

1 HOUSE BILL NO. 8
 2 INTRODUCED BY M. HOPKINS
 3 BY REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION, OFFICE OF
 4 BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING

5
 6 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT APPROVING RENEWABLE RESOURCE PROJECTS AND
 7 AUTHORIZING LOANS; APPROPRIATING MONEY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
 8 AND CONSERVATION FOR LOANS UNDER THE RENEWABLE RESOURCE GRANT AND LOAN
 9 PROGRAM; AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF COAL SEVERANCE TAX BONDS; CREATING STATE
 10 DEBT; PLACING CERTAIN CONDITIONS ON LOANS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

11
 12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

13
 14 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Authorization to provide loans.** (1) The legislature finds that the
 15 renewable resource projects listed in this section meet the provisions of 17-5-702. The department of natural
 16 resources and conservation is authorized to make loans to the political subdivisions of state government and
 17 local governments listed in subsection (2) in amounts not to exceed the loan amounts listed for each project
 18 from the proceeds of the bonds authorized in [section-3 4].

19 (2) The interest rate for the projects in this group is 3.0% or the rate at which the state bonds are
 20 sold, whichever is lower, for up to 30 years:

| Loan | Amount |
|---|---|
| Greenfields Irrigation District | |
| Hydro Development | \$1,500,000 |
| East Fork | |
| Dam Rehabilitation | \$10,000,000 <u>\$16,900,000</u> |
| Painted Rocks | |
| ————— Dam Rehabilitation ————— | \$6,000,000 |

Amendment - 1st Reading-white - (H) Appropriations

- 2023

68th Legislature 2023

Drafter: Katy Callon, 406-444-4421

HB0008.001.005

1 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Projects not completing requirements -- projects reauthorized.** (1)

2 The legislature finds that the following renewable resource projects that were approved by the 67th legislature
3 in Chapter 463, Laws of 2021, may not complete the requirements necessary to obtain the loan funds prior to
4 June 30, 2022. The projects described in this section are reauthorized. The department of natural resources
5 and conservation is authorized to make loans to political subdivisions of state government and local
6 governments listed in subsections (2) through (4) in amounts not to exceed the loan amounts listed for each
7 project from the proceeds of bonds authorized in [section ~~3~~ 4].

8 (2) The interest rate for the project in this group is 3.0% or the rate at which the state bonds are
9 sold, whichever is lower, for up to 30 years:

| 10 Loan | Amount |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 11 Department of Natural Resources and Conservation—Conservation and Resource Development | |
| 12 Division | |
| 13 Refinance Existing Debt or Rehabilitation of Infrastructure Facilities | |
| | 14 \$8,000,000 |

15 (3) The interest rate for the projects in this group is 3.0% or the rate at which the state bonds are
16 sold, whichever is lower, for up to 30 years:

| 17 Loan | Amount |
|---|--|
| 18 Central Montana Regional Water Authority | |
| | 19 Local Match for Central Montana Regional Water Authority \$5,000,000 |
| 20 Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority | |
| | 21 Local Match for Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority \$5,000,000 |
| 22 Dry Prairie Regional Water Authority | |
| | 23 Local Match for Dry Prairie Projects \$5,000,000 |
| 24 North Central Regional Water Authority | |
| | 25 Local Match for North Central Projects \$5,000,000 |
| 26 Lower Willow Creek Irrigation District | |
| | 27 Right Subdrain Repair Project \$200,000 |
| 28 Huntley Irrigation District Reauthorization | |

Amendment - 1st Reading-white - (H) Appropriations

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1 Tunnel 2 and Canal System \$3,500,000

2 Lockwood Irrigation District

3 Box Elder Siphon, Pump Station, and Pump 3 ~~\$750,000~~ \$1,550,000

4 (4) (a) The interest rate for the project in this group is 3.0% or the rate at which the state bonds are
5 sold, whichever is lower, for up to 30 years:

6 Loan Amount

7 St. Mary's Diversion Project Local Share \$40,000,000

8 (b) The loan in this subsection (4) is contingent on the following:

9 (i) the federal government entering into an agreement with the state that designates the federal
10 and state share of the total project cost;

11 (ii) the forming of a water users' association of Montana users of the waters flowing from the Milk
12 River that includes cities, towns, districts, water users' associations, and other unassociated individuals and
13 entities; and

14 (iii) the water users' association demonstrating to the satisfaction of the department of natural
15 resources and conservation its financial capacity, through water user fees or other available sources of funding,
16 to pay the annual costs of the loan repayment over the term of the loan.

17
18 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Authorization to provide loan.** (1) The interest rate for the project in
19 this group is 3.0% or the rate at which the state bonds are sold, whichever is lower, for up to 30 years:

20 Loan Amount

21 St. Mary's Siphon Replacement Projects Local Share \$26,000,000

22 (2) The loan in this section is contingent on the following:

23 (a) the federal government entering into an agreement with the state that designates the federal
24 and state share of the total project cost;

25 (b) the forming of a water users' association of Montana users of the waters flowing from the Milk
26 River that includes cities, towns, districts, water users' associations, and other unassociated individuals and
27 entities; and

28 (c) the water users' association demonstrating to the satisfaction of the department of natural

1 resources and conservation its financial capacity, through water user fees or other available sources of funding,
2 to pay the annual costs of the loan repayment over the term of the loan.

3
4 **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Coal severance tax bonds authorized.** (1) The legislature finds that
5 Title 17, chapter 5, part 7, provides for the issuance of coal severance tax bonds for financing specific approved
6 renewable resource projects as part of the state renewable resource grant and loan program. Available funds
7 from previous sales of coal severance tax bonds, plus any additional principal amount on bonds as may be
8 necessary, pursuant to the conditions in 85-1-605, to fund emergency loans, as authorized and approved in
9 accordance with 85-1-605(4), may also be used for the projects approved in [sections 1 through ~~7~~ 8]. The board
10 of examiners is authorized to issue coal severance tax bonds in an amount not to exceed
11 ~~\$89,950,000~~ \$129,415,000 in the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, of which up to ~~\$8,995,000~~ \$11,765,000 is to
12 be used to establish a reserve for the bonds. Proceeds of the bonds are appropriated to the department of
13 natural resources and conservation for financing the projects identified in [sections 1 ~~and 2~~ through 3] and may
14 be used as authorized in 85-1-605(4). Loans made under 85-1-605(4) must bear interest at the rate borne by
15 the state bonds unless the legislature in a subsequent session provides for a lower interest rate, in which case
16 the rate must be reduced to the rate specified by the legislature.

17 (2) In connection with the issuance of coal severance tax bonds, the board of examiners may pay
18 the principal and interest on the bonds when due from the debt service account and in all other respects
19 manage and use the funds within each special bond account for the benefit of the bonds. The board of
20 examiners shall exercise its discretion to enhance the marketability of the bonds and to secure the most
21 advantageous financial arrangements for the state.

22 (3) Earnings on the bond proceeds prior to the completion of any loan must be allocated to the
23 debt service account to pay the debt service on the bonds during this period. Earnings in excess of debt
24 service, if any, must be allocated to the natural resources projects state special revenue account established in
25 15-38-302.

26 (4) Loan repayments from loans financed with coal severance tax bonds are pledged, dedicated,
27 and appropriated to the debt service account in the state treasury for the benefit of bonds approved for loans
28 under this section.

1

2 NEW SECTION. Section 5. Conditions of loans. (1) Disbursement of funds under ~~[sections 1 and 2]~~

3 ~~[sections 1 through 3]~~ for loans is subject to the following conditions that must be met by project sponsors:

4 (a) approval of a scope of work and budget for the project by the department of natural resources
5 and conservation. Reductions in a scope of work or budget may not affect priority activities or improvements.

6 (b) documented commitment of other funds required for project completion;

7 (c) satisfactory completion of conditions described in the recommendations section of the project
8 narrative in the renewable resource grant and loan program project evaluations and recommendations report;

9 (d) execution of a loan agreement with the department of natural resources and conservation; and

10 (e) accomplishment of other specific requirements considered necessary by the department of
11 natural resources and conservation to accomplish the purpose of the loan as evidenced from the application to
12 the department or from the proposal to the legislature.

13 (2) Each sponsor authorized for a loan from coal severance tax bond proceeds may be required to
14 pay to the department of natural resources and conservation a pro rata share of the bond issuance costs and
15 the administrative costs incurred by the department to complete the loan transaction.

16
17 NEW SECTION. Section 6. Private and discount purchase of loans. Loans to political subdivisions
18 and local government entities pursuant to ~~[sections 1 and 2]~~[sections 1 through 3] and bonds, warrants, and
19 notes issued in evidence of those loans may be made, purchased by, and sold to the department of natural
20 resources and conservation at a discount and at a private negotiated sale, notwithstanding the provisions of
21 any other law applicable to political subdivisions or local government entities.

22
23 NEW SECTION. Section 7. Appropriations established. For any entity of state government that
24 receives a loan under ~~[section 1 and 2]~~[sections 1 through 3], an appropriation is established for the amount of
25 the loan upon award of the loan by the department of natural resources and conservation for the biennium
26 beginning July 1, 2023.

27
28 NEW SECTION. Section 8. Creation of state debt -- two-thirds vote required -- appropriation of

Amendment - 1st Reading-white - (H) Appropriations

- 2023

68th Legislature 2023

Drafter: Katy Callon, 406-444-4421

HB0008.001.005

1 **coal severance tax -- three-fourths vote required -- bonding provisions.** (1) Because ~~[section 3]~~[section 4]
2 authorizes the creation of state debt, Article VIII, section 8, of the Montana constitution requires a vote of two-
3 thirds of the members of each house of the legislature for passage.

4 (2) The legislature, through the enactment of ~~[sections 1 through 7]~~[sections 1 through 8] by a
5 vote of three-fourths of the members of each house of the legislature, as required by Article IX, section 5, of the
6 Montana constitution, pledges, dedicates, and appropriates from the coal severance tax bond fund all money
7 necessary for the payment of principal and interest not otherwise provided for on the coal severance tax bonds
8 authorized by ~~[section 3]~~[section 4] to be issued pursuant to Title 17, chapter 5, part 7, and pursuant to the
9 provisions of ~~[sections 1 through 7]~~[sections 1 through 8] and the general resolution for this bond program that
10 has been adopted by the board of examiners under the authority provided in Title 17, chapter 5, part 7.

11
12 NEW SECTION. Section 9. Notification to tribal governments. The secretary of state shall send a
13 copy of [this act] to each federally recognized tribal government in Montana.

14
15 NEW SECTION. Section 10. Severability. If a part of [this act] is invalid, all valid parts that are
16 severable from the invalid part remain in effect. If a part of [this act] is invalid in one or more of its applications,
17 the part remains in effect in all valid applications that are severable from the invalid applications.

18
19 NEW SECTION. Section 11. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2023.

20 - END -