

## Federal Funding of Authorized Water Projects

### BACKGROUND

Texas and the rest of the nation face urgent water challenges, including: deteriorating infrastructure; increasing demands for water; conflicting uses, especially those between economic and environmental uses; frequent and extended droughts, particularly in the arid West; and limited resources.

All levels of government – federal, state, and local – as well as the private sector, must act to meet these challenges.

Texas faces water shortages that are among the most severe in the nation. Recognizing the potential for adverse impacts to the state, state and local governments committed considerable time and millions of dollars to estimate future water needs and to develop comprehensive strategies for adequately managing these needs. The State Water Plan has been thoughtfully developed by regional water planning groups at the grassroots level. The plan identifies a balanced but urgent approach for managing water resources for our people, economy and environment. Investments in new water supply and conveyance are critical components of the State Water Plan, and part of a prudent strategy that applies conservation, reuse and other means to use existing water sources wisely.

Texas is proud that most of the costs of planning and implementing water management strategies will be met by local and state resources. These resources, however, can become even more powerful and effective when leveraged at the federal level. Texas is a significant contributor to the national economy. As such, it is in the nation's interest to support a healthy Texas economy that thrives in an environmentally sustainable way. Thus, federal participation in water development in Texas is a national priority. The federal government and the state of Texas must commit to joint participation in investing in water for Texas. The Corps of Engineers is vital to this federal-state partnership.

Section 5138 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 establishing the Texas Environmental Infrastructure Program (TEIP) is a major step forward for the future of Texas water. TEIP will provide appropriate federal support for implementing the water projects identified in the Texas Water Plan, especially in rural and other areas of the state that have not developed partnerships with the Corps of Engineers. Deteriorating infrastructure is a major problem facing many of these communities. TEIP will help provide answers for these areas.



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💧 **SUMMARY:** Water is critical to the economy of Texas and the nation. Understanding that the nation now faces a financial crisis that will impact the federal budget and require the skill of Congress to stimulate the economy, we urge Congress to recognize the immediate and long-term economic benefits of funding water infrastructure projects. It is particularly important that Environmental Infrastructure (EI) projects for Texas be funded and “new starts” be allowed.

The Texas Environmental Infrastructure Program (TEIP) was established to provide federal partnering with state and local entities to implement water projects identified in the Texas Water Plan. The

Texas Water Plan not only defines the water projects needed for Texas’ future, but also substantiates the long-term economic benefits to Texas and the nation of investing in those water projects. The projects proposed for TEIP funding were identified as high priority, and critical to the immediate water needs of Texas. Funding of these projects offers the best investment in Texas water needs, immediately stimulating economic activity while helping to sustain the future growth of the state. Therefore, the Texas Water Conservation Association, with members representing both the state and local partners, urges Congress to appropriate full funding of the \$40 million authorized for the TEIP, as well as the other authorized Texas Environmental Infrastructure projects.

Additionally, work under the TEIP and other EI authorizations for Texas is considered a new start. It is the understanding of the Association that funding via a stimulus will be limited to previously funded projects. Given that TEIP projects are both infrastructure-based and ready to proceed immediately, and providing funding for these projects will boost the Texas economy by creating construction jobs as well as long-term jobs for project operations, the Association strongly urges Congress to include language in the economic stimulus bill that will allow funding for previously unauthorized projects or new starts.

💧 **REQUEST:** We respectfully request your support for funding of Texas’ Environmental Infrastructure projects in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 as one of your highest priorities for FY 2010 Energy & Water Appropriations Subcommittee requests. TEIP is the only STATEWIDE program that addresses water needs in all communities. Appropriating the \$40 million authorized for the Texas Environmental Infrastructure Program (Section 5138 ) will provide support for critical funding of Texas water projects and demonstrate how water infrastructure projects can stimulate economic activity, support Texas growth, and create jobs.

💧 **REQUEST:** We respectfully request you to ask the Manager of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to allow projects considered “new starts” to receive funding that otherwise meet the criteria for economic stimulus.