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December 8, 2021

The Honorable Jaime Pinkham
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for
Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Lieutenant General Scott Spellmon
Chief of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20314-1000

Dear Acting Secretary Pinkham and General Spellmon:

I write to express my support for a funding request for several critical stormwater improvement projects in the vicinity of El Paso, Texas. This important investment would come from the Construction Account within the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) spend plan pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

These projects, which would be done in coordination with El Paso Water, are especially timely for El Paso. This year, our region saw record amounts of rainfall which has led to devastating stormwater damage. As the climate crisis grows worse and the country continues to experience extreme weather events, it is critical for El Paso to continue to update its stormwater infrastructure to mitigate future rainfall events. El Paso Water has collaborated with the Corps on infrastructure projects for decades and has a successful track record of partnering with the Corps on this type of work through its Section 219 authority. The proposed projects, listed below, are key components of an overall stormwater management infrastructure system in El Paso, and El Paso Water is prepared to quickly contribute the required 25% non-federal cost-share.

1. Clardy Fox Pump Station Improvements.

The City of El Paso is currently improving stormwater runoff capacity to various streets within the watershed upstream of the Clardy Fox Pump Station. These improvements will be adding flow into the pump station thus the need to increase its capacity. Constructed in 1990, the Clardy Fox Pump Station was designed with a limited capacity of 665 cubic feet per second. To avoid overloading the discharge channel, the pump station needs to be brought to a new design capacity and match the inflow and outflow lines. The project design is over 60% completed by El Paso Water and will be transferred to the Albuquerque District in early March for construction. This project requires \$5.02 million in the spend plan to complete this project.

2. Northgate Diversion Channel Improvements.

The Northgate Diversion Channel is a natural channel located at the foothills of the Franklin Mountains in Northeast El Paso. The channel is intended to divert mountain runoff toward Northgate Dam and provide flood protection to a residential area near Honda Pass Road. Erosion has weakened the downstream embankment of the channel, causing an increased risk of flooding to downstream properties. The project will include design and construction of a new conveyance structure between the Northgate Diversion Levee and the Northgate Dam. The El Paso Water's Stormwater Masterplan calls for construction of two 66-inch underground conduits. This project requires \$3.75 million in the spend plan, and \$400,000.00 for design work.

3. Project 3: SAC 1 Sediment / Detention Basin.

This project would construct an 80-acre-foot desilting basin strategically placed to detain peak flows and sediment affecting the RV Channel, located south of project site. The desilting basin will detain peak flows and sediment bulking affecting the RV Channel, street crossings, residential, commercial, and agricultural land. This project will also prevent erosion and collapse of downstream structures some of which have already been reconstructed due to failure caused by the accumulation of sediment. This project requires \$7.9 million in the spend plan, and \$700,000.00 for design work.

I respectfully ask you to give full and fair consideration, consistent with applicable laws and regulations, to the inclusion of funding for these important stormwater improvement projects in the coming Corps spending plan required by the IIJA. Thank you for your attention to this necessary investment and I look forward to continuing to work with the Corps to improve stormwater infrastructure in the El Paso region.

Sincerely,



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress