



WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL

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Web Page: www.westgov.org/wswc

Position No. 295

March 7, 2008

The Honorable Norm Dicks, Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2441 Rayburn House Office
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dicks and Rep. Tiahrt:

On behalf of the Western States Water Council, representing the governors of eighteen western states, we would like to express our deep concern over the budget request as it relates to federal funding for water and wastewater treatment needs, specifically EPA's State Revolving Fund (SRF) Capitalization Grants. The Western Governors' Association, in its June 2006 report "Water Needs and Strategies for a Sustainable Future," called for stable continuing federal SRF appropriations of \$1.35 billion for the Clean Water SRF and \$850 million for the Drinking Water SRF, increased annually by a construction inflation index. Further, it called for greater flexibility and fewer restrictions on state SRF management.

While the Administration's request for \$842.2 million for the Drinking Water SRF is near that mark, the \$555 million requested for the Clean Water SRF is woefully inadequate to help states address the enormous gap identified by EPA in its recent report on clean water infrastructure needs. EPA estimates a total capital investment need of \$202.5 billion nationwide over the next 20 years – including \$134.4 billion for wastewater treatment and collection systems, \$54.8 billion to correct combined sewer overflow problems, and \$9 billion for stormwater management.

States and communities are already struggling to meet their water and wastewater treatment challenges in the face of our growing population and aging infrastructure. Reducing the critical federal investment in our water infrastructure now is short sighted.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and these comments. We must continue to work together at all levels of government to meet our water and wastewater treatment needs in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Duane A. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Duane A. Smith, Chairman
Western States Water Council

cc: Rep. Tom Udall, Rep. Ed Pastor, Rep. Ken Calvert, and Rep. Lewis

