

**OFFICES OF SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY AND SENATOR RON WYDEN  
WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT  
PROJECT AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM**

**DEADLINE FOR PROJECT SUBMISSION: March 14, 2011**

**Name of Project:** State-based Watershed Planning

**Organization (Project Sponsor):**

Name: Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Address: 1201 Court St. Ne, Suite 303  
City/State: Salem, OR  
Zip Code: 97301  
County: Marion  
Telephone: 503-363-0121  
Fax: 503-371-4926  
Email: [anitaw@owrc.org](mailto:anitaw@owrc.org)

**Primary Contact:**

Name: Anita Winkler  
Address: 1201 Court St. Ne, Suite 303  
City/State: Salem, OR  
Zip Code: 97301  
County: Marion  
Telephone: 503-363-0121  
Fax: 503-371-4926  
Email: [anitaw@owrc.org](mailto:anitaw@owrc.org)

**Project Location Address (If the same as Organization, list "Same"):**

Oregon and other states.

**Local Army Corps of Engineers District: Portland District, Northwestern Division**

Contact Name: Brigadier General John McMahon (Commander and Division Engineer)  
Phone Number: 503-808-3700

**What is the purpose of the Project? Why is it valuable use of taxpayer funds?**

The purpose of the project is to better coordinate federal assistance and support of watershed planning efforts at the state level. It is an excellent use of taxpayer funds because it would better target limited federal funding and technical assistance to where it is most needed and eliminate duplicative efforts. Authorizing the Army Corps of Engineers to work with stakeholders within each state and watershed basin on planning efforts will ensure that the diverse water resources needs of our country are met.

**Please describe the project. (Please limit your response to 150 words.):**

We request that language be added to the Water Resources Development Act to direct the Army Corps of Engineers to: 1) Provide for active involvement and consultation with each state in any watershed planning activity they undertake; that all activities actively involve stakeholders within the watershed during and throughout the planning process, and that all planning activities are based on watershed basin priorities. 2) Develop a process for soliciting priorities from each state Governor on watershed projects. This change would give states a voice and provide greater balance in federal water resources planning and development efforts. Simply stated, states need to be better positioned to ask for the assistance that best meets and addresses critical water resources challenges rather than the federal government dictating from the top down. This would also provide a more effective method for states to identify water resources needs and for federal agencies like the ACOE to target financial and technical assistance where it is not only needed but where it can be most effective. Solutions that originate from the state and basin level instead of the federal level are more likely to be successful because the stakeholders can have ownership over the process and are deeply invested in ensuring that projects are implemented. States are also more invested in the outcome since both the potential benefits and risks will impact them the most. Additionally, authorizing the Army Corps of Engineers to work with each state will lead to a better understanding of water resources needs at the national level.

**If the request is for a construction authorization, does the project have a completed Corps Report?** (Yes or No) No, the request is not for a construction authorization.

**If not, will an Army Corps of Engineers Report be developed?** No.

**Is this request for the modification of an existing authorization? If yes, please provide a reference for the existing authorization.**

Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-114)

**Who is the non-federal (local or state) project sponsor?** None

**What is the total estimated cost of the project?** Unknown

**What is the authorization amount being requested?** Unknown

**Are you requesting an authorization for more than one project in this bill?** (Yes or No)  
No.

**If yes, this project is priority \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ total requests for your organization.**  
Not applicable.

**Are you enclosing a letter of recommendation referenced at the top of this form?**  
(Yes or No) No.

**Notes, comments, or anything else you would like us to know about the project request.**

(Please limit comments to 250 words)

In recent years there have been various attempts at developing a coordinated water policy at the national level, including efforts by the Council on Environmental Quality to rewrite the "Principles and Guidelines" for water resources programs. However, these efforts have failed to adequately acknowledge and provide for state sovereignty in water resources management and planning. Stakeholders at the state level are best suited to identify needs and viable solutions for water resources projects and should be the ones asking for federal assistance rather than federal agencies determining what is best for individual states. Oregon is a model for watershed based planning and does not need a federal agency to dictate planning, but does need federal assistance to meet its water resources challenges. The Army Corps of Engineers has the necessary skills and resources to assist states but their efforts lack direct engagement with individual states and basin stakeholders. Directing the Army Corps of Engineers to engage in a collaborative state-based process can help target finite federal resources and ensure that critical water resources needs of Oregon and other states are met in an efficient and timely manner.

**Please return this form and any letters of support from the non-federal project sponsor(s) no later than March 14, 2011 (via email) to your Field Representatives.**