



April 3, 2012

Lawmakers Challenge Army Corps on California Levees

Today, a bi-partisan group of the California Congressional Delegation, including the entire Democratic Congressional Delegation, sent a letter to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Jo-Ellen Darcy, in response to the public comment period for the *Policy Guidance Letter (PGL) on Variance from Vegetation Standards for Levees and Floodwalls* released by the Army Corps in February. It has been one of CSAC's top federal legislative priorities that the PGL continues to ignore the science on the subject of vegetation on levees, and does not provide enough flexibility that takes into account California's unique challenges.

In their letter, the bipartisan group of California Members declares that the PGL has not resolved issues that will adversely affect public safety and cause harm to the environment. The Members are therefore urging the Corps to reconsider a number of important issues before finalizing a PGL.

In a press release accompanying the letter, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (D-Sacramento) commented, "Our number one concern should be public safety. Unfortunately, the Corps' vegetation policy - and their draft guidance for any variance in the policy - will have a negative impact on public safety, on the environment, and on the cost of our levee projects. I thank my colleagues in the California Congressional Delegation for joining with me to demand changes from the Corps that demonstrate a commitment to completing our critical flood protection projects."

CSAC greatly appreciates that 35 members of the California Congressional Delegation signed on to this letter and will continue to press the Army Corps of Engineers for a resolution to this issue that can be supported by California's counties.

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