

## Summary: Priority Water Issues for Texas

In implementing its water resources projects, Texans have a long history of environmental compliance, while proactively planning for economic growth. The Texas Water Conservation Association (TWCA) strongly supports maintaining a balance in the federal decision-making on water resources projects that properly considers our environment and the net economic benefit to Texas and the nation. TWCA supports Texas' primacy over water resources management with state, regional, and local control and strong federal support in technical, financial and implementation roles.

Water is critical to the economy of Texas and the nation. Understanding that the nation faces a continuing financial crisis that will require the skill of Congress in helping to stimulate the economy, the members of the TWCA from across the state of Texas call upon our Texas Delegation to recognize the immediate and long-term economic benefits of funding water infrastructure projects.

### U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY FUNDING

Texas enjoys a sterling reputation for comprehensive water resources planning and now seeks to construct high-priority water infrastructure projects identified and prioritized, in part, on the basis of data provided by the USGS' National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) and Cooperative Water Program (CWP).

◆ **SUPPORT:** The USGS and its design for the NSIP beginning in FY 2011 and to restore the USGS capacity for matching non-federal cost-share investments in the CWP on a 50/50 basis. Full implementation of the NSIP will require \$110 million annually (substantially more than the \$27.2 million available this year). With a fully functioning NSIP, the USGS would also need approximately \$95 million for the CWP to match state tribal and other non-federal investments in data collection and interpretive investigations (the budget for this year included only \$65.5 million).

### CONTROLLING INVASIVE AQUATIC PLANTS

Federal help is needed to address problems caused by invasive plant species through (1) financial assistance with operational control of existing problems and (2) technical assistance in developing and implementing scientifically sound, ecosystem-based management strategies for restoring native plant communities in weed-infested water bodies.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Funding for the following U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' aquatic plant control and research programs: \$5 million to the Aquatic Plant Control (APC) cost-share efforts; \$5 million to the Aquatic Plant Control Research Program (APCRP); \$2 million for innovative approaches to solving non-indigenous aquatic plant problems.

### DIRECTION OF FEDERAL WATER POLICY

We are proud of Texas for many reasons—its strong economy during time of recession, its forward-thinking planning for future growth that will happen, and its regard for the environment to be protected and sustained for future generations of Texans to enjoy. However, the TWCA is concerned that several recent federal policy and legislative proposals carry a serious threat to Texas' authority to maintain its future water resources infrastructure.

We call upon our Texas Delegation to demand that Federal proposals provide balance to protect the environment while continuing to maintain Texas' primacy to control water resources management and build its water infrastructure for the future.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Maintaining Texas' primacy regarding water resources management. In the pending revisions to the Principles & Guidelines and the Floodplain Executive Order (EO 11988), we request your support for transparency in the process and pledge our cooperation in a meaningful discussion of changes to these critical Federal water policies.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Texas receiving its fair share of Federal funding on all issues including Corps, Bureau of Reclamation, EPA, and other water-related Federal funding.

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### SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

Meeting Texas' future water needs involves advancing a traditional water supply strategies, such as reservoirs and pipelines, as well as emerging sustainable water management strategies. Emerging strategies are sustainable and support federal "green initiative" policies. Timely implementation of these strategies to meet Texas' water needs is consistent with the objectives of the economic stimulus initiative to create jobs, to advance science and technology in a manner that creates long term benefits, and to address the strong connection between water and energy.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Streamlining of federal programs and increased federal funding for research, development, and implementation of innovative and sustainable methods of enhancing water supplies, including reuse, conservation and desalination (seawater, brackish groundwater, and surface water).

◆ **SUPPORT:** Additional funding and broadening of the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI Program and agricultural water conservation projects.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Additional funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's Research Grant Program, State Revolving Funds program, and the Alliance for Water Efficiency.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Innovative Clean Renewable Water Supply Bonds (CREWS) legislation (H.R. 4132, S.1371).

◆ **SUPPORT:** Full funding of the USGS Cooperation Water Program (CWP) at a total of \$95 million to gather quantity and quality data critical to the development of science and technology essential for a successful water reuse program.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Legislation that would restore eligibility for issuance of private activity bond financing for air and water pollution control facilities. The eligibility of these facilities would provide another tool for financing what is needed to meet new and existing environmental requirements to reduce greenhouse gases and improve quality of discharge to our rivers and streams (Restore IRC Section 142).

### LEEVE CERTIFICATION, DAM SAFETY, AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

Flooding is a concern to all Texans, no matter if they live on the Gulf Coast, in a large city, or a rural area.

#### LEEVE CERTIFICATION

◆ **SUPPORT:** The approach taken under HR 3415, which delays FEMA floodplain remapping for up to seven years, providing a reasonable period of time for Texas levee managers to address confirmed deficiencies while giving non-Federal sponsors an incentive to address them as well.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Adequate funding for review and inspection of existing Federal levees in Texas under the Inspection of Completed Works line item of the USACOE FY2011 O&M Budget.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Full funding in FY 2011 budget for implementation of Title IX in WRDA 2007, and establish certification assistance program for local levee owners.

#### DAM SAFETY

◆ **SUPPORT:** Texas endorses passage of H.R. 3224 to create a federally administered dam rehabilitation funding program. This federally sponsored program would provide funds to be cost-shared at 65 percent federal to 35 percent state/local for non-federal publicly owned dams. The legislation would provide funds to states based on the number of high hazard dams in each of the participating states.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Grant assistance for non-federal dams under HR 1770 and S732 that will assist Texas with the more than 100 dam sites that no longer meet dam safety standards.

#### FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

◆ **SUPPORT:** Reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program, passage of FEMA's 2011 budget with the continuing Risk Map, and its Cooperating Technical Partner Program.

◆ **SUPPORT:** Continued appropriations in FEMA's FY2011 budget for the ongoing Risk Map and Cooperating Technical Partner Program.