

Funding for U.S. Geological Survey

BACKGROUND

Texas enjoys a sterling reputation for comprehensive water resources planning, and now seeks to construct high priority water infrastructure projects identified and prioritized based, in part, upon data provided by the United States Geological Services Cooperative Water Program (USGS CWP). Planning of this importance and magnitude requires a base knowledge of the quantity and quality of the state's water resources. The USGS CWP is a critical component to this base of knowledge; however, the federal portion of funding for streamgaging under CWP has steadily declined over the past several years.



Water resources data are critical to ensure and stimulate economic development, public health and environmental protection. Such information is vital to water resources planning, provides data for flood warnings and characterization, provides flow measurements to maximize hydropower generation, helps to reduce pollutant loads, and addresses environmental concerns. Emergency management personnel depend upon the accessibility and accuracy of streamflow information provided by the USGS CWP streamgages. During flood events, streamgages actively measure the flows, allowing emergency management personnel to plan and respond promptly. It is in the national interest to have a single, integrated system providing real-time and historical stream flow information for all users, including water managers, emergency managers, recreational water users, engineers, and scientists. The CWP is intended to fulfill that purpose. We need to continue to increase our scientific understanding in order to accurately assess the sustainability of our water resources and to implement valuable water resource projects demanded by policymakers and the public at large.



💧 **SUMMARY:** Recognizing the nation is in an historic financial crisis which impacts the federal budget, we urge Congress to acknowledge the role water infrastructure projects can play in revitalizing the nation's economy. The data provided by the USGS Cooperative Water Program has been an integral component of Texas' successful planning and management of water resources issues, as described in the 2006 report by the National Hydrologic Warning Council entitled "Benefits of USGS Streamgaging Program" (http://nhwc.udfcd.org/PDF/nhwc_nsip_phaseA.pdf). The USGS CWP provides invaluable long-term hydrological data for state and local water resource managers. Support for the USGS CWP in the federal budget enhances water infrastructure planning and development, flood response, drought management, water supply, irrigation, water rights, fisheries, and recreation.



💧 **REQUEST:** A \$60 million increase above FY 2008 funding, specifically for the U.S. Geological Survey's Investigations and Research Account for the Cooperative Water Program, which is part of the FY 2010 Interior and Environment spending bill. This will return the program to a 50% federal / 50% non-federal cost share, thereby supporting vital water resources infrastructure upgrades and new project development necessary to meet the growing demands of the nation.