

Integrated Water Resources Management Act of 2005

Section-by-Section

Section 2 - Support for State, Tribal, Interstate Water Resources Organizations, and Local Governments - Reiterates the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) mission to assist State and local governments in implementing locally-identified water resources management plans.

Section 3 - Technical Assistance. - Eliminates the State funding limitation in Section 22 of the Water Resources Management Act (WRDA) of 1974. This allows the Corps to target federal technical assistance funds to federal and State priority water management issues and better respond to state needs.

Section 4 - Watershed and River Basin Assessments. Modifies cost sharing for comprehensive basin studies to 75/25 federal/non-federal cost share requirements and allows the non-Federal share to be provided through in-kind services. This provision was included in the House-passed WRDA bill in the 108th Congress.

Section 5 - Credit for Materials and In-Kind Services - Provides for cost share credit for planning, engineering, design, and construction efforts conducted by non-federal project sponsors required for the project/study implementation. Under this provision, non-federal cost share credit would extend to work conducted prior to execution of an agreement, allowing Texas to take credit for its proactive efforts in regional water planning. This provision is important to Texas due to the considerable effort expended by the State on water planning activities. This reduces the amount of time required for completion, which reduces the total cost of the project.

Section 6 - Improvement of Water Management at Corps of Engineers Reservoirs - Provides for possible reallocation of storage, as well as possible improvements in system operations. This provision allows the Corps to use their reservoirs to more effectively and efficiently address present and future water resources needs of the regions affected by the reservoirs. This authority takes on a high level of importance as Texas implements the water management strategies identified in the State Water Plan. The assessments under this authority could preclude the need for major water supply development in some circumstances and could reduce the costs of water supply development for many Texas communities.

Section 7 - Access to Water Resources Data - Establishes a program for the Corps to make its data more readily available to the public. Additionally, it encourages data management partnerships with State and local governments, particularly States such as Texas that have well-established data collection and dissemination infrastructure.

Section 8 - Written Agreement for Water Resources Projects - This provision restores the authority for negotiating and approving cost sharing agreements with local sponsors to the District level (which was inadvertently changed in the 1986 Reauthorization). The provision allows for an expedited and more region-specific decision making process. A similar provision was included in the House-passed WRDA bill in the 108th Congress.

Section 9 - Environmental Infrastructure - Expands Corps existing authority to provide technical assistance for water resources management in Texas colonias to include construction authority for Texas colonias. In addition the provision allows for the non-federal cost share of the project to be provided through in-kind services.

Section 10 - Texas Environmental Infrastructure Program - Establishes a general authority for the Corps to assist state and local governments in planning, engineering, design, and construction of water supply, wastewater, water quality, and environmental projects. In addition, the provision allows the Texas Water Development Board to prioritize water projects based the State Water Plan. **This proposed provision is the most significant authority in helping to implement the water management strategies identified to meet the enormous water needs of the State.** The Corps has similar existing authority in several other states.

If you would like to cosponsor the Integrated Water Resources Management Act, please contact Congressman Burgess or staffer Stacey DeFino at 225-7772.