

Jon Tester United States Senator for Montana

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Water Resources Development Act

The Rural Community Flood Protection Act

In January 2008, USACE reversed earlier policy to cease performing certifications of levees for inclusion on flood maps. This left rural communities without adequate resources to have their levees certified for flood insurance protection. Many rural communities, including those in Montana, lack the population to be able to spread the cost of private certification studies through taxes, water assessments, or levee O&M assessments. The Rural Community Flood Protection Act would allow communities behind levees to work with USACE to certify the flood protection of those levees with a federal cost share. Cost share may be waived if the community meets certain criteria.

Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee Travel Reimbursements

Section 5018 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007 authorized USACE to establish the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC). The MRRIC is a collaborative stakeholder forum that provides guidance to the Corps and other agencies with Missouri River responsibilities. MRRIC is composed of representatives from 28 non-governmental stakeholder groups, 28 federally recognized tribes, 8 states, and 13 federal agencies. Section 5018 currently prohibits federal reimbursement of MRRIC member travel expenses. The reimbursement constraint could be the most critical factor limiting stakeholder input. Travel expenses currently prohibit many alternates from attending the meetings as well as many of the tribes represented in the basin. The requested language authorizes reimbursement for travel expenses for members of the committee, many of whom would otherwise be prohibited from contributing to the committee by the expense of travel.

Cooperative Agreements

WRDA 2007, Sec 2015 authorized the use of cooperative agreements for the design and construction of wetlands restoration projects. However, section 2015 did not include authority for cooperative agreements in planning study efforts. Also, authorization for a use for "wetlands restoration" has proved unnecessarily restrictive, when "ecosystem restoration" projects could also benefit from the use of cooperative agreements. Requested language would expand the use of cooperative agreements to planning efforts, as well as ecosystem restoration projects, as well as lifting the cap on funding authorized to be used for cooperative agreements.

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8/31/12 [Tester statement on next step to expand Billings VA Clinic](#)

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Schedule

August 30, 2012

7:45 a.m.
Press Interview

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