

**From:** Hubert Oxford hubertoxford@benoxford.com  
**Subject:** Water Resources Reform Legislation  
**Date:** August 2, 2013 at 5:03 PM  
**To:** Randall Reese rreese@navigationdistrict.org, Rick Lewis rglewis1@sbcglobal.net  
**Cc:** Hubert Oxford hubertoxford@benoxford.com, Hubert Oxford hubertoxford@benoxford.com

HO

Remember—if it has “Reform” in the title it is screwing someone.

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**From:** Milam Mabry [mailto:milam@mabrypublicaffairs.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 02, 2013 2:53 PM  
**To:** pbeard@snnd.org; Jim Rich; kduhon@snnd.org; Rick Lewis; jjohnson@snnd.org; Randy Reese; Clayton Henderson  
**Cc:** Renny DeVille; Hubert Oxford; Paul Beard; Jim Rich; Rick Lewis; Joe Johnson; Ken Duhon  
**Subject:** FYI - the latest from the Conf. Call with Chairman Shuster re. timing of the WRRDA Bill - Sept. - Oct.

Team,

FYI - I was on Chairman Shuster's WRRDA Conference Call this morning. W"RR"DA is not a typo, as the Committee has added "Reform" to the acronym given the Corps Acceleration & Streamlining reform language they plan to pass along with "De-Authorizations" for projects that have been on the books for years with no support or action.

All of the Chairman's themes fit right in with the SNWW Improvement Project: Jobs, Increased Competitiveness, National Significance, Fiscally Responsible, etc.

The Chairman is also pushing a theme of increased funding flexibility/options for local sponsors.

I expect we'll have a copy of the language hopefully the first week Congress is back in from the August Recess-District Work Period - the week of Sept. 9 hopefully.

This will give us time to comb the language before the Committee Marks up its bill later in September, and the Chairman is telling stakeholders "we're good with Leadership." We don't have a set time to go to the Floor, but it is looking like sometime in October.

We remain very excited about helping Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member Rahall use

the Sabine-Neches Waterway Improvement Project as a project of National Significance that can help push the need for a WRRDA Bill on the Floor of the House.

Very exciting, and I'll report more as it develops.

When you have a minute and want to comb the details of Chairman Shuster's Press Release, an article from Transportation Weekly and AAPA's Release regarding the latest timing, it is all pasted below for your review.

Randy, Clayton, Renny and I are using all of this intelligence to help perfect the next generation of the SNWW's "House Floor" focused Handout.

Thank you for all your support, and we're rolling strong. We must keep up the work as every single vote will count on the House Floor for sure.

Happy Weekend!

- Milam

*Below, please refer to the two follow up releases from Chairman Shuster's (R-PA) office, as well as from the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, in regards to this morning's stakeholder call with Chairman Shuster.*

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1. **From:** Transportation and Infrastructure Press  
<[Transportation.GOP@mail.house.gov](mailto:Transportation.GOP@mail.house.gov)>  
**Date:** August 2, 2013, 12:11:15 PM EDT  
**Subject: Shuster and Gibbs Announce Plans for Committee to Consider Water Resources Reform Legislation in September**

## **Shuster and Gibbs Announce Plans for Committee to Consider Water Resources Reform Legislation in September**

For Immediate Release: August 2, 2013  
Contact: [Jim Billimoria](#) or [Justin Harclerode](#) (202) 225-9446

Today, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) and Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment Chairman Bob Gibbs (R-OH) announced plans for the Committee to consider the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2013 when Congress returns in September. The Committee leaders' plans also received the support of Speaker of the House John Boehner

and House Majority Leader Eric Cantor.

“One of my top priorities is moving forward with unprecedented water resources infrastructure reform legislation. This bill will be the most policy and reform-focused legislation of its kind in the last two decades,” **Shuster** said. “In September, our Committee plans to consider the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA). This legislation will contain no earmarks and will make major reforms to increase transparency, accountability, and Congressional oversight in reviewing and prioritizing future water resources development activities. WRRDA will cut federal red tape and bureaucracy, streamline the project delivery process, promote fiscal responsibility, and strengthen our water transportation networks to promote American competitiveness, prosperity, and economic growth.”

“We are literally studying infrastructure projects to death. While it once took the Corps of Engineers three to five years to complete a study, it has now become the norm for this process to take 10 to 15 years,” said **Gibbs**. “The unwieldy review process remains tied up in red tape, costing us time and money and preventing action. Congress must change the way the Corps of Engineers does business.”

“Chairman Shuster and Chairman Gibbs have done a great job developing a water resources bill focused on major policy reforms – and without earmarks,” said **Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH)**. “I look forward to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee moving a bill that addresses our infrastructure needs in a fiscally responsible manner.”

“We need fiscally responsible solutions that cut red tape and improve our essential infrastructure,” said **House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA)**. “The bill by Chairman Shuster and Chairman Gibbs offers a way to cut through the Federal Government’s excessive bureaucracy and help America become more competitive. I look forward to consideration of WRRDA this fall.”

More details about the Committee’s markup of WRRDA will be announced at later date.

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2. **From:** Transportation Weekly <[transpoweekly@gmail.com](mailto:transpoweekly@gmail.com)>

**Date:** August 2, 2013, 1:26:23 PM EDT

**Subject: House Leaders Announce Plans For Water Resources Bill in Sept.-Oct.**

TRANSPORTATION WEEKLY

UPDATE - HOUSE LEADERS ANNOUNCE PLANS FOR WATER RESOURCES BILL  
IN SEPT.-OCT.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2013 - 1:25 P.M.

(This is what happens when you leave your phone in the car for a nice long lunch on a

Friday.)

House Transportation and Infrastructure chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) and Water Resources and Environment subcommittee chairman Bob Gibbs (R-OH) released an announcement an hour ago detailing their plans for moving the next in a recurring series of Army Corps of Engineers civil works program (river and harbor dredging, flood control, and other water resources programs and projects) authorization bills through the House this fall.

Shuster and Gibbs (together with their Democratic counterparts on the T&I Committee) have been working behind the scenes to draft a bipartisan water resources bill for several months, but the public release of bill text and the markup of a bill in the committee was always dependent on receiving a firm commitment of debate time on the House floor from the House Republican leadership. The leaders appear to have given the water bill a firm commitment for House floor action in early October.

As *TW* noted earlier this week, the House schedule for the month of September is an odd one -- September 30 (with its midnight deadline for a continuing appropriations bill being signed into law) falls on a Monday this year, but the House is scheduled to be in recess for the week before that. This means that a T&I markup of the water bill would likely fall the week of Monday, September 16, with the release of bill text several days to a week or so before the committee markup session.

The leadership buy-in to moving the water bill was evident in Shuster and Gibbs' press release, which also included quotes from House Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Cantor extolling the water bill.

Shuster and Gibbs have added an extra "R" to the acronym this year - the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA). (The bill, without the reform part, has been WRDA since the landmark 1986 WRDA law.) The Senate passed a bipartisan WRDA bill (S. 601) on May 15 of this year.

Shuster said that "This legislation will contain no earmarks and will make major reforms to increase transparency, accountability and Congressional oversight in reviewing and prioritizing future water resources development activities."

The "no earmarks" part was expected, but this approach in Congress (the Senate bill was also earmark-free) is a stark departure from the previous WRDA laws, which tended to be long laundry lists of earmarked water project authorizations. Historically, the Corps of Engineers has been the federal agency most micromanaged by Congress, to the point that there were often jokes that the Corps was really in the legislative branch and not the executive branch. But Congress's disavowal of earmarks as a means of controlling Corps priorities has changed the relationship a bit.

Shortly before their press release went out, Shuster and Gibbs held a telephone conference call with industry stakeholder groups in which Shuster told the group that he and T&I ranking minority member Nick Rahall (D-WV) were in agreement on the draft bill and on reviving the old bipartisan public works approach to legislation, whereby committee leaders of both parties would oppose all amendments to the base bill unless the leaders of both parties agreed to accept the amendments.

The full text of the Shuster-Gibbs announcement is here:

<http://goo.gl/bHTwIY>

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**BELOW forwarded from Clayton from AAPA's Jim Walker - the AAPA Staffer we had breakfast with in DC recently.**

### **Timeline Released for Fall Action on Revised WRDA**

House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) held a conference call with Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) supporters on Friday, August 2, to discuss the schedule for what will now be called by the House, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA). Chairman Shuster's timetable is that the T&I draft bill will be released in mid-September, debated and finalized in late September and then proceed to full House floor time for debate and passage in October. Chairman Shuster will meet with stakeholders in mid-September when the T&I draft bill is released.

Chairman Shuster also said there is bipartisan agreement by the committee leadership on WRRDA, although the final language is being resolved. The Chairman went on to say that WRRDA has been coordinated with House leadership.

The Chairman wants to have WRRDA bills more regularly in the future – one every Congress.

Chairman Shuster highlighted that WRRDA will:

- Not have earmarks
- Accelerate project studies
- Streamline environmental reviews
- Be fiscally responsible, deauthorizing more projects than new authorizations
- Strengthen transparency and Congressional oversight
- Revise the project authorization process with an increased role for local officials making a request to the Corps of Engineers who would then take the project to Congress.

Chairman Shuster closed the conference call by emphasizing that WRRDA is a jobs bill, enabling trade and commerce and enhancing U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace. The Committee also released the [following press release](#).

Very Respectfully,

- Milam Mabry



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