

U.S. House of Representatives
The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment

“Water Resources Development Act of 2022: Members’ Day Hearing”

Wednesday, March 16, 2021, at 10 a.m. EST
2167 Rayburn House Office Building

Statement:

Thank you, Chair Napolitano and Ranking Member Rouzer, for hosting a Members’ Day Hearing on this critically important bill to address the water supply and environmental infrastructure needs of our nation and our local communities.

As many of you know, southern Nevada – and the entire West – is facing an unprecedented drought. In my district, Lake Mead, which supplies water for 25 million people across Nevada, Arizona, and California, is at its lowest level since the construction of the Hoover Dam in the 1930s. Now more than ever, it’s critical that we build the infrastructure we need to make our communities resilient to drought and better manage our water resources.

That is why I’m advocating for critical investments in the Section 595 Army Corps program in rural Nevada and across the Western U.S.. To date, funding for this vital water management program has been almost completely expended since its last authorization. Section 595 allows the Army Corps to provide design and construction assistance for water-related environmental infrastructure projects. These projects include things like wastewater treatment plants, water supply facilities, environmental restoration, and surface water protection.

In my district, Section 595 has funded a range of projects to protect our water resources and ensure our community has access to clean drinking water.

In Searchlight, the Army Corps was critical in the design and construction of Searchlight Water and Wastewater System improvements.

In Boulder City, they renovated three city wastewater pump stations and several miles of force main to protect against accidental discharge of wastewater into the watershed of Lake Mead National Recreation Area and Lake Mead.

And just outside of Las Vegas, the Army Corps and Las Vegas Valley Water District have worked closely to complete an urgent upgrade to meet fire protection and emergency requirements after the system suffered from water leaks, excessive corrosion, and main breaks. The declining groundwater levels and well deterioration presented a significant water supply risk for the greater Las Vegas Valley community. Section 595 was critical to updating our facilities and protecting against ongoing drought conditions so that the existing water system has a reliable means to safely provide for the community's water needs.

I cannot stress enough how important the Section 595 program is for southern Nevada – and the American West – as the region faces the worst drought in twelve centuries.

Thank you again, Chair Napolitano and Ranking Member Rouzer for the chance to speak about this important program. I yield my time.