

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 8, 2019

Colonel James J. Handura
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District
1325 J Street, Room 1513
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Colonel Handura:

We urge you to give all due consideration to Lake County's, the non-federal sponsor, request to dedicate funding for the Middle Creek Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Project. In our view, this project is an ideal candidate for disaster-relief funds provided to the Army Corps under the *Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019* (Public Law 116-20) and the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018* (Public Law 115-123).

Congress stipulated that only projects in counties with federal declarations for wildfires and floods in calendar years 2017, 2018, or 2019 be eligible for this disaster-relief funding. According to FEMA, the President issued Lake County three such declarations in 2017, three in 2018, and none to date in 2019 heading into California's peak fire season.

Advancing this project is a high priority for us, Lake County, and the State of California. In February 2018, local lawmakers secured \$15 million in state funding to help meet the non-federal cost share for the project. Congress authorized the project in the *Water Resources Development Act of 2007* (Public Law 110-114).

Completing the project would restore some 1,600 acres of critical wetland habitat by breaching antiquated levees dating back to the 1930s. It would also result in very significant water quality and ecosystem restoration benefits for Clear Lake, which is the second largest natural lake in California. At present, Clear Lake frequently suffers from algal blooms linked to sediment runoff and nutrient overload.

Again, we urge the Army Corps to consider the County's request to dedicate available federal disaster-relief funding for this eligible and deserving project. This project will remain a top priority for us as Congress prepares the next Water Resources Development Act. Thank you for your leadership at the Sacramento District and for considering our views.

Sincerely,


JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress


MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress