

# INCREASED INVESTMENT for WATER RESOURCES and ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION



## FY 2011 Energy & Water Appropriations

### BACKGROUND

*Our nation's water resources are critical to our economy, our infrastructure, public safety, and the preservation and enhancement of our environmental resources. Much of our water infrastructure is aging, compromising its ability to meet the needs for which it was created. With a commitment from Congress to a plan that increases funding for its civil works program over the next five years, critical water resources projects could be executed at levels that will eliminate the backlog of projects and meet the nation's water resource needs.*

### WRC MESSAGE

**Increase Civil Works Funding to at Least \$7.0 Billion for FY 2011.** With each passing day, the inability of our nation's aging infrastructure to meet the needs of our growing population further threatens our economy. To complete ongoing infrastructure projects in a timely and efficient manner and to save future costly repairs by adequately addressing the existing backlog of critical deferred maintenance, Civil Works funding must increase to at least \$7.0 billion for FY 2011. In subsequent years, annual increases of at least \$400-600 million will be required to reduce the "benefits foregone," keep the Civil Works program on schedule and save the nation the costs of paying for more expensive "crisis" repairs in the future.

**Increase Funding For Bureau of Reclamation to at Least \$1.2 Billion for FY 2011.** The Bureau has a broad portfolio of responsibilities for natural resource management. Additional funding would allow the agency to address aging water resource facilities and to make significant progress on environmental restoration, irrigation structures, water recycling, and rural drinking water systems. As with providing additional funding for the Corps of Engineers, additional funding for the Bureau of Reclamation could be put to use over the next two years to put shovels in the ground, fortifying critical pieces of infrastructure and creating good-paying construction jobs that would stimulate the economy.

**Eliminate the Infrastructure Investment Gap.** In recent years, national investment in water resources projects has not kept pace with the level of economic and social expansion. Over the last 30 years, the U.S. population has increased more than 40 percent while GDP has grown from \$2.5 to \$7.5 trillion. Capital investment in public water resources infrastructure, however, has decreased by 70 percent. The combination of an expanding population and economy coupled with a decline in infrastructure investment has created a substantial investment gap.

**The Need for Investment.** In 2009, ASCE estimated that \$2.2 trillion needed to be invested over five years to bring the condition of the nation's infrastructure up to a good condition—an increase of more than half a trillion dollars since the 2005 Report Card's estimate of \$1.6 trillion. This number, adjusted for a 3% rate of inflation, represents capital spending at all levels of government and includes what is already being spent. Current spending amounts to only about half of the needed investment, which means the U.S. must invest an additional \$1.1 billion over the next five years.

**Restructure Continuing Contracts To Improve Project Delivery And Reduce Costs.** Congress should agree to fully fund all Civil Works projects under \$40 million in FY 2011 and \$60 million in FY 2012. Absent fully funding all navigation and waterways projects, a fair and equitable continuing contracts clause is necessary to finance multi-year projects.

**Allow New Construction Starts.** We urge the removal of the prohibition on “new starts” in future Appropriations bills. We believe this is not in the best interest of the Corps’ work on the nation’s waterways, flood control needs and ecosystems restoration. Congress took a strong stand and made a serious commitment to the American people when it voted to override President Bush’s veto of the 2007 Water Resources Development Act and authorized over \$23 billion in new projects for the Corps of Engineers. It is time to meet that commitment by addressing this backlog of funding needs and provide additional funding for this critically important program. However, not moving on new projects, that have been authorized, will stop the Corps from addressing pressing needs.

**Congress Should Fully Fund the National Dam Safety Program.** To protect the safety of our nation’s dams, we urge full funding for the National Dam Safety Program at the authorized level of \$14.9 million for fiscal year 2011 and provide a specific line item in FEMA’s budget for the program. The National Dam Safety Program Act (PL 104-303) established the first national program to improve the safety of both federal and non-federal dams in the United States and was reauthorized in 2002 and 2006 as the Dam Safety and Security Act of 2002 (PL 107-310) and the Dam Safety Act (PL 109-460). States have the enormous responsibility of regulating 95% of the nation’s 79,000 dams. This modestly funded, yet vital, program provides assistance to state dam safety programs through grant assistance, providing technical training, research and facilitating important partnerships between states and federal agencies with vast dam safety expertise.

**Meet Needs for Greater Integrated Water Resources Planning in the West.** The Bureau of Reclamation has played an important role in the development of the 17 western states over the past one hundred years. The WRC recognizes the importance of such investment given the aging of the infrastructure and the harsh climatic conditions of the western United States. We believe there should also be a greater emphasis to drought preparedness and the expected challenges from climate change with regard to the Reclamation program.

**Increase Funding to States for Water Planning.** Increased funding to the states for water resource planning is vitally important to encourage statewide collaborative efforts to avert future crisis such as flooding or drought. Preparedness is a cornerstone for ensuring future water supply availability for population and economic growth and new challenges to address environmental needs. At least \$100 million should be provided on a cost-shared basis in the Civil Works program to help states develop strategies to address their future challenges and needs.

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*The **Water Resources Coalition** was established in 2007 to promote the development, implementation and funding of a comprehensive national water resources policy. With member organizations representing state and local governments, conservation, engineering and construction, ports, waterways and transportation services, the Coalition works to ensure that a comprehensive, national water resources policy is developed, implemented and funded to provide a sustainable, productive economy; a healthy aquatic ecology; and public health and safety. For more information, visit the Water Resources Coalition Web site at [www.waterresourcescoalition.org](http://www.waterresourcescoalition.org).*