

Senate Hopes for September Floor Vote on WRDA ***September 10, 2004***

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hopes to have a Senate vote this month on a \$4 billion bill authorizing numerous Corps of Engineers water projects, according to committee staff members at a briefing this week.

S. 2773, the Senate's version of the Water Resources Development Act of 2004, could be sent to the floor as early as next week, several staff said at a meeting of House and Senate staff on September 9.

The projects authorized by the bill have been delayed by the fact that Congress has not passed a WRDA bill in four years, said Susan Bodine, staff director of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. A bill needs to pass this year because "it is critically important that we authorize these [delayed] projects," she said. Further delay will only increase the cost of necessary water resources programs already in the planning process, Bodine added.

ASCE testified in March in support of the Corps and prompt reauthorization of water resources projects contained in the legislation.

The House passed its bill in September 2003. A House-Senate conference committee will be needed to iron out the differences between the two bills.

This weekly report is written by the American Society of Civil Engineers' Government Relations staff. If you have any questions or comments about any items in this report please email govwash@asce.org.