



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

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**Westerners Hail Senate Action on Water**  
*Amid drought, wildfires, western water in need of funds*

Water groups from across the western United States are praising the Senate Appropriations Committee's action to increase funds for the Bureau of Reclamation in the fiscal year 2003 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. If enacted, the Committee's July 24 measure will add \$90 million to the Bureau's 'water and related resources account' over the Administration's original request.

This summer across the west, widespread drought, wildfires, continued population growth and ongoing environmental concerns have drawn heavily on federal, state and local water facilities. Bureau facilities have been crucial to consistently meeting communities' needs during both everyday situations and emergencies.

Members of the House and Senate this year have already acknowledged the need to increase Reclamation's budget in 2003. Earlier this month a House Appropriations subcommittee also approved a \$63 million increase for the Bureau over the President's request, and the Senate Budget Committee recommended a \$79 million increase to the total Bureau budget in March.

"After 100 successful years of service to western communities and the country as a whole, the challenges facing the Bureau today are greater than ever," said Invest in the West Coordinator Peter Carlson. "The Invest in the West coalition continues to appreciate that Congress recognizes Reclamation's programs as proven investments that strengthen communities, stimulate the economy, promote conservation and safeguard the environment."

The Bureau of Reclamation operates in facilities in 17 western states that provide drinking water, hydropower, irrigation water and conservation programs. Bureau programs have reliably served western communities since 1902, including during 10 years of budget cutbacks which began in the late 1980s. Last year the Congress reversed this trend with a \$115 million increase for the Bureau in 2002, and could be poised to reaffirm this action as the appropriations process nears completion for the coming fiscal year.

The Invest in the West coalition has urged Congress to increase the Bureau's water and related resources budget to at least \$1 billion by 2005, and will continue this effort through the appropriations process in the coming fiscal years.

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