

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 9, 2013

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Secretary Darcy:

We are writing regarding the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project and the importance of securing funding for the project for the second half of fiscal year 2013.

Now that the Continuing Appropriations Act of 2013 has been enacted, we understand that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is prioritizing projects and making decisions on which projects to fund for the remaining six months of fiscal year 2013. We want to take this opportunity to reiterate our strong support for the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project.

According to USACE – Buffalo District, an additional \$1.5 million in federal funding is needed to continue the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project for the remainder of fiscal year 2013. Securing this funding is critical to completing the project's Chief's Report. As you know, completing the Chief's Report by the time the next WRDA passes will likely be necessary in order for the project to be eligible for authorization.

The local cost-share is in place. All the locals need is the federal share.

As you may know, the project recently entered its sixth year of study. We were encouraged by the project's conversion to the 3-3-3 planning process last year and the promise it offered in expediting the completion of the study phase. However, without funding for the rest of fiscal year 2013, the project's Chief's Report will not be completed by April 2014, which is the USACE's projected timeframe for completion. A delay at this stage would be devastating to this project and to the local partners who have done everything asked of them, and more, to keep this project on track and moving forward. A gap in federal funding would delay the project.

Recognizing USACE is facing significant budget constraints, we hope that as you determine priorities for the remainder of fiscal year 2013 you give due consideration to the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project. As you may be aware, this project has been held up by the USACE as a model as the first flood risk management project in the country to achieve a planning charette in fiscal year 2012 under the 3-3-3 planning process.

We applaud the USACE and the local communities for working so closely on this critical project. This partnership continues to be a model for other communities to follow and one we are proud to support.

Again, we greatly appreciate your assistance and leadership with respect to advancing the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

  
Sherrod Brown  
U.S. Senator

  
Rob Portman  
U.S. Senator

  
Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress