

JOHNSTON | GROUP

To: Lake Ballinger / McAleer Creek Watershed Forum
From: Jake Johnston
Date: April 14, 2011
RE: Recap of DC Meetings

This memo intends to recap the recent meetings between the Lake Ballinger / McAleer Creek Watershed and offices from the Washington State congressional delegation. The objectives of these meetings were:

1. To brief the delegation offices about the Forum and its goals
2. To secure support for federal funding for the Forum's projects via the WRDA bill and future appropriations bills.
3. To ask the delegation to engage with the Army Corps of Engineers to build a productive relationship for the Forum.

Executive Summary

- The Forum accomplished its goals stated above. The Forum's congressional delegation seems ready to engage on behalf of the Forum and other members of the delegation are willing to lend support and provide information.
- Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell will be coordinating their WRDA requests and jointly submitting them. Staff are expected to meet shortly to finalize their lists and we believe the Forum request (\$1.4 million) is in a strong position due to its urgent need, multi-jurisdictional footprint and relatively low cost.
- All short-term federal funding paths involve the Army Corps of Engineers. There is some confusion about the Forum's eligibility under the Corps Continuing Authorities Program. Understanding the specific standing of the Forum with the Army Corps of Engineers should be a top priority for the Forum.
- Creating authority for the Forum with the Army Corps of Engineers is a potential way for the delegation to assist the Forum – leading to short term funding eligibility.

Next Steps

- The Forum will send thank you letters to each office we met with. Jake will draft for the Forum by 4/15.
- Jake will share copies of the briefing packets with the district congressional staff we met with earlier this year.
- The Forum needs to fully understand its position with the Army Corps of Engineers. Forum staff should review previous meetings and contact with the Corps to understand this dynamic from the Forum's perspective.
- Senator Cantwell's staff will engage the Corps from the D.C. side to get the Corps' perspectives on the Forum's eligibility.
- The reconciliation of the two perspectives should lead to a meeting with representatives from the congressional delegation, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Forum to best

understand where funding eligibility exists and what legislative changes, if any, are necessary to qualify the Forum for federal funding through existing channels.

Meeting Recaps

The notes below are the outcomes or key points derived from each meeting. In all instances, the Forum presented its mission, history and details about the specific WRDA request that we are seeking federal funding to support.

Governor Christine Gregoire

Attending Meeting: Mark Rupp, Director, Washington, DC Office

- Offered to engage FEMA on behalf of Forum and/or the City of Lake Forest Park via Governor Gregoire's position as the Chair of the National Governor's Association.
- Offered to look into the state phosphorus bill (ESHB 1489) – explored possibility of doing the bill signing at Lake Ballinger but was unable to do so as the bill was already on the Governor's desk.
- Communicated on behalf of the Forum with Jay Manning to express the Forum's support for the phosphorus bill.
- Is willing to lend assistance to the Corps to help prioritize Lake Ballinger Forum.

Congressman Jay Inslee

Attending Meeting: Congressman Jay Inslee
Celina Cunningham, Legislative Assistant

- Rep. Inslee reiterated his support for the Forum and pledged to contact Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell in support of the Forum's WRDA request.
- Will continue to sponsor a WRDA request for the Forum if the House begins its consideration of a WRDA bill.
- Is willing to lend assistance to the Corps to help prioritize Lake Ballinger Forum.

Congressman Norm Dicks

Attending Meeting: Pete Modaff, Legislative Directors

- Provided counsel to the Forum having significant experience with the Army Corps of Engineers and funding large water quality initiatives like the Puget Sound Partnership
- Communicated that the Corps is key to the Forum's funding success – either as a grant partner or funding manager. Expressed frustration at the Corps' staff rotations leading to lack of continuity at the Agency.
- Recommended that having a dedicated program staff person assigned to the Forum should be a goal – someone to liaise with the Agency and serve as a point of contact.
- Thought that the earmark ban would hold up for FY 2011 and be subject to a redefinition for the following fiscal years.

Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler

Attending Meeting: Anna Bartlett, Legislative Director

- Had recently communicated about WRDA with House Majority Committee staff and does not think it is on the committee's action list over the next several months.
- Offered to share information about the committee schedule for WRDA on the House side and provide counsel to the Forum about submitting requests.
- Echoed the comments from Pete Modaff that the outright ban on "earmarks" will probably go through a series of revisions with the result being that projects like the infrastructure investments connected to the Forum would be eligible for federal funding.

Congressman Jim McDermott

Attending Meeting: Alan Lee, Legislative Counsel

- Offered to allow us to communicate Rep. McDermott's support for the Forum's WRDA request to Senators Murray and Cantwell.
- Will support our effort to meet with the Corps and build a relationship to benefit the Forum's funding projects.

Senator Patty Murray

Attending Meeting: Moire Duggan, Legislative Assistant (WRDA, Energy & Water)
Lauren Overman, Legislative Assistant (Transportation)

- Indicated that the Senators would be jointly recommending WRDA projects for funding – and that staff would be meeting very shortly to prioritize their lists.
- Very supportive of the multi-jurisdictional nature of the request and the fact that the politics on the ground were in place to make a request work.
- Further supportive of the relatively low dollar amount within a WRDA bill.
- Started a conversation about direct funding through the WRDA bill versus language directing the Corps to work with Forum under its Continuing Authorities Program. The Forum needs to quickly understand where it is – or is not – eligible within existing Corps programs and adjust our WRDA request accordingly.
- Strongly support the Forum's plan to engage with the Corps directly and is willing to lend pressure to the Corps to provide technical assistance.

Senator Maria Cantwell

Attending Meeting: Senator Maria Cantwell
Paul Wolfe, Legislative Assistant (WRDA, Energy & Water)
Carl Seip, Appropriations Clerk / Federal Funding Coordinator

- The Senator was personally supportive and directed her staff to help us work with the Corps to obtain the necessary funds.
- Senator Cantwell spoke in detail about the flooding problems and the need to bring resources to bear to work with local municipalities.
- Senator Cantwell asked questions about the participation of Lynnwood and Shoreline and encouraged us to keep them involved with the Forum's activities.
- Staff had been in contact with the Army Corps in preparation of this meeting. The Corps indicated to staff that the Forum was eligible under the Corps' Continuing Authorities Program. This information differs from the Forum's recollection of the Forum being told by the Corps that they needed additional authorization in order to be able to financially help. Resolving this discrepancy between staff is the top priority stemming from these meetings.

- Strongly support the Forum's plan to engage with the Corps directly.
- If the Forum is not currently eligible under current Corps' authorities, is willing to explore legislative language to change this.