



washington dc update

January 25, 2012

President's State of the Union Speech

In the political world, and especially during a Presidential election year, there are always spirited responses to a State of the Union Address. Those who support the President rush to his defense and those who oppose him find fault. For his part, the President has to identify and articulate issues which he believes will be most helpful to his Administration when voters go to the polls.

One notable element missing from President Obama's State of the Union last night was almost any mention of infrastructure. You can confirm this by reviewing the attached 8 page summary of the [President's remarks](#). This perhaps isn't surprising since issues like "infrastructure spending," "stimulus," and so many others have taken a pounding in the court of public opinion.

There is also the stark reality that while everybody agrees that there is a huge infrastructure deficit, there is no money available to address the challenge. The issue is even worse with regard to water resources infrastructure which is normally given a much lower priority than roads, airports, rail and other transportation related issues.

The nation cannot prosper in the 21st century unless the infrastructure deficit is addressed. This is particularly true for water resources and especially in the Arid West where an assured water supply lies at the very heart of existence.

Very shortly, WESTCAS will begin drafting its own ideas for how water resources infrastructure can be funded in view of the current budgetary realities faced by the nation. Part of this exercise will be to support current programs administered by the Bureau, the Corps, USEPA, and others. But an even more exciting part of the endeavor will be to identify strategies for financing water infrastructure and making sure that these strategies give the water community new tools to meet future needs.

Your ideas and perspectives as a WESTCAS member will be a vital part of this process. Please watch your in-box as this process begins and please share your ideas as we move towards the creation of a final document that will be introduced in the Federal sector.

Summary & Take-Away .

Although missing from the State of the Union, our nation faces a perplexing dilemma:

On the one hand, there is the stark reality that while everybody agrees that there is a huge infrastructure deficit, there is no money available to address the challenge (water infrastructure is worse because it is typically given a lower priority than other infrastructure types).

But on the other, the nation cannot prosper in the 21st century unless the infrastructure deficit is addressed (and there, water should be a high priority).

Your ideas and perspectives are needed to build a WESTCAS response to this dilemma.

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