



July 27, 2020

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Chairman
House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves--

The National Water Supply Alliance (NWSA) thanks you for your leadership in strengthening the nation's water resources infrastructure with the Committee's passage of the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 (WRDA). Your determination and commitment to delivering a bipartisan WRDA bill on a regular two-year cycle is admirable and important. NWSA's focus is more narrowly focused on water supply related to Corps of Engineers reservoirs, but we absolutely support the WRDA process generally and the Committee's efforts in particular.

As you take the bill to the floor, we offer comment on one provision of great interest. NWSA specifically supports Section 217 of the introduced bill related to a *Study on Water Supply and Water Conservation at Water Resources Development Projects*. Over the past few years, NWSA has been working very closely with Corps of Engineers leadership and staff to define and refine Corps policy on managing water supply at Corps reservoirs to optimize their usage now and into the future. The productive discussions with the Corps resulted in the withdrawal of a proposed water supply rulemaking, thus engendering a deeper deliberation on the issues and implications of various water supply policy decisions. Section 217 directly aligns with NWSA's discussions with the Corps regarding the importance of water supply as part of its water resources portfolio and will benefit both federal and state interests.

NWSA continues to highlight the importance of water supply in discussions with the Corps. Historically, the Corps has placed very little focus on water supply, noting that water supply is a not a primary mission of the Corps. While technically accurate, this lack of focus to date ignores the facts. One hundred and

President, Darren Gore, PE, City of Murfreesboro, TN
Vice President, Dan Buhman, PE, Tarrant Regional Water District
Secretary, Katherine Zitsch, PE, BECC, Atlanta Regional Commission
Treasurer, Glenn Page, PE, Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority
Past President, Earl Lewis, PE, Kansas Water Office

Director, Andrew Dehoff, PE, Susquehanna River Basin Commission
Director, Jennifer Verleger, Esq, PE, State of North Dakota
Director, Brad Brunett, Brazos River Authority
Director, Greg Volkhardt, Tacoma Water
Dave Mitamura, Executive Director

thirty-six reservoirs in the Corps' portfolio provide almost 10 million acre-feet (3.3 trillion gallons) of storage for municipal and industrial water supply. The investment in this storage is valued at \$6.1 billion in 2016 dollars and can provide water supply to over 100 million people, according to Corps reports. In addition, Corps reservoirs could provide even higher storage volumes and access to water supply through policy and regulatory improvements. Section 217 would further reinforce the need for the Corps to make water supply a priority.

Relatedly, we note that the Corps has, as a matter of policy, improperly excluded water supply projects from its Annual Report to Congress under Section 7001 on grounds that water supply is not currently considered a primary mission. We support Section 127, which we interpret as ending the Corps' current practice of screening needed water supply projects in this manner.

As the Committee works with the Corps on water supply policy, NWSA strongly urges that any study include direct involvement of water supply providers who are Corps partners in managing and developing water supply. NWSA members stand by to participate in this effort in anticipation of a thorough and thoughtful dialogue that will inform policy making on water supply issues.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if NWSA can be of assistance on water supply issues. Thank you for focusing attention on the nation's water supply needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Mitamura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dave Mitamura
Executive Director

The National Water Supply Alliance (NWSA) comprises 20 members from across the country. NWSA was formed to advance the interests of water supply providers before the United States Congress and federal agencies whose actions impact water supply storage and projects. Our members include state, regional, and local governments, as well as wholesale water providers and utilities who rely on water supply stored in federal facilities maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. NWSA was formed to give water supply providers across the nation a unified voice to advocate for the preservation and enhancement of the nation's water supply, protection of traditional State authorities, and to ensure that water supply interests share equitably in the benefits provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.