



May 10, 2016

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Gibbs
Subcommittee on Water Resources
and Environment
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
Subcommittee on Water Resources
and Environment
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member DeFazio, Chairman Gibbs, and Ranking Member Napolitano:

As the Committee works to develop a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) for 2016, we urge you to consider including language that will encourage greater coordination among all levels of government addressing water resources management as well as place a greater focus on holistic planning for this vital resource.

As you know, many communities around the U.S. face challenges in finding sufficient water supplies. While many arid regions of the West have long been challenged to innovate to stretch and supplement their water supply, other regions are also experiencing more frequent droughts and increased pressure on current water resources. To address water demand, many municipalities develop plans for stormwater management, water reuse, and aquifer recharge. Many such plans may look to capture high flows to optimize storms for reuse and recharge. These efforts will be influenced by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) actions and also have the potential to impact ACOE's work in the community and upstream.

Enhanced coordination between the ACOE and local stormwater agencies could also help in the wetter climates of the Midwest and Eastern Seaboard. Many communities in these regions are spending increasing amounts of local ratepayer dollars on controlling urban stormwater runoff in order to mitigate adverse water quality impacts. As in arid regions, there may be

opportunities for increased collaboration between the ACOE as it fulfills its flood control and ecosystem restoration missions, and local stormwater management efforts in order to ensure that federal and ratepayer investments are being efficiently utilized and beneficial outcomes are maximized.

We believe that including a provision in WRDA requiring enhanced coordination between the ACOE and municipalities would prompt the ACOE to look more carefully at local water quality, aquifer recharge, and/or water reuse plans and, where feasible, incorporate those plans into the federal effort, or at least not adversely impact the local plans. At the same time, such language would encourage local communities with water quality and water supply plans to collaborate with their ACOE district office to better integration and management of water resources. We suggest the following language as a WRDA provision:

“sec. xxx.—INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES PLANNING. In carrying out a water resources development feasibility study, the Secretary shall coordinate with local governments in the watershed area covered by such study to determine if local or regional water management plans exist or are under development for the purposes of stormwater management, water quality improvement, aquifer recharge, or water reuse. When such local or regional water management plans do exist in the watershed, the Secretary, in cooperation with the non-federal sponsor and affected local public entities, shall seek opportunities for mutually beneficial management of water resources.”

This is a commonsense provision that will encourage local and federal officials to manage water as one resource with multiple purposes. It enjoys bipartisan support in the Committee and we ask that it be included in the introduced WRDA bill.

Sincerely,

Adam Krantz
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of
Clean Water Agencies

Susan Gilson
Executive Director
National Association of Flood and
Stormwater Management Agencies

Diane VanDe Hei
Chief Executive Officer
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies

Scott Grayson
Executive Director
American Public Works Association

Eileen O’Neill
Executive Director
Water Environment Federation

Melissa L. Meeker
Executive Director
WateReuse

David B. LaFrance
Chief Executive Officer
American Water Works Association