

WEATHER MODIFICATION

LEGISLATOR NOTICE

The Legislative Services Division is required to offer a brief history on the subject matter of a bill draft request prior to drafting (5-4-105, MCA; [Chapter 309, Laws of 2017](#)). The history must include related legislation introduced over the last five sessions and hyperlinks to the bill, hearing information, and fiscal notes. The legislation links below open to the page showing the status and history of bills introduced on this topic in the past. The bill text and any related fiscal notes can be accessed through the link at the top of that page.

Legislation can be complex and this history is not intended to be exhaustive. Please contact the drafter of the requested bill for more information.

Background Materials and Research

Topic Summary: State law defines “weather modification” as a “means [of] changing or controlling or attempting to change or control, by artificial methods, the natural development of atmospheric cloud forms or precipitation forms that occur in the troposphere.” This is commonly known as cloud seeding.

The most common weather modification process involves introduction of a substance (such as silver iodide) into the air (by cannon, plane, or propane-fired tower) to cause condensation in clouds and to precipitate rain or snowfall. Following centuries of efforts by mostly non-scientific “rainmakers,” weather modification researchers successfully demonstrated cloud seeding in 1947; Montana state laws on the subject date back at least to then. Under Montana law, the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation may investigate, use, and coordinate weather modification efforts for the state of Montana. The department must also license and permit private weather modification activities. County residents may also petition to form their own weather modification authority.

Legislative Services Division Materials: None.

Other Materials: Jedidiah S. Rodgers, *Project Skywater*. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (2013).

Introduced Legislation

2017: None.

2015: None.

2013: None.

2011: None

2009: None

Prepared By:

Jason Mohr, research analyst

Legislative Environmental Policy Office