

Hicks-Ray Associates



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TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Fred B. Hicks and Tom Ray

SUBJECT: Senate Environment and Public Works Democrats Prepare to Release
Water Resources Development Act Draft Bill

Later today, Senate Democrats on the Environment and Public Works Committee plan to release a 135 page draft of a Water Resources Development Act [WRDA] reauthorization bill. We will share a copy of the bill when we receive it along with our analysis. WRDA's are the legislative vehicles that authorize Corps of Engineers projects and also establish federal policies in areas such as environmental oversight by the Corps.

This draft has no chance of passing during the lame duck session of Congress. But it could serve as a benchmark for a WRDA measure that could pass in the 113th Congress. We should learn more about the issue after a hearing on the draft bill which will be held in the EPW Committee a week from today.

On another issue, both parties in Congress are beginning to grapple with the issue of how to address the current "no earmark" policy which essentially prevents Members from being able to advocate for specific projects in their States and Districts. This represents an opportunity for WESTCAS to suggest ways in which this prohibition could be eased which keeping the process completely transparent.

We will be in touch with further specifics on both of these issues.

Fred Hicks - 703.866.4290
P.O. Box 2115
Springfield, VA 22152-0115
fred@hicks-ray.com

Tom Ray - 254.855.0880
P.O. Box 955
Waco, TX 76703-0955
tom@hicks-ray.com