

More than \$15 million in funding for Valley projects including the ongoing restoration of the Salt River was approved today by the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee, announced Rep. Ed Pastor, D-Ariz.

The projects are part of the Fiscal Year 2008 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, which now moves to the full House for its approval.

The local projects include \$11 million for the continue development of the Tres Rios project and \$1.8 million to complete the construction of the Rio Salado Project, Pastor said. 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.

"I'm proud that my colleagues have continued to show support for these vital revitalization projects along the Salt River," Pastor said. We are providing a peaceful, environmentally-sound refuge for people and wildlife in the central city. The benefits range from environmental restoration to flood control to economic development."

Funding is included for the following Valley-related projects:

- \$11 million for the continued 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.
- \$1.8 million to complete construction for the Rio Salado Project in the Phoenix/Tempe area. This is a project by the Army Corps of Engineers to restore and revitalize the Salt River and nearby areas while also controlling the flood zones with proper channels. By creating a waterway through the connection of a series of lakes and streams, this project will produce waterside parks and open public spaces while restoring the riparian habitat.
- \$800,000 for the Va Shly'ay Akimel project in Mesa, for preconstruction engineering and design costs of this flood control project which would restore an 18-mile stretch of the Salt River to its natural beauty by reintroducing water, native vegetation and wildlife habitat.
- \$300,000 for the for the Rio Salado Oeste project that connects the Rio Salado and Tres Rios projects. The funding would allow a Corps project to restore the riparian habitat in conjunction with projects for flood control, water quality and recreation along additional reaches

of the Salt River. The project connects the Rio Salado Project at 19th Avenue with the Tres Rios Project at 83rd Avenue.

- \$250,000 for Phoenix Metropolitan Reclamation and Reuse, known as the Agua Fria Groundwater Recharge Project. This is an additional \$50,000 above the President's budget for the project, which 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.

In addition to water and energy projects, \$1 million from the Department of Energy was approved 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.

Outside the Valley, funding was approved for these projects:

- \$14 million for the Tucson Drainage Area Arroyo Chico project.
- \$1.5 million for the Yuma East Wetlands, and
- \$800,000 for the Rio de Flag project in Flagstaff.