



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
441 G STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20314-1000

OCT 25 2010

Civil Works Directorate

Dr. Jim Kundell
Carl Vinson Institute of Government
University of Georgia
201 N. Milledge Ave
Athens, Georgia 30602

Dear Dr. Kundell,

Jim

Thank you for your letter dated 19 May 2010 on the Sustainable Rivers Project (SRP). The SRP is a successful collaboration between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) which focuses on modifying flows from Corps dams for the benefit of downstream ecosystems. Since the introduction of the Environmental Operating Principles (EOP) (ER-200-1-5) on October 30, 2003, the Corps has sought to operate its projects to enhance the environment. The SRP is just one of the collaborative efforts that are being implemented pursuant to the EOPs and other Congressionally authorized environmental objectives.

The Corps owns and operates 650 dams nationwide that have been authorized by Congress to meet a specific set of purposes. These dams and other Corps flood risk management efforts reduce the risk of flood damages to homes and property within the watershed as well as to vital infrastructure such as energy grids and transportation networks. Corps flood damage reduction projects, including levees and dikes, have prevented an estimated \$706 billion in river and coastal flood damage, most of that within the last 25 years. The cumulative cost for building and maintaining these projects to date is about \$120 billion. That means for every dollar spent, approximately six dollars in potential damages have been saved.

The current eight SRP sites, located within seven Corps Divisions, are priority ecological areas under TNC Ecoregional Planning efforts. The existing projects have not required new authorities and in most cases, we do not envision a need to obtain a new authority for implementation. In addition, the types of alternatives developed under the SRP are also being developed on other Corps projects, such as the Rough River Lake, Kentucky, and CJ Brown Reservoir, Ohio, as well as on the Susquehanna and Potomac Rivers. However, these projects are not listed under the SRP collaboration and, in the case of Rough River Dam and the CJ Brown Reservoir, the area is not considered a TNC ecological priority.

The Corps has been very supportive of this innovative collaboration and the overall partnership with TNC from the beginning. The Corps received \$243,000 in funding for the SRP in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 under the National Portfolio Assessment (Water Supply Business Line). The Administration's FY11 Budget includes funds to continue this initiative. Though limited, these funds have been used to support work at five of the eight sites and include, for the

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first time, an economic evaluation of the benefits of modified flows on the Green River, Kentucky project. In September 2010, we partnered with TNC to hold a SRP Technical Workshop in Louisville, Kentucky. This meeting brought together project staff from both organizations to strengthen the cohesiveness of the project, advance site-based work and cross-site exchange and enhance strategic efforts on related programmatic and policy initiatives. Funds are also being used to support a critical evaluation of Corps policies that are used to support work conducted under the SRP by a team of experts. This team will make recommendations based on the evaluation and this may result in updating of current policies and if needed, an integrated SRP policy.

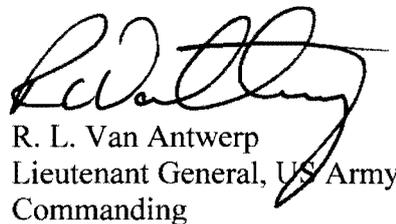
We understand that Legislative requests have been made that would create a National Sustainable Rivers Program and that you are requesting our support. However, the Corps, as an Administrative agency, does not take a position on proposed legislation.

In 2008, the Corps initiated a survey of reservoirs as part of its National Portfolio Assessment for Water Supply Reallocation. The survey is collecting information about water supply operations and sedimentation status at Corps Reservoirs, as well as information about water management operations at reservoirs with federally authorized flood storage. The SRP has recognized that data sets produced by this effort could be used as an engineering foundation for identifying candidate SRP sites.

Thank you for your insights and recommendations. The Corps looks forward to continuing this successful collaboration and continuing to work with partners and stakeholders to find holistic and sustainable solutions to our Nation's water resources challenges.

Building Strong!

Sincerely,


R. L. Van Antwerp
Lieutenant General, US Army
Commanding