



May 17, 2018

The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman  
Senate Environment and Public Works  
Committee  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper  
Ranking Member  
Senate Environment and Public Works  
Committee  
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jim Inhofe  
Chairman  
Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee  
Senate Environment and Public Works  
Committee  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ben Cardin  
Ranking Member  
Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee  
Senate Environment and Public Works  
Committee  
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, Chairman Inhofe, and Ranking Member Cardin:

The undersigned organizations write to urge the inclusion of the “Local Planning Enhancement and Watershed Integration” language in the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee’s manager’s amendment for the 2018 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). This language will help create more efficient outcomes for improved local water resource management through increased coordination between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and local governments.

Many communities around the nation are taking a more integrated and innovative approach to managing their water resources as they confront more complex hydrological challenges and extreme weather events today than decades past. Many of these approaches look to optimize opportunities for managing wet weather events in ways that bolster a community’s resiliency to them. For example, when implementing local stormwater management plans, communities are not only implementing practices to divert stormwater or prevent flooding, but are incorporating best management practices such as stormwater recycling for aquifer recharge, habitat restoration, and augmenting freshwater supplies.

While USACE is primarily responsible for undertaking projects that address flood risk management, navigation, and aquatic ecosystem restoration goals, working with local sponsors and integrating these activities with local municipal stormwater management projects can help ensure broader water resource management goals like water reuse and aquifer recharge are met. The proposed language accomplishes this by directing the USACE to coordinate with communities when planning and implementing projects to enhance local water resource management goals.

Improving water resource management through increased coordination is a common-sense way to maximize benefits of water resource management. This provision has already been vetted and was included in the 2016 Senate WRDA bill, but was cut during conference negotiations due to procedural issues, not substantive issues. We urge the inclusion of this provision in the Committee's manager's amendment for WRDA. The language is identical to the provision included in the 2016 Senate passed bill (Sec. 1042. Local Government Water Management Plans) except for the retitled section name.

*"Sec. xxx. LOCAL PLANNING ENHANCEMENT AND WATERSHED INTEGRATION. The Secretary, with the consent of the non-Federal sponsor of a feasibility study for a water resources development project, may enter into a feasibility study cost-sharing agreement under section 221(a) of the Flood Control Act of 1970 ( 42 U.S.C. 1962d -5b(a)), to allow a unit of local government in a watershed that has adopted a local or regional water management plan to participate in the feasibility study to determine if there is an opportunity to include additional feasible elements in the project being studied to help achieve the purposes identified in the local or regional water management plan.*

Alternatively, we would also support the inclusion of corresponding House language being requested by Members of the House in their 2018 WRDA bill. The 2016 House language has been shortened to one sentence for this WRDA cycle:

*"Sec. xxx. INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES PLANNING. In carrying out a feasibility study for a water resources development project, the Secretary shall coordinate with communities in the watershed covered by such study to determine if a local or regional water management plan exists or is under development for the purposes of stormwater management, water quality improvement, aquifer recharge, or water reuse."*

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Amber Kim or Patricia Sinicropi with the WateReuse Association at [akim@watereuse.org](mailto:akim@watereuse.org) or [psinicropi@watereuse.org](mailto:psinicropi@watereuse.org) with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

American Public Works Association

National Association of Clean Water Agencies

National Association of Flood & Stormwater Management Agencies

WateReuse Association

US Water Alliance