

Hicks-Ray Associates

Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success



April 26, 2016

TO: WESTCAS MEMBERSHIP

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Releases WRDA Draft

Late yesterday the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee released a bi-partisan Water Resources Development Act bill which could be marked up in full Committee as early as Thursday. This means that the Senate is first out of the WRDA starting gate in terms of moving a reauthorization. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is also hard at work on its version of the bill which should be marked up in House full Committee in May. After consideration and hopefully passage of the House and Senate versions in their respective chambers, WRDA-16 would then be the subject of a conference committee which would work to create a single bill that could be submitted for final passage and signed into law by the President.

You can go to <http://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases-democratic?ID=E769686A-6A2F-4C53-A0C7-037EEBDA505A> to see this press release issued by the Senate EPW Committee, and we have also attached the press release for your reference.

If you look at the bottom of the document you will see hot links that will enable you to pull up the entire 271 pages of the Senate draft bill as well as a 3 page summary and a more detailed 20 page summary of what should be for the water community a very exciting piece of legislation.

This includes numerous policy changes in the way the Army Corps of Engineers manages water infrastructure programs under its jurisdiction. The Senate bill also contains authorization for a Clean Water trust Fund and new programs to funding Safe Drinking Water infrastructure.

We urge you to read the three page summary from the EPW Committee which you can access via the attachment to this update. For the things that really grab your attention, we suggest you go to the 20 page document which is also easy to pull up using the attachment to this report.

We will be reviewing in detail a number of these provisions that appear to hold great value for the Arid West and will be sending an ongoing stream of reports which will culminate in our presentation in Santa Fe during the WESTCAS summer conference. By the third week in June we should have both the House and the Senate versions of WRDA bills at least based on the full Committee markups and perhaps even passed by the respective chambers. There appears to be a lot to like in this Senate WRDA and we expect the same will be true for the House version.

This is a great opportunity for WESTCAS to strongly endorse selected WRDA provisions that are especially relevant to the Arid West.

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