



**National Rural Electric
Cooperative Association**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

May 19, 2014

Jo Ann Emerson
Chief Executive Officer

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman, Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Vitter
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman, House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nick Rahall
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Boxer, Chairman Shuster, and Ranking Members Vitter and Rahall:

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) applauds your bipartisan leadership in successfully completing the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA) Conference. On behalf of rural electric cooperatives across the country, I am writing to urge swift adoption of the Conference Report by the House and Senate so that it may be sent to the President and signed into law.

Specifically, I would like to thank the conferees for reaching agreement on two NRECA priorities:

- **Section 1006. Expediting the Evaluation and Processing of Permits.** We are pleased that this section allows U.S. electric utilities (including electric cooperatives) to enter into mutually agreeable, fair and practical cost recovery agreements with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to provide a more transparent, timely and predictable review of permit applications. This provision will further electric cooperative efforts to safely, reliably and affordably serve our member owners. It will also help to ensure that the Corps has sufficient resources to process applications and complete its work with appropriate care in a time frame that applicants expect.
- **Section 1046. Reservoir Operations and Water Supply.** This language seeks to provide a much needed update to a 1992 report on Authorized and Operating Purposes of Corps of Engineers Reservoirs, which is supported by the longstanding purchasers of Corps hydropower. Without the hydropower production and the revenues returned to the Treasury in electricity rates charged by the federal government, many of these projects would have never been built. As this Section is implemented by the Corps, we ask for your continued oversight to ensure that future operations are consistent with the congressionally authorized purposes of all Corps of Engineers dams and reservoirs.

On behalf of rural electric cooperatives across the country, NRECA would like to thank you for your hard work in reaching bi-partisan compromise on a thoughtful approach to water resources reform. Finally, we urge all members of the House and Senate to vote **in support** of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 Conference Report.

Sincerely,


Jo Ann Emerson
CEO, NRECA