



July 12, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for the 2026 Water Resources Development Act

Dear Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of more than 300,000 members, American Rivers writes to share our support for H.R. 9497, the bipartisan 2026 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). We commend committee leadership and staff for advancing another strong, bipartisan bill that will benefit communities nationwide. This year's bill offers substantial policy changes that will improve the efficiency and operations of the US Army Corps of Engineers and ensure more sustainable and resilient water resource infrastructure nationwide.

WRDA 2026 includes key provisions to support water infrastructure, public safety, and water security. In particular, American Rivers is pleased to support the reauthorization of the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation (HHPD) Grant Program and the amendment of the National Dam Safety Program. While the lowhead dam inventory continues to be key to a full nationwide accounting of potentially unsafe and environmentally irresponsible dams, this number need not impact the allocation formula for state assistance due to circumstances outside of state control.

Additionally, American Rivers is encouraged by the continued attention toward ensuring non-federal interests have the tools and information to fully engage with water resources development projects, particularly with the creation of an office within the Directorate of Civil Works specifically assigned to community outreach, the electronic tracking and public sharing of permit information and environmental review documentation, and the ongoing publication of the deauthorization list in the Federal Register.

Furthermore, the House WRDA bill makes significant contributions to improving the Corps' approach to natural infrastructure, including an assessment of nonstructural approaches to flood risk management, equal consideration of structural and nonstructural features in flood risk management studies, and full evaluation of the benefits of natural or nature-based features in water resources development projects. American Rivers is also pleased to support the advancement of integrated floodplain management programs at the state level.

We appreciate the committee's continued efforts on WRDA and especially commend members and staff for keeping Congress on track for passage of the 7th bipartisan WRDA bill since 2014. We welcome further opportunities to work with you on this legislation as it progresses.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Cruickshank
Government Relations Director
American Rivers