



Protecting Our Precious Water Resources

In the West, we know how valuable water is to our economy and way of life. It is one of the most precious resources in our state, and deciding how it is used should be the responsibility of state and local officials who are familiar with the people and local issues, not handed over to a federal bureaucracy.

Clean Water Restoration Act:

With these principles in mind, I am strongly opposed to efforts to expand the jurisdiction of the federal government over Idaho's water. The Clean Water Restoration Act would remove the word "navigable" from the Clean Water Act's definition of waters covered by the Act's provisions. In short, this would make virtually any water body in the United States potentially subject to EPA permitting and enforcement authorities, including water tanks, irrigation canals, ponds, drainage ditches, and even mud holes. Non-navigable waters are currently regulated by the states.

This bill is a classic example of legislation that sounds good to the average citizen but has devastating impacts on farmers, ranchers, and local governments. There is simply no reason why the federal government needs to be out micro-managing our nation's farms and ranches and stealing regulatory jurisdiction from the states.

Water Resources Development Act (WRDA):

The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) authorizes important projects and makes program revisions involving the activities of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, including provisions to improve rural water infrastructure, reduce flood damage, reduce hurricane and storm damage, and undertake environmental restoration, as well as improve waterways for use as a method of transportation for America's farmers and producers. Navigation improvement is particularly important in Idaho, where the Snake River feeds the lower Columbia River international gateway and annually moves about six million tons of grain, paper products, petroleum products, and general container cargo produced by Idahoans. This amounts to almost \$1.6 billion in Idaho goods a year.

Once projects are authorized by Congress through WRDA, they are eligible for funding in the Corps of Engineers budget and through the annual appropriations process. Today our water quality has improved dramatically as a result of cooperative efforts between federal, state, and local governments. It is important that we work to increase and maintain a balance between our nation's need to use, consume, and develop water with the needs of the environment. The current WRDA legislation was passed in 2007. As Congress considers a new WRDA authorization bill, we must focus on both transportation and water quality issues, and I believe there are a number of projects throughout Idaho's Second Congressional District that should be considered for authorization. For a list of these projects, **please [click here](#)**.