

**American Bird Conservancy ♦ American Rivers
Clean Water Action ♦ Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice ♦ Friends of the Earth
League of Conservation Voters
National Audubon Society
National Wildlife Federation ♦ Sierra Club
The Wilderness Society**

January 15, 2009

Dear Member of Congress:

As Congress develops and considers the economic recovery package, we write on behalf of our millions of members and supporters to urge you to ensure that this critical legislation is used to fund economically responsible and environmentally restorative water projects and upholds water resource development policies that are in step with our nation's current and future needs. This legislation provides the opportunity to modernize our water resource projects so that they work with nature and reinforce those natural systems.

The economic recovery package should only provide funding to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the Bureau of Reclamation for projects that are environmentally sustainable, truly ready to go - including having completed their National Environmental Policy Act review, being in full compliance with other environmental laws, and having a proven adequate cost-benefit ratio making them a wise investment of taxpayer dollars.

Many water resource projects have been stalled due to very real questions about either their need, or their economic or environmental benefits - not because of lack of funding. Congress should avoid legislation that would waive established cost-sharing, benefit-cost or environmental requirements or provide funds to start construction of high cost projects that fail to meet modern environmental and economic standards. Investing instead in projects that protect community quality of life and protect natural systems will build a modern and healthy economy.

Communities across the nation are struggling in these harsh economic times and Congress must act responsibly to make sure that a provided short term benefit does not saddle a community with a costly long term ecologic and economic mistake.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Darin Schroeder
Vice President of Conservation Advocacy
American Bird Conservancy

Peter Raabe
Policy Director for Budget and Appropriations
American Rivers

Lynn Thorp
National Campaigns Coordinator
Clean Water Action

Mary Beth Beetham
Director of Legislative Affairs
Defenders of Wildlife

Joan Mulhern
Senior Legislative Council
Earthjustice

Shawnee Hoover
Legislative Director
Friends of the Earth

Tiernan Sittenfeld
Legislative Director
League of Conservation Voters

Mike Daulton
Legislative Director
National Audubon Society

Adam Kolton
Senior Director, Congressional and Federal
Affairs
National Wildlife Federation

Debbie Sease
Director, National Campaigns
Sierra Club

Linda Lance
Vice President of Public Policy
The Wilderness Society