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Congress of the United States
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WATER AND POWER

March 16, 2015

Chairman Mike Simpson
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
United States House of Representatives
2362B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Marcy Kaptur
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
United States House of Representatives
1016 LHOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Kaptur:

We write to respectfully urge the Subcommittee to retain the President's fiscal year 2016 budget request of \$700,000 in the upcoming Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2016. Prioritizing this funding will allow continuation of the Feasibility Study currently being conducted by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on the Lower Santa Cruz River Watershed in Pinal County, Arizona.

The Lower Santa Cruz River Watershed has a long history of catastrophic flooding during major storms, resulting in severe damage to the region's homes, businesses, crops and infrastructure. Previous significant damage occurred when the region was mostly a small farming community. Due to dramatic population growth that has occurred over the past 10-15 years, damage from a major flood event today would cause unprecedented damage, disruption and economic harm.

Pinal County was the second fastest growing County in the U.S. between 2000-2010, expanding to almost 400,000 people, with one million people projected by 2030. The area is critically important to the state and region. It serves as an international trade hub at the center of the Sun Corridor, with interstate highways, transcontinental rail lines and critical interstate infrastructure, all located near the watershed. Severe flooding along the watershed also jeopardizes the region's agriculture industry, which is the state's top producer of cotton, barley and livestock, among others.

There is widespread local support for this project, from county and city governments, tribes, farmers, businesses, homeowners, a unanimous state legislature and previous Governor. The region's stakeholders stand ready to coordinate and support this project.

A Reconnaissance Study was completed in 2014 with a finding of federal interest and a recommendation to move to the Feasibility Study. Also in 2014, \$200,000 was provided by the USACE to begin the Feasibility Study, which was promptly matched by the local sponsor, Pinal County. The study of this watershed is congressionally authorized and affects an international

river system, three sovereign tribal nations, interstate commerce, national infrastructure and other federal interests. It also impacts the lives of thousands of Arizona residents and our constituents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request, and for your continued leadership on your committees.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Paul A. Gosar in blue ink.

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Ann Kirkpatrick in blue ink.

Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress