



washington dc update

May 9, 2011

DC Updates

In both the news media and also the Federal community, events last week in Pakistan seem to have taken over the “national dialogue” and crowded out most other issues. But WESTCAS members must remain vigilant with regard to issues that could portend the biggest changes seen in generations in the water resources community. In our view, there are three huge issues looming on the immediate horizon:

1. CEQ has announced that it will issue “Principals and Standards” next month in final form and signed by President Obama to be followed shortly by a draft of “Principals and Guidelines” which will be submitted for public comment and National Academy of Sciences Review. P&G will provide specific guidance to individual Federal agencies with regard to implement a new national water policy. Cost-benefit analysis for projects will play a secondary role in securing Federal permits for projects.
2. USEPA will issue its Guidance for expanding the definition of “waters of the US” next month.
3. The Congress and Administration are beginning to consider FY12 water resources spending that would severely impact programs such as EPA’s State Revolving Fund, Corps of Engineers Construction, and Bureau of Reclamation programs.

WESTCAS will provide comments from its own unique perspective for how these policy changes will impact the arid west. The membership must also play a vital role in educating Members of Congress with regard to how these new policies will affect their States and Districts.

We hope you are planning on attending the WESTCAS annual conference June 22-24 because this will give you the opportunity to participate in the Legislative workshop to be held Thursday afternoon, June 23rd. You will emerge from this workshop fully conversant on these three crucial issues and ready to reach out to your Representatives and Senators. As an added bonus, you will also help to educate others with regard to the local impacts of these emerging issues. See you in San Diego!

Summary & Take-Away .

Report Current Issues

- CEQ announcement on Principles & Standards
- EPA Jurisdictional waters guidance
- Congress considering FY12 water resources spending

Take-Away:

WESTCAS will provide comments from its own unique perspective for how these policy changes will impact the arid west. The membership must also play a vital role in educating Members of Congress with regard to how these new policies will affect their States and Districts.

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