

**Over 150 Water and Agricultural Organizations
Urge Congress and the White House to Address Western Water Challenges**

**April 20, 2020**

(Washington, D.C.) – A coalition of 150 organizations representing water and agricultural interests in the western U.S. urged Congress and President Trump today to address aging Western water infrastructure as further measures are considered to help the U.S. economy recover from the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

“The COVID-19 pandemic underscores the importance of safety and stability provided by domestic food production,” the groups stated in separate letters to [**Congress**](https://66b2b330-e672-44f2-adb5-a5ef70be164c.filesusr.com/ugd/0c120d_10d2bd0c606c46fe99221e41898fac71.pdf)and [**the president**](https://66b2b330-e672-44f2-adb5-a5ef70be164c.filesusr.com/ugd/0c120d_d0b233c301854b65b67e2708bcbe6206.pdf). “As this crisis has pointed out, a stable domestic food supply is essential and of national security interest. For farmers and ranchers to survive, and for food to continue to be produced here in the American West, a stable water supply is a necessary part of any conversation about our national food security.”

President Trump has stated his belief that renewed efforts to meet the systemic infrastructure demands of the nation will be an important step in combating the long-term impacts of the pandemic.

“We strongly agree,” the organizations stated in the [**letter to the White House**](https://66b2b330-e672-44f2-adb5-a5ef70be164c.filesusr.com/ugd/0c120d_d0b233c301854b65b67e2708bcbe6206.pdf). “In particular, we urge you to advance critically needed investments that address the shortcomings of our aging Western water infrastructure.”

Existing water infrastructure in the West needs rehabilitation and improvement. Most of the federally funded water infrastructure projects that benefit the large cities, rural communities and small farms in the West were built more than 50 years ago. As hydrological conditions in the West change and populations continue to expand, failure to address water security has become increasingly critical.

“Failing to improve water infrastructure and develop supplies will inevitably result in additional conflict as pressure grows to ‘solve’ urban and environmental water shortages,” the groups stated in the [**letter to Congress**](https://66b2b330-e672-44f2-adb5-a5ef70be164c.filesusr.com/ugd/0c120d_10d2bd0c606c46fe99221e41898fac71.pdf). “Moving water away from Western irrigated agriculture will surely contribute to the decline of our national food security.”

The coalition letters—spearheaded by the California Farm Bureau Federation, Family Farm Alliance and Western Growers—emphasize that water conservation, water recycling, watershed management, conveyance, desalination, water transfers, groundwater storage and surface storage are all needed in a diversified management portfolio.

“If and when additional infrastructure funding is discussed as part of a larger economic stimulus package, we need your help to ensure that federal dollars flow to the water infrastructure needs mentioned above,” the letters conclude.

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