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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

September 16, 2013

The Honorable William "Bill" Shuster, Chairman
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of Water Resources Development Act reauthorization legislation.

As your committee marks up H.R. 3080, the *Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013 (WRRDA 2013)* the County of Santa Barbara requests your attention to the following priorities:

- Thank you for including Section 124 to direct that the Army Corps' Vegetation Management Policy be reviewed and revised to take into consideration regional characteristics and habitat for species of concern.
- Thank you for including Sections 107, 108 and 114 to establish a Public-Private Partnership Pilot Program and increase opportunities for non-Federal interests to support or expedite projects. These innovative efforts could be important for completion of projects such as the Lower Mission Creek flood control project.
- The County opposes Section 301 and Section 303 and requests your opposition to any language that would deauthorize projects simply because they have not been funded. The focus should be on project merits, not funding stream. In the case of the Lower Mission Creek project, substantial work and financial investment have been made and the project should not be summarily deauthorized simply because more recent funding has not been available.
- Ensure that any National Levee Safety Program is focused on safety and maximized flexibility to avoid counter-productive bureaucracy.

Thank you for your attention to these priorities as you develop *WRRDA 2013* legislation.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Walters
Washington Representative

TPW:dwg