

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 21, 2014

The Honorable Jo Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
United States Army
441 G St, NW
Washington, DC 20314

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

We write in support of the proposed reconnaissance study known as the Three Rivers Study. The study area is located at the confluence of the Arkansas, Mississippi, and White Rivers and is the starting point of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS).

This study will help determine potential solutions, feasibility scope, federal participation interest, and willingness of non-federal sponsors to cost share in a feasibility study. It is our understanding that this reconnaissance study will cost about \$100,000 and that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has carryover investigation funds nationwide that could be used to fund this high priority project of national significance.

The MKARNS is responsible for \$1.5 billion to \$3 billion in trade transportation in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Kansas each year, not to mention the positive indirect economic impacts on the local economies. In addition, 42 countries have traded commerce with the Arkansas River Basin Region via the MKARNS. The MKARNS is also responsible for over \$3.5 billion in industrial investments and provides flood protection, hydropower, water supply, and recreation benefits.

The Three Rivers Study would investigate ongoing threats to navigation and bottomland hardwoods at the confluence of the Arkansas, Mississippi, and White Rivers in southeastern Arkansas. As we understand, the MKARNS is being threatened with a breach between navigation miles 3 and 8 on the White River. If a breach occurs, navigation could be impacted for more than 100 days and the economic impact could easily exceed \$300 million, including the loss of thousands of acres of wetlands. This watershed is home to the White River National Wildlife Refuge and more than 100,000 acres of bottomland hardwoods. This is the largest stand of bottomland hardwoods on any tributary to the Mississippi River and provides a home for numerous protected and endangered species, including the Bald Eagle.

We believe a reconnaissance study should investigate and address the serious hydrologic and hydraulic problems that threaten navigation, the aquatic ecosystem habitat, flood damage reduction, and protection of the watershed to help ensure the continued viability of the MKARNS.

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For the foregoing reasons, we write in support of the Three Rivers Study and ask that resources are made available to complete the study. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

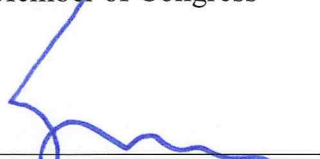

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U.S. Senator



JOHN BOOZMAN
U.S. Senator



JAMES INHOFE
U.S. Senator



RICK CRAWFORD
Member of Congress

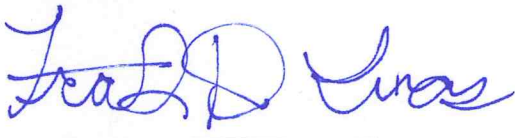

TIM GRIFFIN
Member of Congress

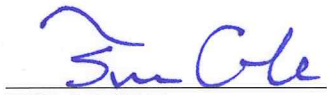

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