



ASLA



May 1, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and our nearly 16,000 members, I write to thank you for your past support of nature-based infrastructure funding and urge you to include robust investments for these measures in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) appropriations legislation. Specifically, ASLA asks the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) to be funded at its full authorization of \$3.25 billion with an increase for nature-based solutions.

As you know, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58) authorized the CWSRF at \$3.25 billion for FY25. The CWSRF provides states with low-cost financing to design, plan, build, or update water infrastructure. The CWSRF program remains the principal federal funding program for wastewater infrastructure projects throughout the country. By leveraging federal investments with state and local contributions, the CWSRF helps communities utilize nature-based solutions to improve municipal wastewater facilities, nonpoint source pollution control, decentralized wastewater treatment systems, stormwater management and mitigation, estuary protection, and water reuse.

Many communities, however, continue to face challenges in maintaining and upgrading their water infrastructure due to more frequent climate impacts like extreme heat and rainfall. These impacts accelerate the deterioration of antiquated infrastructure like aging treatment plants, pipes, and pollution runoff systems that pose significant risks to communities such as severe flooding, property damage, human health concerns, and economic damage. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), according to its most recent Clean Watersheds Needs Survey (CWNS) report EPA-830-R-15005, estimated that \$271 billion is needed over the next 20 years to meet federal water quality objectives concerning wastewater and stormwater infrastructure.¹

The Congressional Research Service confirmed that nature-based infrastructure (e.g., rain gardens, green roofs, detention ponds, bioswales, permeable pavements, etc.) can be built for 5-30 percent less and maintained for 25 percent less than gray infrastructure (e.g., pipes, tanks, pumps, etc.) to effectively manage stormwater and improve water quality by filtering pollutants.²

¹ "Clean Watersheds Needs Survey 2012: Report to Congress." U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, January 2016. https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-12/documents/cwns_2012_report_to_congress-508-opt.pdf.

² Claudia Copeland, "Green Infrastructure and Issues in Managing Urban Stormwater." Congressional Research Service, May 2, 2016, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43131>.

Therefore, increased investments for the Green Project Reserve (GPR), included as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5), are needed to help communities fully utilize the CWSRF and implement cost-effective nature-based solutions to address their water management needs. Increased investments for the GPR from 10 to 20 percent would spur upgraded water infrastructure nationwide without spending any new money.

The CWSRF is one of the most-accessed federal funding sources for landscape architects. Landscape architects plan and design successful water infrastructure projects using nature-based solutions to reduce the impacts of flooding, contain the movement of pollutants and other debris, help infiltrate stormwater on-site, and integrate these solutions seamlessly into our communities. Projects focus on stormwater management, damaged shorelines, and natural landscape protection at parks, campuses, hospitals, streetscapes, trails, plazas, and more.

Once again, I urge you to fully appropriate the Clean Water State Revolving Fund at its full authorization of \$3.25 billion and increase the Green Project Reserve set-aside to 20 percent. If you have any questions or would like to follow up on this legislative matter, please contact me or ASLA Manager of Federal Government Affairs, Caleb Raspler, at craspler@asla.org or (202) 216-2372.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Torey Carter-Conneen", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Torey Carter-Conneen
Chief Executive Officer