

By: Senator(s) Dearing

To: Environment Prot,
Cons and Water Res

SENATE BILL NO. 2860

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE STATEWIDE SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION
2 MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COORDINATING COUNCIL; TO SPECIFY THE MEMBERSHIP
3 OF THE COUNCIL AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE
4 COUNCIL; TO REQUIRE THE COORDINATING COUNCIL TO DEVELOP AND
5 PREPARE A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
6 A STATEWIDE SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND TO
7 PROVIDE FOR THE MINIMUM CONTENTS OF THAT PLAN; TO REQUIRE THE
8 MISSISSIPPI RESEARCH CONSORTIUM TO SERVE AS COORDINATOR FOR
9 IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 SECTION 1. This act shall be know and may be cited as the
12 "Statewide Scientific Information Management Act of 1999".

13 SECTION 2. (1) The Legislature finds that:

14 (a) Numerous federal and state agencies collect and
15 manage scientific information relating to the environment and
16 natural resources of the state;

17 (b) Scientific information is a strategic asset in the
18 management of our natural resources, exploration for oil and gas
19 and economic development activities; and

20 (c) Lack of coordination in the collection and
21 management of scientific information can lead to duplication of
22 efforts and inefficient information management thus leading to
23 increased and unnecessary costs.

24 (2) The purpose of this act is to establish a statewide
25 coordinated effort to provide for the management of scientific
26 information to ensure the effective and efficient collection,
27 management, dissemination, and analysis of scientific information
28 available to the state and to provide that information in a
29 user-friendly format to governmental agencies, academic

30 institutions, other public and private organizations and the
31 general public for economic development, natural resources and
32 environmental management and other purposes.

33 SECTION 3. For purposes of this act, the following terms
34 shall have the meaning ascribed herein unless the context clearly
35 indicates otherwise:

36 (a) "Scientific information" means information
37 associated with the monitoring and management of the environment
38 and natural resources of a specifically targeted geographic area
39 that is collected, analyzed, managed, updated by and used among
40 agencies, departments, associations and other organizations
41 concerned with or responsible for the geographic area.

42 (b) "Scientific information management system" means a
43 management system which would allow scientific information to be
44 collected, processed, analyzed, managed, updated and subsequently
45 accessed by users of that information.

46 SECTION 4. (1) There is created the Mississippi Statewide
47 Scientific Information Management System Coordinating Council,
48 hereinafter referred to as "coordinating council," for the purpose
49 of developing a strategic plan for a statewide scientific
50 information management system and serving as a coordinating entity
51 for all aspects of scientific information management.

52 (2) (a) The council shall consist of the following members:
53 the Executive Director of the Department of Environmental
54 Quality; the Executive Director of the Department of Economic and
55 Community Development; the Executive Director of the Department of
56 Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks; the Executive Director of the
57 Department of Marine Resources; the State Health Officer; the
58 Executive Director of the Department of Transportation; the
59 Chairman of the Mississippi Water Resources Advisory Council; the
60 Vice-President for Research and Sponsored Programs at each
61 university on the Mississippi Research Consortium; the State
62 Director of Technology Transfer; the Center Director of the
63 National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Stennis Space
64 Center; the Executive Director of the Mississippi Automated
65 Resource Information System; and two (2) representatives of the
66 private sector user community appointed by the Governor.

67 Members of the coordinating council not appointed by the
68 Governor shall serve a term concurrent with their term of office
69 in their respective position. Nonappointed members may designate
70 an alternate to serve in their stead.

71 Members of the council appointed by the Governor shall serve
72 four-year terms.

73 (b) In addition to the members of the coordinating
74 council specified in paragraph (a) of this subsection, the
75 coordinating council may invite, as participating members,
76 representative of any other state and federal organizations, or
77 individuals possessing appropriate expertise or who have a viable
78 interest in the development and implementation of the statewide
79 scientific information management system.

80 (c) Original appointments to the coordinating council
81 shall be made no later than October 1, 1999. The Governor shall
82 require adequate disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by
83 appointed members of the coordinating council. Vacancies on the
84 coordinating council shall be filled by appointment in the same
85 manner as the original appointments.

86 (d) The coordinating council shall elect from its
87 membership a chairperson to preside over meetings and
88 vice-chairperson to preside in the absence fo the chairperson or
89 when the chairperson shall be excused. The coordinating council
90 shall adopt procedures governing the manner of conducting its
91 business. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum to
92 do business.

93 (e) Members of the coordinating council shall serve
94 without compensation. At the direction of the chairman of the
95 coordinating council and contingent upon the availability of
96 sufficient funds, each member may receive reimbursement for
97 reasonable expenses, including travel expenses in accordance with
98 rates established pursuant to Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of
99 1972, incurred in attending meetings of the coordinating council.

100 (3) The coordinating council shall convene before November
101 15, 1999.

102 (4) The coordinating council shall not employ any permanent
103 staff, rent or occupy independent office space or otherwise
104 establish a full-time office.

105 (5) In conducting its activities under this act, the
106 coordinating council may elicit the support of and participation
107 by any state or local governmental agency as may be necessary or
108 appropriate. All state and local governmental agencies shall
109 provide support or participation as requested.

110 (6) The coordinating council may exercise those duties and
111 powers necessary to carry out the purposes of this act, including,
112 but not limited to, the following functions:

113 (a) Conduct, or cause to be conducted any studies,
114 analyses or evaluations related to the development and
115 implementation of a scientific information management system;

116 (b) Apply and contract for and accept any grants,
117 public or private funds, gifts or proceeds in furtherance of the
118 activities of the coordinating council;

119 (c) Authorize the Chairman of the Mississippi Research
120 Consortium to enter into all contracts or execute all instruments,
121 on behalf of the coordinating council, and do all acts necessary,
122 desirable or convenient to carry out any power expressly granted
123 to the council in this chapter.

124 (d) Expend or distribute any funds or assets in its
125 custody or under its control appropriate in carrying out the
126 purposes of this act.

127 SECTION 5. (1) Before November 15, 2000, the Mississippi
128 Scientific Information Management System Coordinating Council
129 shall develop and prepare a strategic plan for the development and
130 implementation of a statewide scientific information management
131 system.

132 (2) The strategic plan shall include, but not be limited to,

133 the following:

134 (a) A detailed analysis of the sources, types, amounts
135 and methods by which scientific information is currently collected
136 in the state and of methods or systems currently used to manage
137 that scientific information;

138 (b) An identification of the current costs of
139 collection, management, analysis, updating, use and dissemination
140 of scientific information in the state with particular emphasis on
141 costs to state agencies;

142 (c) A description of current efforts by agencies and
143 organizations collecting scientific information to provide broad
144 access to that information;

145 (d) An identification of planned scientific information
146 management programs and needs and an evaluation of how those
147 planned programs or needs may be met or integrated into the
148 statewide scientific information management system;

149 (e) A clearly-defined, comprehensive statement of the
150 mission, goals and objectives of the statewide scientific
151 information management system;

152 (f) A detailed analysis of the benefits and
153 capabilities of a statewide scientific information management
154 system;

155 (g) A plan for the development and implementation of a
156 statewide scientific information management system in a phased
157 manner;

158 (h) A timeline for the development and implementation
159 of a statewide scientific information management system;

160 (i) A detailed analysis and estimate of the costs for
161 development and implementation of the statewide scientific
162 information management system and a recommended method for funding
163 the development and implementation of the system; and

164 (j) Any other information the coordinating council
165 deems appropriate.

166 (3) In addition, the strategic plan shall recommend
167 appropriate policies and standards for use in management of
168 scientific information and for providing access to that
169 information. The strategic plan shall also address information
170 accuracy and quality issues, ease of access issues, training and
171 technical support issues and interagency coordination issues.

172 (4) Upon completion of the strategic plan, the coordinating
173 council shall provide copies to the Governor, the Lieutenant
174 Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the
175 Chairmen of the Senate Environmental Protection, Conservation and
176 Water Resources Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee,
177 the Chairmen of the House Conservation and Water Resources
178 Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, the Legislative
179 Budget Office, the Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review
180 Committee, the Executive Director of the Department of Finance and
181 Administration and the Legislative Reference Bureau.

182 SECTION 6. The Mississippi Research Consortium shall serve
183 as the coordinator for implementation of this act. The consortium
184 shall provide any technical and other support services and
185 personnel as the Mississippi Scientific Information Management
186 System Coordinating Council may require in the performance of its
187 functions. The consortium shall administer any funds made
188 available to the coordinating council for its use and shall at the
189 request and on behalf of the coordinating council, contract for
190 services using any funds available to the coordinating council.

191 SECTION 7. Sections 1 through 6 of this act shall be
192 codified as a new chapter in Title 49.

193 SECTION 8. This act shall take effect and be in force from
194 and after July 1, 1999.