



**Association of California Water Agencies
Family Farm Alliance
Idaho Water Users Association
National Urban Agriculture Council
National Water Resources Association
Oregon Water Resources Congress
Upper Missouri Water Association
WaterReuse Association
Western Coalition of Arid States**

April 28, 2003

The Honorable Bill Frist
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House
H-232 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Frist and Speaker Hastert,

Invest in the West is a coalition of water organizations representing rural and urban interests in the 17 Western states. For the past two years, the coalition has endorsed urgently needed increases in the Bureau of Reclamation's Water and Related Resources (construction) account.

Invest in the West is requesting your support for a \$150 million increase for the Bureau's construction account over the \$771 million provided by the fiscal year 2004 budget resolution. These funds are necessary to respond to a steep 36 percent decline in Bureau funding over ten of the past 12 years. During this time, population in the western states has soared by 20 percent, drought has hit hundreds of farms and communities, and environmental mandates have dramatically increased the pressure on existing Bureau facilities.

Simply put, the water infrastructure of the west cannot sustain the demands being placed upon it without increased investment through proven Reclamation programs. The backlog in authorized water projects, combined with the ongoing need for security and maintenance, have taxed the Bureau's resources beyond their practical limit, and budgets in western states are not in the position to meet this need.

To address this problem, Invest in the West urges you to support an additional \$150 million for the Bureau as the 2004 Energy and Water appropriations process gets underway.

Invest in the West Coalition

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Thank you for your consideration, and please contact our office if we may be of assistance with this request.

Sincerely,

Douglas Karafa, President
Western Coalition of Arid States

Stephen K. Hall, Executive Director
Association of California Water Agencies

G. Wade Miller, Executive Director
WaterReuse Association

Anita Winkler, Executive Director
Oregon Water Resources Congress

Craig Smith, Executive Director
Family Farm Alliance

Michael Dwyer, Executive Director
Upper Missouri Water Association

Roger Waters, President
National Urban Agriculture Council

Norm Semanko, Executive Director and
General Counsel
Idaho Water Users Association

Tom Donnelly, Executive Vice President
National Water Resources Association

Cc Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee