



## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

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C. H. HUCKELBERRY  
County Administrator

February 5, 2010

The Honorable Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords  
United States Congress  
502 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Attn: Ms. Liz Berry

**Re: Pima County Flood Control, Ecosystem Restoration, and Wastewater Projects:  
United States Army Corps of Engineers Fiscal Year 2011 Appropriations**

Dear Congresswoman Giffords:

Pima County has been working with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for several years on projects that will help us promote and achieve our community objectives for critical flood control within Pima County's urbanized area; environmental restoration projects to support the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan; and water resources projects to protect the environment and our valuable natural resources.

We are requesting that you seek appropriations under the FY'11 Energy and Water appropriations bill for the following Corps projects, which are listed in order of highest priority to Pima County:

1. Tucson Drainage Area (Arroyo Chico), Pima County, Arizona (Exhibit A) (AZ – Dist 7)

*Project Description:* **This project is shovel-ready.** This project provides flood protection to the downtown business district of Tucson, Arizona, and was authorized for construction under the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 1999. Phase I construction was completed in 1997 by Pima County using \$13 million of local funding. Phase II construction of this critical urban flood control project began in 2007 with Phase II A, the Cherry Field Detention Basin, which was completed in October 2008. In FY'10 we received an appropriation of \$5,000,000 to begin construction of Phase II B, the last three detention basins to complete the project.

**We need an additional \$16,844,000 (\$16.844M) in FY'11 to complete construction of Phase II B (the final phase) of the project in 2012.** This will allow the Corps to finish flood

control improvements vital for the protection of the Tucson urban core including neighborhoods along the Tucson Arroyo and Arroyo Chico Wash and the downtown business district. All construction plans are complete and ready to go to bid if funding is provided. It is critical that funding be provided in FY'11 to allow construction of this final phase of the project to be completed by 2012.

*President's Budget:* Not in the President's Budget

*Request for Assistance:* We request that you **seek an appropriation of \$16,844,000 (\$16.844M) for fiscal year 2011 in Construction General funding** to ensure that construction of this project is completed.

2. Paseo de Las Iglesias Flood Control and Environmental Restoration Project, Pima County, Arizona (Exhibit B) (AZ – Dist 7)

*Project Description:* This proposed project incorporates a comprehensive plan to restore the Santa Cruz River from the San Xavier Mission (San Xavier District, Tohono O'odham Nation) through downtown Tucson as a way of revitalizing this reach of the river. Congress authorized the construction of this project in WRDA 2007 for a total of \$97,700,000. Our objective is to develop flood control and environmental restoration along the Santa Cruz River including cultural resources preservation and associated recreational facilities (i.e., development of a river park). We received an appropriation of \$339,000 in fiscal year 2005 that allowed the Corps to complete the Feasibility Study on time and within budget in the fall of 2005. We are now ready to begin the preconstruction engineering and design (PED) phase of the project.

*President's Budget:* Not in the President's Budget.

*Request for Assistance:* We request that you **seek an appropriation of \$275,000 for PED in Fiscal Year 2011 for Paseo de Las Iglesias** to ensure work on the PED can begin on a timely basis and to avoid unnecessary delays.

3. Tanque Verde Creek, Pima County, Arizona (Exhibit C) (AZ – Dist 8)

*Project Description:* This project is located on the Tanque Verde Creek between Sabino Canyon Road and Craycroft Road in Tucson, Arizona. It incorporates flood control bank protection and habitat preservation and mitigation measures. Tanque Verde Creek is a major tributary to the Rillito River that flows into the Rillito River at Craycroft Road. After a 1983 flood, Congress authorized bank stabilization and flood control protection along the Rillito River in WRDA 1986. Tanque Verde Creek was subsequently authorized for construction by Congress in WRDA 2007 in the amount of \$5,906,000 (federal share of \$3,836,000 and non-federal share of \$2,070,000) in accordance with the recommendation in the report to the Chief of Engineers dated July 22, 2003. The project design has been completed and the project is ready for construction.

*President's Budget:* Not in the President's Budget

*Request for Assistance:* We request that you seek **an approval of a New Construction Start and an appropriation of \$3,836,000 (\$3.836M) in FY'11 for construction of the Tanque Verde Creek Project.**

4. Canoa Ranch, Pima County, Arizona, Section 206, Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (Exhibit D) (AZ – Dist 7)

*Project Description:* This project is located along the Santa Cruz River in southeastern Pima County, Arizona. Canoa Ranch is an historic ranch that was established by a La Canoa Spanish Land Grant and it includes a portion of the Juan Batista de Anza Expedition Trail. This project would reestablish the Canoa Spring site recreating 27.5 acres of wetland and aquatic habitat conditions to attract native amphibians, semi-aquatic reptiles, and bird species including the Lowland leopard frog, Sonoran mud turtle, and Mexican garter snake. The Corps has prepared a Preliminary Restoration Plan and has determined that there is a federal interest and the project would be cost effective in promoting aquatic ecosystem restoration in this area of the Sonoran Desert.

Funding is now needed for the Los Angeles District of the Corps to prepare an Environmental Restoration Report (ERR) and Detailed Project Report (see enclosed Determination of Federal Interest). Development of the Restoration Plan and report can begin in fiscal year 2011 **subject to congressional designation of this project as a priority project.**

The Corps has authority to design and construct the Canoa Ranch Project under the Continuing Authority Projects (CAP) Section 206, Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration program. However, individual projects such as these **must be specifically identified by Congress as a Section 206 priority project under the program in order to qualify for such funding.**

*President's Budget:* The project is authorized under the Corps' Continuing Authority Program (CAP) Section 206, Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration.

*Request for Assistance:* We request that you **seek to have the project identified as a priority project under the Corps' Continuing Authority Project, Section 206 program in FY'11.** This will direct the Corps to fund the Canoa Ranch Project for further study in FY'11 for a federal share of \$115,000.

5. Avra Valley/Black Wash Reclamation and Riparian Restoration Project, Pima County, Arizona (Exhibit E) (AZ – Dist 7)

*Project Description:* This project is being proposed as a Bureau of Reclamation project, under Public Law 102-575, Title XVI Wastewater Reclamation and Groundwater Studies, as part of the Avra Valley Wastewater Reclamation Facility (Avra Valley Facility) upgrade and expansion. This project would help Pima County continue to enhance the environmental and water resources benefits of the Avra Valley Facility. The project would be incorporated into the expansion of the facility to create a multi-purpose facility incorporating wastewater treatment and water reclamation, habitat conservation and restoration, education and recreation including wildlife watching along with interpretative and hiking trails.

The project would rehabilitate existing percolation basins and add new basins which would enhance groundwater recharge and will be designed in a more natural pond-like configuration with trails for bird watchers and hikers. In addition, environmental restoration is proposed to preserve and enhance the riparian habitat along Black Wash which lies along the western edge of the facility. This will establish the area as an education site for

The Honorable Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords  
**Pima County Flood Control, Ecosystem Restoration, and Wastewater Projects:**  
**United States Army Corps of Engineers Fiscal Year 2011 Appropriations**  
February 5, 2010  
Page 4

sustainable use of water resources and habitat conservation, and restoration that is consistent with Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

President's Budget: Not in the President's Budget.

Request for Assistance: We ask **that you: (1) amend Title XVI Wastewater Reclamation and groundwater Studies (PL 102-575) to authorize the Bureau of Reclamation participation in this project, and (2) request an appropriation of \$500,000** for the feasibility study.

In closing, I would like to thank you for all of your assistance. Please do not hesitate to call me or my Regional Flood Control District Director, Suzanne Shields, at (520) 243-1880 to further explain any of our requests in detail. Please be advised that I have also sent a letter similar to this one to Senator Jon Kyl, Congressman Ed Pastor, and Congressman Raúl Grijalva.

Sincerely,



C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

CHH/SS/tj

Enclosures: Determination of Federal Interest  
Exhibits A to E