

1933 to carry out all Federal functions essential to a unified program of resource development, use, and conservation. The Delaware River Basin Commission, established by Federal-State compact in 1961, has a broad delegation of Federal and State powers, but it does not replace existing agencies. Thus far it has not engaged in direct operations, but it has adopted a comprehensive river basin plan to which actions by Federal and State agencies must conform. Analysis of the accomplishments of those regional agencies should shed light on the potential benefits of consolidation at the national level.

Through the Federal-State river basin planning commissions authorized by the Act, State representatives are able, for the first time, to participate in comprehensive river basin planning as equal partners of the Federal representatives. The Act also established the Water Resources Council to perform certain Government-wide and nation-wide functions, which are designed to achieve a unified approach to water resources functions among the several Federal agencies.

River basin commissions are composed of a Chairman, appointed by the President, and representatives of interested Federal agencies and the participating States, appointed by agency heads and Governors respectively. This broad representation enables the commissions to approach the development of water and related land resources in a way that recognizes inherent land and water relationships and undertakes to explore all economically feasible uses. Their major functions are to prepare joint, coordinated, and comprehensive plans for Federal, State, interstate, local and private development of these resources and to recommend priorities for action. Each plan is to include an evaluation of all reasonable alternatives for achieving optimum development as well as the commission's recommendations.

Since the commissions are advisory only, the Act directs that their methods of operation be designed to achieve a consensus with respect to their recommendations. Failing consensus, each member is to be given full opportunity to present and report his views. A proposed plan will then be transmitted to each interested Federal agency, the Governor of each State, and any interstate agency or the U.S. section of any international commission that may be affected. With or without subsequent revision, completed plans, together with comments received, will be transmitted to the President through the Water Resources Council.

The Water Resources Council is composed of the Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce, and the heads of the Federal agencies concerned with water resources and programs.

To provide for a unified approach among Federal agencies, the Act directs the Council to consult with other interested entities, Federal and non-Federal, and to establish, with the President's approval, principles, standards, and procedures for Federal participants in comprehensive regional or river basin planning and project formulation and evaluation.