



washington dc update

July 8, 2012

House Appropriators Cut Funding for EPA SRF Program

The Congress adjourned for its 4th of July recess on Friday, June 29th and will return to session today. But before leaving town, the House Appropriations Committee adopted its version of the FY13 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. This measure funds USEPA, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, CEQ, and a number of other agencies.

Advocates for water resources infrastructure were disappointed at the provisions made for the EPA SRF program. Here are the numbers:

Clean Water SRF

- \$1,466,000,000—FY12 Funding Level
- \$1,175,000,000—FY13 Administration Request
- \$ 689,000,000—FY13 House Proposed Funding Level

Drinking Water SRF

- \$917,000,000—FY12 Funding Level
- \$850,000,000—FY13 Administration Request
- \$829,000,000—FY14 House Proposed Funding Level

Given the concern over our national water infrastructure and the lack of other alternatives, a 37% reduction in funding from FY12 to FY13 seems drastic. The Interior and Environment Appropriators explained their action in the following way:

“During calendar year 2009, the Committee provided over \$11 billion for water and wastewater infrastructure assistance. Since then, the Committee provided an additional \$4.87 billion for fiscal years 2011 and 2012. As a result, EPA has \$2.4 billion in unobligated SRF balances yet to be transferred to States. In addition, the States have yet to spend nearly \$5 billion that the Federal government has allocated for drinking water and wastewater projects. The Committee believes that EPA and the States must aggressively put this \$7.4 billion on to projects in order to address the pressing infrastructure needs facing the nation. The bill provides funding at the fiscal year 2008 enacted levels for the Clean Water and drinking Water State Revolving funds: \$689,000,000 and \$829,000,000 respectively.”

What do you think as a WESTCAS Member? The Interior and Environment Appropriators believe they have identified nearly \$7.5 billion in SRF funding that has yet to be distributed to the water community. But everybody we talk to at State pass-through agencies say that they process their money quickly and have no balances at all.

Both sides can't be right.

Summary & Take-Away .

Maintaining funding requires spending what's appropriated.

As part of its federal funding position paper presented during the WESTCAS DC Fly-in, we advocated maintaining current funding sources for water and wastewater infrastructure, this included the EPA State Revolving Fund (SRF) program. Recently, the House Appropriations Committee adopted a 37% reduction in FY13 funding for EPA's SRF program.

In its report, the Committee that EPA has \$2.4 billion in unobligated funds and that the States have not spent nearly \$5 billion in previously appropriated funding. The point is simple, with some \$7.4 billion still available; the current year appropriations levels can be rolled back to the FY08 amounts.

After another excellent conference in San Diego, take the opportunity to invite others to join and participate in WESTCAS! Why not start with by forwarding a complimentary copy of the Washington Update?

