

**THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Resolution in Support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Recognizing State  
Investments to Preserve Reservoirs**

Resolution Summary

Over the past 50 years the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has constructed reservoirs to prevent damage from floods. Those reservoirs have become prime drinking water supply sources and provide significant recreational opportunities. The Corps of Engineer's reservoirs have been hugely successful in preventing damage to property.

The reservoirs were constructed with a life expectancy of 100 years or less, depending on the anticipated rate of siltation. Most of the reservoirs are experiencing sedimentation rates in excess of anticipated amounts, thereby reducing the planned life expectancy of the reservoirs' flood control, drinking water supply, and recreational properties.

Because the best physical sites for the construction of impoundment facilities (dams) have been utilized, the political will and financial resources to acquire individuals' land for new reservoirs is absent, and development around many of the reservoirs prevents increasing dam heights to recapture the original water storage capacity, preserving and restoring the existing reservoirs is the most politically and cost-effective means of protecting regional flood control, drinking water supplies, and recreational opportunities.

Many states have contracts with the Corps of Engineers to purchase the reservoirs. Some contracts require annual payments, while others provide for a lump sum payment at the end of the contract period. A major issue for states will be the purchase of reservoirs that have reduced water storage capacity and increasing problems with sedimentation that will continue to degrade storage capacity and water quality.

Most states continue to experience fiscal problems as a result of the national economic downturn. It is essentially impossible for states to invest in reservoir protection and restoration programs at the same time they are making payments to the Corps of Engineers to purchase the impoundments. If the Corps of Engineers and Congress will permit states to invest in extending the life of reservoirs and have those program payments deducted from the purchase obligation, the long term best public interests will be served because the reservoirs' lives will be extended. Failure to make this public policy change will result in states purchasing reservoirs with reduced flood control, drinking water storage capacity, and recreational opportunities and with sedimentation problems so large that state action to reverse the situation will be cost prohibitive.

Reservoir Preservation Directives

Passage of this resolution will indicate solidarity among state officials to protect the long term flood control, drinking water supplies, and recreational opportunities of Corps. of

Engineers constructed reservoirs. It also will reflect the realities of federal-state partnerships on water policy issues, fiscal constraints on both parties, and the importance of long term water management policies.

It is expected that copies of this resolution will be sent to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, members of Congress from states with Corps of Engineers constructed reservoirs, and Governors of those states.

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**Resolution in Support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Recognizing State Investments to Preserve Reservoirs**

**WHEREAS,** the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed many reservoirs in the U.S.; and

**WHEREAS,** those reservoirs have provided flood control, recreational opportunities, and drinking water supplies to millions of Americans; and

**WHEREAS,** the reservoirs represent partnerships between the U.S. Government and State Governments; and

**WHEREAS,** many of the reservoirs are being adversely impacted by sedimentation that significantly reduces the storage capacity of the reservoirs; and

**WHEREAS,** the reduction in storage capacity has deleterious effects on water quality, flood control capabilities, and recreational opportunities; and

**WHEREAS,** available and suitable land to construct new reservoirs by the Corps of Engineers is essentially unavailable; and

**WHEREAS,** raising the height of existing dams is largely not feasible because of the political difficulties associated with flooding additional land above the normal reservoir flood plain; and

**WHEREAS,** the benefits and costs associated with maintaining and preserving these important water impoundments are currently being shared by the U.S. Government and State Governments; and

**WHEREAS,** most of these Corps of Engineer constructed reservoirs will be sold to the States; and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that The Council of State Governments (CSG) recognizes the value and importance of these reservoirs to both the federal government and the states; and

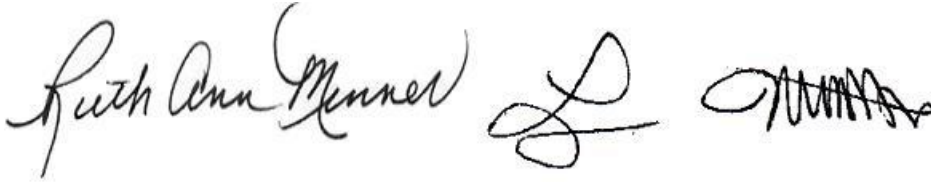
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that CSG recognizes the importance of investing wisely in preserving these reservoirs to prevent massive flooding as occurred prior to their construction; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that CSG supports development of a program by which investments by individual states to preserve the maximum flood control and drinking water supply storage capacity of reservoirs

constructed by the Corps of Engineers shall be deducted from each reservoir's purchase price as determined by the Corps of Engineers; and

**FURTHERMORE THAT THIS RESOLUTION**, be forwarded to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Congressional Delegation members with Corps of Engineer constructed reservoirs within their states, and the Governors of those states.

Adopted this 4<sup>th</sup> Day of December, 2005 at the  
CSG Annual State Trends and Leadership Forum  
In Wilmington, Delaware



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Governor Ruth Ann Minner  
2005 CSG President

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Assemblyman Lynn Hettrick  
2005 CSG Chair