

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. House of Representatives today voted to override President Bush's veto of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), legislation authorizing federal waterway projects for flood control, navigation, and environmental restoration. The bill authorizes more than \$475 million for infrastructure improvement and clean-up efforts for the Chesapeake Bay and other Maryland waterways. The Senate, which approved the legislation by a veto-proof majority of 81-12, will take up the override later this week. This is the first House override of a President Bush veto.

"The Water Resources Development Act that we passed today is a long overdue piece of legislation to ensure the continued viability of America's water resources and infrastructure," stated Rep. Hoyer. "This critical bill authorizes investments in vital projects to facilitate commerce and economic development, provide ecosystem restoration and protect human life and property. With \$180 million in authorizations for the Chesapeake Bay restoration and other Maryland water projects, WRDA is one of the most critical vehicles we have at the federal level to support these vital efforts."

The Water Resources and Development Act includes the authorizations for the following Maryland initiatives:

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration

In October 2004, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Blue Ribbon Finance Panel concluded in its final report that "...restoring the Chesapeake Bay will require a large-scale national and regional approach, capitalized by federal and state governments and directed according to a watershed-wide strategy." As the lead Federal agency in water resource management, the Army Corps of Engineers has a vital role to play in this effort.

- Increases authorized level for the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Restoration and Protection Program from \$10 million to \$40 million to provide design and construction assistance to State and local authorities in the environmental restoration of the Chesapeake Bay.
- Increases authorized level for Chesapeake Bay Oyster Restoration from \$30 million to \$50 million.
- Authorizes \$30 million for environmental infrastructure projects to benefit the Chesapeake Bay, including the nutrient removal project at the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment facility in the District of Columbia.

- Authorizes \$40 million for water pollution control in the Chesapeake Bay Region, Maryland and Virginia.
- Authorizes \$260 million for the continued expansion of the Paul S. Sarbanes Ecosystem Restoration Project at Poplar Island.

Anacostia River Restoration

The Anacostia River is one of the most degraded rivers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and in the Nation. It is a resource that has long been abused and neglected, but one that can be protected and restored. Through a cooperative and coordinated federal, state, local and private effort, progress has been made in the past ten years in restoring the watershed. The Army Corps of Engineers has played a key role in improving tidal water flow through the marsh, reducing the concentration of nitrogen and phosphorus, and restoring wetlands.

- Authorizes \$20 million for environmental infrastructure and resource protection and development in the Anacostia Watershed.
- Authorizes \$35 million for the implementation of a combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term plan in the District of Columbia
- Directs the Army Corps of Engineers, in coordination with the Mayor of Washington, D.C., the Governor of Maryland, and the County Executives from Prince George's and Montgomery counties, and other interested entities to develop a 10-year comprehensive action plan for the restoration and protection of the ecological integrity of the Anacostia River and its tributaries within one year of enactment.

Potomac River Watershed

The Potomac River is the centerpiece of a nearly 15,000 square-mile watershed that is home to roughly five million people. Each day the river and its tributaries supply about 500 million gallons of fresh drinking water to more than five million people in four states and the District of Columbia. The river is an invaluable natural resource for every individual within the watershed.

- Enables the Secretary to participate in the Potomac River Watershed Assessment and Tributary Strategy Evaluation and Monitoring Program to monitor the effectiveness of the agreed upon tributary strategies and other policies pertaining to the resource protection of the Potomac River watershed.

Streambank Protection in St. Mary's County

Erosion of river streambanks threatens river ecosystems and can imperil public infrastructure. Streambank protection projects place material along or beside banks to prevent erosion in order to preserve the greatest degree of natural stream and floodplain function.

- Authorizes funding for an emergency streambank protection at Piney Point Lighthouse in St. Mary's County.
- Authorizes funding for streambank protection on the St. Mary's River at St. Mary's College of Maryland.

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