

Hicks-Ray Associates



November 11, 2012

TO: WESTCAS Membership
FROM: Fred B. Hicks and Tom Ray
SUBJECT: The Wheels Begin To Turn

Please pardon our excitement. We suspect that many people are grateful that the election is now a week in the rear view mirror and they contemplate trying to forget about policy and political issues at least for a while.

But for us, the convening of the lame duck session of Congress ushers in an exciting and consequential period of our national history. The Legislative and Executive Branches of government have essentially been shut down since the summer awaiting the verdict of the voters which was delivered on November 6th. Now these institutions of government are beginning to stir, first with the lame duck session of Congress, and then, after a very brief Christmas break, with the convening of the 113th Congress and the inauguration of President Obama.

Over the coming weeks, the White House and Congress will attempt to figure out how not to go off the fiscal cliff on January 1. Most people predict they will succeed.

A much greater challenge will be the longer term issue of how our nation can raise sufficient revenue to pay for national priorities while stopping our disastrous \$1 trillion+ per year deficits.

The issue of how to finance the huge and largely unmet needs for water resources infrastructure will be a prominent feature of this debate as will the impact of regulations and their cost/benefits on the delivery of water related services to the people.

So after a period of inaction and inactivity with regard to the Executive and Legislative Branches of the government, the pace is about to accelerate noticeably. WESTCAS must be a player in its capacity as the voice of water in the Arid West.

Please “stay tuned” as Ed and the Board work on creating a framework and a process for WESTCAS to establish its policy positions for the debate and the challenges that lie ahead.

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