



Statement of the
Interstate Council on Water Policy

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Role in the Nation's
Water Resource Needs in the 21st Century

U.S. Senate
Environment and Public Works Committee

Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Senator Christopher Bond, Chairman

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The Interstate Council on Water Policy (ICWP), a national organization representing state, interstate and regional water resources management agencies, appreciates the opportunity to submit this statement for inclusion in the record of the March hearing on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Role in the Nation's Water Resource Needs in the 21s Century.

ICWP in particular, would like to address its comments to the need for a Water Resources Development Act of 2004. We appreciate the committee's efforts to move a WRDA bill this congressional session and support the inclusion of language in this legislation to expand U.S. Army Corps of Engineers technical assistance to State, interstate and local water resource management agencies for local water planning. ICWP also supports the authorization of adequate funding to carry out this activity.

Increased State Planning Assistance

ICWP encourages an increase in planning assistance provided to states under Section 22 of Public Law 93-251 (42 U.S.C. 1962d-16).

Support for Regional Environmental Restoration Approaches/Sediment Management

ICWP feels the Corps' capabilities are critical to the area of environmental restoration dealing with sediment management. ICWP urges the Corps to work with non-federal sponsors to address regional sediment issues.

Development of Partnership Agreement

ICWP also supports legislative efforts to develop a new partnership agreement for flood control projects that reflects the federal partnership with local sponsors in carrying out these critical activities. ICWP also supports moving approval and signing of this agreement to the District level.

Clarification of Model Agreements

Some states have expressed concerns about the lack of uniformity and flexibility involving model feasibility, project cost share and planning assistance to the states agreements, primarily related to state anti-deficiency constitution and laws that prevent state or local governments from unconditionally committing future funds. Federal law relating to such model agreements should be amended to clarify that model agreements developed by the Secretary shall contain provisions to recognize limitations imposed by States' anti-deficiency laws.

We appreciate your efforts to adopt a WRDA this year and offer our assistance in your work to achieve this goal. Please feel free to have your staff call ICWP Executive Director Susan Gilson at 202-218-4133 if you have any questions. As an organization with members who partner with the Corps in various capacities, we very much appreciate this commitment. Since 1986, Congress has worked hard to keep with this two-year renewal process and we as sponsors applaud this effort.