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U.S. House okays \$19.4 million for Tres Rios, Rio Salado Oeste, other water, energy projects
ACE program in Maricopa Community Colleges to get \$951K

WASHINGTON -- More than \$19 million in funding for Arizona projects including \$9.57 million for the ongoing construction of the Tres Rios project was approved today by the U.S. House of Representatives, announced Rep. Ed Pastor, D-Ariz.

The funding was included in the Omnibus Appropriations Bill, which combined nine annual appropriations bills left over from last year, including Fiscal Year 2009 Energy and Water appropriations. This bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

Pastor has been instrumental in securing House support for the projects. He represents Arizona's Fourth Congressional District and is a member of the House Appropriations Committee, with a seat on its Energy and Water Development Subcommittee.

"These projects represent sound investments in Arizona's water and energy infrastructure," Pastor said.

"The benefits range from environmental restoration to flood control to economic development."

The legislation included:

- \$ 9.57 million for the Army Corps of Engineers' construction of the Tres Rios Project, designed to reclaim and reuse the effluent flow from a Phoenix-area wastewater treatment plant using a

series of constructed wetlands along a seven-mile stretch of the Salt River to the confluence of the Gila and Agua Fria rivers. Funding is critical for ensuring there will be no serious disruptions and delays in complying with EPA effluent treatment

requirements. Without the continuation of the wetland constructions, it is likely that flow from the wastewater treatment plant that support downstream wetlands will have to be stopped.

- \$1.434 million for the Rio Salado Oeste project, which will restore riparian habitat along an eight-mile stretch of the Salt River from 19th Avenue to 83rd Avenue in Phoenix. The project will join the Rio Salado and Tres Rios habitat restoration projects. The Rio Salado Oeste project would also provide water quality, flood control and recreational benefits.

- \$1,952,000 for an innovative technology to produce energy at Phoenix Children's Hospital. The state-of-the-art energy efficient design incorporates the use of water-to-water heat pump chillers and retains water that is normally evaporated. The unique and innovative energy plant would provide chilled water, hot water, and a power generator for a 320-bed facility. Using variable frequency drives, the system regulates power consumption based on need, and conserves an estimated six million gallons of water annually, reducing energy consumption by 17 percent. This would be the first time this type of energy system will be used in a critical care facility.

- \$629,000 for the Va Shly'ay Akimel Salt River Restoration, a project shared by the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community and the City of Mesa.

- \$250,000 for Phoenix Metropolitan Reclamation and Reuse, known as the Agua Fria Groundwater Recharge Project. This is a water reclamation and reuse project along the Agua Fria River that also incorporates a portion of the outflow from the seven-mile Tres Rios project. The Phoenix metropolitan area currently has three main sources of water, all of which will be fully developed in the near future. The region is working cooperatively with the Bureau of Reclamation to develop new sources of water and to find ways to lessen the impact of population growth on groundwater resources. Recharging water into the aquifer is one way to slow the decline in groundwater levels.

- \$2.5 million for the Nogales Wash, a critical flood control project in Nogales, Ariz., which

began construction in April 2006 to promote flood damage reduction, mitigation and recreation. The project is being constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Santa Cruz County Flood Control District. It will result in the removal of a 100-year floodplain that threatens several Nogales neighborhoods.

- \$1.5 million for the Yuma East Wetlands project. This Bureau of Reclamation project will restore 1,418 acres of barren river bottom along a five-mile stretch of the Colorado River near Yuma, Ariz., which had previously been choked by non-native vegetation, starved of a water supply and had become a haven for illegal activity. This project includes wetlands restoration, natural channel stabilization, revegetation and cultural conservation.

- \$1.5 million for the Rio de Flag flood control project by the Corps of Engineers. This project, combined with environmental enhancement and mitigation, would reduce the potential for flooding in downtown Flagstaff, Ariz., and around the campus of Northern Arizona University.

- \$54,000 for the Casa Grande, Ariz., Water Recycling Project. The Arizona Water Institute will use these funds to investigate the feasibility of recycling spent process water at a food processing facility in Casa Grande using membrane bioreactors with nanofiltration. The goal of the project is to identify the factors that affect water quality and to determine the maximum percentage of water that can be recycled in commercial as well as municipal facilities.

In addition to water and energy projects, Arizona received \$951,000 in funding from the Department of Energy to help expand the ACE (Achieving a College Education) Program in the Maricopa Community Colleges. ACE is a successful high school dropout prevention program offered by the Maricopa Community Colleges.