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March 31, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting \$91,400,000 for the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas Navigation System Catastrophic Failure Prevention project in fiscal year 2024. The entity to receive funding for this project is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The funding would be used for The recommended plan includes the construction of a new containment structure approximately 2.5 miles long at an elevation of 157 feet with a relief channel through the Historic Closure Structure, beginning on natural high ground just south and west of the existing Melinda Cutoff Structure located on the south side of Owens Lake. It would continue east and cross south of the existing Melinda Structure, then head northeast and connect to the existing soil cement containment structure north of Jim Smith Lake where it would follow the existing containment alignment and terminate at the Historic Closure Structure. A section of the Historic Closure Structure ranging from 500 feet to 1,000 feet wide, would be lowered to elevation 145 feet to facilitate earlier water exchange during flooding to alleviate extreme head differentials between the two rivers.

The Melinda Cutoff Structure would be demolished to reduce turbulence and erosion in the immediate Melinda Structure vicinity. This action would also reestablish the hydrologic connection of the two arms of Owens, increasing spawning and nursery habitat for native fish species. An opening would be constructed in the Owens Lake Structure to prevent changes in flood duration that could adversely impact forested wetlands (bottomland hardwood forest).

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because The future economic viability of the MKARNS is at risk as there is currently more than a \$300 million backlog for projects including locks, dams, and other important equipment that is deteriorating to dangerous conditions. The

MKARNS is vital to the economies of Arkansas and Oklahoma, as well as Kansas, which sends or receives 49 percent of the tonnage coming through ports along the MKARNS. A critical failure on the system could result in it being shut down for months and even a temporary shutdown could put future use of the system at risk, as businesses would no longer see the MKARNS as reliable and would likely find other means to transport their goods. Losing navigation on the entire MKARNS would cost over 6,000 jobs and cause national GDP to decline by \$723 million.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by section 1401 of the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, 132 STAT. 3836 (Public Law 115-270).

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric A. Crawford", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
MEMBER OF CONGRESS