

Rep. Marshall  
WRDA Member Day Hearing  
Thursday, February 27, 10am  
2167 Rayburn

Chairwoman Napolitano, Ranking Member Westerman, and  
Members of this subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to highlight some of the needs facing Kansas as you consider the upcoming water resources development package. The Water Resource Development Act represents Congress' continued investment in vital infrastructure projects across the country, ensuring that our communities have access to reliable sources of water, not just for farming or recreation, but also contributing to the health and wellness of our cities and towns.

The Spring of 2019 was one of the wettest on record, wherein excessive flooding along the Missouri River resulted in a Major Disaster Declaration for nearly half of the State of Kansas. For cities like Manhattan, which has been partnering with the US Army Corps of Engineers to raise the levees north of town, that

excess water brought the river systems and reservoirs within an inch of breaching their banks. This threatened more than 1,600 acres of urban industrial, commercial, public, and residential development in and around Manhattan, highlighting the need for continued investments and progress in raising the existing levee systems.

Manhattan wasn't the only community impacted by the flooding of 2019. Municipalities from Kansas City to Garden City felt the effects. As we continue to make repairs from 2019 floods, we are also making preparations for the future, and 2020 is projected to be another wet year. It is imperative that the Army Corps make every effort to work with farmers and landowners on cleanup and future flood mitigation efforts. Most farmers and landowners know the land better than Army Corp officials, and they would appreciate the opportunity to be a part of mitigation and rebuilding efforts. Too often, Army Corps personnel do not consult with landowners during these

processes, and their recommendations place cumbersome requirements on landowners that often prove ineffective.

Beyond encouraging greater coordination with farmers and landowners, I'd also like to encourage collaboration between agencies. Recently, the Army Corps of Engineers announced a joint commitment to water infrastructure with the Bureau of Reclamation. In addition to water quantity issues, I suggest that this working group consider critical water quality issues as well. Partnerships such as this bring together a wide array of tools aimed at improving water resource management and environmental protection. As we continue to utilize programs that span multiple federal agencies, we need to encourage communication and coordination so that projects can be implemented efficiently.

While not in my district, the Port of Catoosa (kah-too-sah), located in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is essential to the flow of agricultural goods in and out of Kansas. However, the port is in

need of major maintenance and dredging. I encourage the committee to prioritize this important infrastructure project, ensuring that the products grown or manufactured in Kansas can make it quickly and efficiently to market.

Water infrastructure is of vital importance to my district, whether through availability of quality water sources, or upgrading the aging water towers, levees, and dams across my state. I appreciate the opportunity to highlight some of the priorities I've heard about back in Kansas and yield back the remainder of my time.