

The Honorable Chairman James Inhofe
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
205 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Chairman Bill Shuster
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2268 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Ranking Member Barbara Boxer
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
112 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Ranking Member Peter DeFazio
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

October 19, 2016

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member Boxer and Ranking Member DeFazio,

As organizations representing conservation, engineering, construction, sportsmen and women, outdoor industry, and floodplain management interests, we are writing to express our unified support for the consideration of natural and nature-based features in the design, construction, maintenance, and repair of water resource development projects during the reconciliation of each of your chambers respective Water Resources Development Acts (WRDA) of 2016, S. 2848 and H.R. 5303.

We request the Committees retain provisions that ensure the consideration of the use of natural and nature-based features in design, construction, maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation of development projects as expressed through H.R. 5303 Sections 140 and 181. These provisions have bicameral, bipartisan support.

Ensuring coastal and river projects consider such approaches, including through the use of wetlands, natural floodplains, coastal dunes, and shellfish reefs, alone or in combination with grey infrastructure, provide for sustainable and cost-effective means to reduce flood and storm damage, improve water quality, and protect vital wildlife habitats.

Moving forward, natural and nature-based features will facilitate broad support for the delivery of Army Corps of Engineers projects and promote a comprehensive and inclusive approach to water resource management. These types of strategies are not only fiscally responsible; they will increase our communities' safety and enhance our environment.

We look forward to working with the committee on these provisions and to seize the opportunity to further natural and nature-based features in the final WRDA bill.

Sincerely,

American Council of Engineering Companies
American Shore and Beach Preservation Society
American Society of Civil Engineers

American Society of Landscape Architects
American Sportfishing Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Association of State Floodplain Managers
B.A.S.S.
CH2M
Environmental Defense Fund
Izaak Walton League of America
National Asphalt Pavement Association
The Nature Conservancy
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited