance con-
23 ducted under subsection (b)(2).

24 (2) APPLICABILITY OF FOIA.—Section 552 of
25 title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to any

1 information collected through aerial surveillance con-
2 ducted under subsection (b)(2).

3 (3) RIGHT TO PETITION.—The owner or oper-
4 ator of land surveilled under this section has the
5 right to petition for copies of the information col-
6 lected through such surveillance.

7 (f) DESTRUCTION OF INFORMATION.—The Adminis-
8 trator shall destroy information collected through aerial
9 surveillance conducted under subsection (b)(2) not later
10 than 30 days after collection, unless the information is
11 pertinent to an active investigation or prosecution by the
12 Administrator.

13 (g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act
14 expands the power of the Administrator to inspect, mon-
15 itor, or conduct surveillance of agricultural land pursuant
16 to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
17 1251 et seq.) or any other Federal law.

18 **SEC. 9. REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE TAKING OF DOU-**

19 **BLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS.**

20 (a) FORCE AND EFFECT.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b),
22 sections 21.47 and 21.48 of title 50, Code of Fed-
23 eral Regulations (as in effect on January 1, 2016),
24 shall have the force and effect of law.

1 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking subpara-
2 graph (A) and inserting the following:

3 “(A) an aggregate aboveground storage ca-
4 pacity greater than 10,000 gallons but less than
5 42,000 gallons; and”;

6 (C) in paragraph (3)—

7 (i) by striking subparagraph (A) and
8 inserting the following:

9 “(A) with an aggregate aboveground stor-
10 age capacity of less than or equal to 10,000
11 gallons; and”;

12 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking
13 “; and” and inserting a period; and

14 (D) by striking paragraph (4);

15 (2) in subsection (c)(2)(A)—

16 (A) in clause (i), by striking “1,000” and
17 inserting “1,320”; and

18 (B) in clause (ii), by striking “2,500” and
19 inserting “3,000”; and

20 (3) by striking subsection (d).