

June 25, 2008 - Murtha: House Appropriations Committee Passes Funding for Local Water Infrastructure Projects

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Congressman John P. Murtha, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, announced today that the House Appropriations Committee has passed a \$33.2 billion fiscal year 2009 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill that includes funding for local sewage and water projects as well as construction and maintenance of our locks and dams.

Included in the spending bill is \$40,806,000 for the general construction of Locks & Dams 2, 3 and 4 on the Monongahela River. This multi-year project includes the construction of a new gated dam at Braddock, construction of two new 84x720 locks at Charleroi, removal of Elizabeth Locks and Dams, and channel dredging. This funding was expected to be sharply reduced, but Murtha was able to convince the committee that full funding be provided for these crucial projects.

The appropriations bill also includes \$25,800,000 for general construction of the Emsworth Locks & Dams and \$600,000 for general construction of the Grays Landing Locks & Dams in Masontown, PA.

"It is absolutely essential that we continue to overhaul and replace our region's vast network of locks and dams," said Murtha. "These projects are important not only for commerce and recreation, but for future economic growth."

Also included in the appropriations bill is \$8,000,000 for the South Central Pennsylvania Environmental Infrastructure Program. This program provides the Army Corps of Engineers with the funding to design and construct projects for wastewater treatment, water supply, storage, and water resource protection and development in Allegheny, Armstrong, Cambria, Greene, Fayette, Indiana, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland Counties.

"The Environment Infrastructure Program has helped thousands of Pennsylvania residents and businesses gain access to clean and reliable water sources," said Murtha. "At the same time, these projects improve the environmental quality of our rivers and streams by fixing or replacing malfunctioning septic systems that release raw sewage into our waterways."

The appropriations bill also includes \$2,000,000 for the West Virginia and Pennsylvania Flood Control Program. This funding will be used by the Army Corps to improve flood control, stream bank protection, storm water management, and channel clearing measures in the Lower Allegheny and Lower Monongahela River Basins.

Also included in the appropriations bill is \$2,142,000 for operations and maintenance of the Johnstown Local Flood Protection Project. The project includes sediment removal, channel clearing, concrete slope lining and toe repairs, and repairs to safety railings.

The FY09 Energy-Water Appropriations Bill also makes key national investments into:

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: \$1.6 billion, \$369 million above the President's request. This includes

\$220 million for solar energy, \$250 million for biofuels, \$305 million for vehicle technology to improve fuel efficiency in automobiles, \$168 million for research into building and industrial technologies to reduce energy demand, \$100 million to help businesses improve energy efficiency, and \$40 million to research new ways of generating power from water flow.

Army Corps of Engineers: \$5.3 billion, \$590 million above the President's request.

Energy Independence and Security Act: \$500 million for new initiatives and grants to promote our nation's energy independence, not requested in the President's budget.

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