



SUSAN SULLIVAN
CHAIRMAN

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The Honorable James Moran, Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2239 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Simpson, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2312 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 29, 2010

**Regarding: FY-2011 Appropriations for the Department of the Interior,
Funding for Water Data Collection & WaterSMART Initiative**

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Simpson:

The Interstate Council on Water Policy has supported increasing federal support for the U.S. Geological Survey's Cooperative Water Program (CWP) and National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) for several years because the water data collected by USGS is highly reliable and necessary in making so many vital decisions. The federal partnership in gathering and analyzing water data is crucial and yet the capability of these two fundamental programs continues to erode.

As indicated in the December 9, 2009 letter that we endorsed with 55 other leading organizations (copy attached), we believe the USGS needs approximately \$110 million annually to fully implement the NSIP (substantially more than the President's FY-2011 request of \$27.15 million), and \$95 million for the CWP to fully match state, tribal and other non-federal investments in data collection and interpretive investigations (the President's request for FY-2011 would cut funding by \$1.96 million from the FY-2010 funding level, leaving only \$63.6 million).

To achieve the 10-year completion schedule established in conjunction with authorization of the NSIP (PL 111-11), the USGS will need an additional \$10M in FY-2011 (for a total of \$37.3M).

The ICWP is increasingly concerned by the lack of progress in completing the NSIP implementation, particularly in light of the many worthy, new water initiatives that depend on the data that the NSIP was designed to provide. Within the Administration's request for FY-2011 is a new "WaterSMART" Initiative that includes \$9 million for national and regional water

availability and use assessments. The ICWP has worked closely with USGS during the past year to improve the design for these proposed assessments and would like to see the Water SMART initiative get full funding. However, it makes no sense to fund these new interpretive applications unless federal funds are also available to assure the collection of water data that those new assessments will require.

If there isn't sufficient funding for both, then the ICWP urges the Subcommittee to give first priority to the NSIP, even if that requires postponing the proposed WaterSMART assessment of water availability and uses.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's support and the recent opportunity to meet with and brief your staff concerning the needs and priorities of state, interstate and local water management agencies. Please feel free to contact our Executive Director, Peter Evans, if you have any questions.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Sullivan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Sullivan".

Susan Sullivan
Chairman
Interstate Council on Water Policy

Attached: December 9, 2009 Letter

Copies to: Members, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
Secretary Ken Salazar, US Department of the Interior
Director Marcia McNutt, US Geological Survey
ICWP Board of Directors