



November 18, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Support Efforts to Increase Water Resources Infrastructure Investment in Jobs Bill**

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

On behalf of the Water Resources Coalition, we are writing to urge you to support efforts to increase investment in water resources infrastructure in any forthcoming legislation that would help create jobs. Our nation faces challenging economic times, and we reiterate the call for significant investment in our nation's infrastructure as a means of providing an immediate and lasting impact on our economy.

As this process moves forward, we understand that you will be faced with many difficult decisions. Our nation's infrastructure needs are large: \$2.2 trillion needed to improve the nation's infrastructure over the next five years. Included in that total are billions of dollars in critical infrastructure projects that would be administered by both the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation. These agencies have construction and operations and maintenance backlogs for which additional funding would create immediate construction employment opportunities.

With additional funding, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would fully fund major waterways navigation, and flood control projects. Upon contract award and commencement, these funds would provide an immediate economic impact and continue for several years, particularly for a very large construction project. However, expenditures - and thus, job creation - for on-going and smaller construction projects, including dredging and operations and maintenance work, would be higher up front.

It is widely estimated that every additional \$1 billion of investment in nonresidential construction supports or creates 28,500 jobs. There are several other important benefits to stimulus funds for water resources projects identified by the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation. Such funding would:

- Substantially reduce the backlog of critical maintenance and repairs at hundreds of multiple purpose flood control, hydropower, recreation, water supply, and navigation projects.
- Repair several high risk dam safety projects.
- Rehabilitate and upgrade hydropower plants to achieve an industry standard 98 percent availability.
- Recapitalize the oldest and most at-risk projects on our inland waterways system.
- Fully dredge, to authorized depth, the nation's highest-use deep draft, commercial ports.

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**improve, prevent, save**  
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- Fully dredge our inland waterways to authorized depth and width.
- Repair and upgrade critical coastal protection projects that serve as defense to key population centers.
- Increase water supply reliability and availability through water reuse and rural water projects.

The nation's Marine Transportation System contributes 30 percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product through the movement of petroleum, coal, and other energy products to power plants and consumers and through the export of agricultural and other products to global trade partners improving the nation's balance of trade. Approximately 2.6 billion tons, or 94 percent, of the nation's commercial import and export commerce, valued at over \$620 billion, is moved on the channels and waterways. Failure to maintain channels creates a drag on the economy and may slow economic growth. Additional investment in our nation's waterways would be used to improve channel availability of our coastal ports from 32 percent to 95 percent, and would improve inland waterway lock and channel reliability and availability by reducing lock closures due to mechanical failures from 27,000 hours to 10,000 hours per year.

Finally, investment in this sector will greatly expedite the construction of critical environmental projects: completing projects sooner, returning critical ecosystems to a more natural state. Projects producing beneficial impacts on more than 1 million acres could be expedited. Of these outputs, approximately 90 percent are nationally significant and would contribute greatly to long-term environmental sustainability.

To maximize the economic stimulus benefits of investment in water resources projects, the Corps recommends, and WRC agrees, that a provision be enacted to enable cost-sharing sponsors to repay their share within 5 years. Since most Corps projects are cost-shared, and many local jurisdictions are experiencing budget shortfalls, this provision would allow the Corps to enter into cost-sharing agreements without regard to the availability of the non-federal share and immediately apply funding where it would do the most good.

We urge you to continue to support all efforts to increase infrastructure investment in the jobs bill. The Water Resources Coalition stands ready to provide whatever assistance we can to help you in your efforts to achieve passage of the jobs bill.

Sincerely,



Brian Pallasch  
Co-Chairman  
American Society of Civil Engineers



Marco Giamberardino  
Co-Chairman  
The Associated General Contractors of America

cc: The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
The Honorable James Clyburn  
The Honorable John Larson  
The Honorable George Miller