



washington dc update

June 5, 2013

Highlight of June Conference...

Western Water Funding—**REALISTIC OPTIONS?**

**The attached article is a recent news release by EPA.*



The need for water infrastructure is clearly identified and quantified in the latest EPA Water Needs Survey results. The report is timely for WESTCAS as the results will be available for discussion during the Summer Conference.

The WESTCAS session on funding will have the EPA Needs survey results to compare with the initial FY14 Appropriations funding proposals.

WESTCAS has an established position on funding of infrastructure—the importance of that funding to the Western water. The managers of water systems throughout the West are looking for answers—hoping for some federal support through continued SRF or other financing assistance and wanting to understand more on how public/private financing could be successfully and realistically accomplished.

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today released results of a survey showing that \$384 billion in improvements are needed for the nation’s drinking water infrastructure through 2030 for systems to continue providing safe drinking water to 297 million Americans.

EPA’s fifth Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment identifies investments needed over the next 20 years for thousands of miles of pipes and thousands of treatment plants, storage tanks and water distribution systems, which are all vital to public health and the economy. The national total of \$384 billion includes the needs of 73,400 water systems across the country, as well as American Indian and Alaska Native Village water systems.

“A safe and adequate supply of drinking water in our homes, schools and businesses is essential to the health and prosperity of every American,” said EPA Acting Administrator Bob Perciasepe. “The survey EPA released today shows that the nation’s water systems have entered a rehabilitation and replacement era in which much of the existing infrastructure has reached or is approaching the end of its useful life. This is a major issue that must be addressed so that American families continue to have the access they need to clean and healthy water sources.”

The survey, required under the Safe Drinking Water Act to be submitted to Congress every four years by EPA, was developed in consultation with all 50 states and the Navajo Nation. The survey looked at the funding and operational needs of more than 3,000 public drinking water systems across the United States, including those in Tribal communities, through an extensive questionnaire. In many cases, drinking water infrastructure was reported to be 50-100 years old.

The assessment shows that improvements are primarily needed in:

- **Distribution and transmission:** \$247.5 billion to replace or refurbish aging or deteriorating lines
- **Treatment:** \$72.5 billion to construct, expand or rehabilitate infrastructure to reduce contamination
- **Storage:** \$39.5 billion to construct, rehabilitate or cover finished water storage reservoirs
- **Source:** \$20.5 billion to construct or rehabilitate intake structures, wells and spring collectors

EPA allocates Drinking Water State Revolving Fund grants to states based on the finding of the assessment. These funds help states to provide low-cost financing to public water systems for infrastructure improvements necessary to protect public health and comply with drinking water regulations.

Since its inception in 1997, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund has provided close to \$15 billion in grants to all 50 states and Puerto Rico to improve drinking water treatment, transmission and distribution. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program has also provided more than \$5.5 billion to protect drinking water in disadvantaged communities.

EPA is committed to utilizing the tools provided under the Safe Drinking Water Act to assist states and to better target resources and technical assistance toward managing the nation’s drinking water infrastructure. In addition to Drinking Water State Revolving Fund grants, EPA awarded nearly \$15 million in funding in 2012 to provide training and technical assistance to small drinking and wastewater systems – those serving fewer than 10,000 people – and to private well owners to improve small system operations and management practices and to promote sustainability. EPA also works with states, municipalities and water utilities to strengthen the resiliency of drinking water systems against the potential impacts of severe weather events and climate change.

More information: http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/dwsrf/index.cfm

