



June 6, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and our 1.6 million members and supporters, we thank the House for taking up H.R. 7776, the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 (WRDA), this week. We appreciate you keeping this bipartisan effort on its two-year cycle. We hope the House will move this bill forward because it includes many provisions that improve the resiliency of Army Corps projects that protect our communities and parks from extreme weather and climate change.

Since 1919, NPCA has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. The Army Corps is an important partner in many places where we work to protect and restore national park waterways and landscapes, the communities that surround them, and the millions of people who visit them each year. From Gateway to the Grand Canyon, Everglades to Olympic, water is central to the features, wildlife, recreation and aesthetic of these esteemed places. However, the natural, cultural and historic resources in national parks, once viewed as isolated and remote, are affected by activities occurring in their watersheds. These beyond park boundary activities often enhance or detract from the visitor experience.

Outside impacts are increasingly caused by extreme weather, like drought, fire and flooding. These impacts are vividly seen in U.S. coastal and riverine parks. In some places, hotter temperatures are fueling stronger storms as more water is drawn into the atmosphere through evaporation. In other places, higher temperatures result in historic drought and fire. Higher seas and rivers also mean stronger storms have a much wider impact, spreading their power much farther across park landscapes. The consequences are easy to see with beaches and barrier islands eroding, bigger floods and fires, irreversible ecosystem changes, and biodiversity losses.

Our coastal and river parks are at risk from these impacts. National parks protect some of the last remaining large stretches of relatively undeveloped shorelines in the nation. Whether on the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico or Great Lakes coasts or on rivers big and small, the natural, cultural and recreational resources in parks are vulnerable to drought, rising sea levels and intensifying storms. Activities outside park boundaries can have a profound impact on the ability of these sites to adapt their natural and cultural resources to sea and lake level changes, saltwater intrusion, ocean acidification, storm inundation, hotter temperatures, mega-droughts, and heavier rains.

Headquarters  
777 6<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20001  
P 202.NAT.PARK | 800.628.7275

[NPCA.org](https://www.nps.org)

H.R. 7776 continues to focus the work of the Army Corps in part on preparing the areas around coastal and river parks for extreme weather, restoring these landscapes and making them and nearby communities more resilient. This legislation continues to prepare the Army Corps to play its critical role in protecting coastal and riverine areas from climate-enhanced flooding and storms. The benefits to park landscapes are many, including more resilient and safer beaches, new or restored habitat for wildlife, improved water quality for drinking and outdoor recreation, and protection for people from flooding, sea level rise and storm surge.

This is a big legislative package and we do not have positions on every provision. However, we do support the provisions that prepare parks and communities from climate change. This bill:

- Promotes the development and repair of critical infrastructure necessary to address sea-level rise and other climate change impacts
- Allows the Corps to rebuild and maintain storm reduction projects in ways that address flooding, increased extreme weather and other impacts from climate change
- Authorizes the Corps to look at projects that can protect and restore watersheds, river basins, and coastal shorelines to be sure that climate impacts like streambank erosion and sea level rise are assessed
- Supports vulnerable coastal communities hit hardest by climate change by allowing the Army Corps to provide technical assistance for resiliency planning for these partners and creates additional flexibility for the Corps to make it easier and more affordable for them to undertake coastal resiliency work

Thank you again for keeping WRDA on its two-year cycle. Please do not hesitate to contact Chad Lord, our senior director for environment and climate policy, with questions. He can be reached at 202.257.4365 or [clord@npca.org](mailto:clord@npca.org).

Sincerely,

Kristen Brengel  
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs

Cc: The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
The Honorable Sam Graves  
The Honorable Grace Napolitano  
The Honorable David Rouzer