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March 25, 2025

Senator John Kennedy, Chair
Senator Patty Murray, Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Room S-128 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Kennedy and Ranking Member Murray:

Membership of the Interstate Council on Water Policy (ICWP) includes state, local, regional and interstate water resources management agencies. Our members rely upon and work closely with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Planning Assistance to States and Tribes Program (PAS&T) to support, co-fund, and implement important water resources management projects across the nation. These 50/50 cost-share projects provide **real depth** to decision-level studies, modeling, and engineering both at the state as well as small community levels that simply would not happen otherwise.

We write to underscore the importance for Congress to **ensure baseline funding** for the USACE PAS&T program **for at least \$9 million for FY2026 appropriations**. The PAS&T program assists states and nonfederal entities with planning (at a 50/50 cost share) and technical assistance of water resource projects, including flood risk management, ecosystem restoration and navigation. It is known as one of the most flexible programs that USACE offers that allows for the fluid iterative nature of early planning and is a crucial first step for states and nonfederal stakeholders to get important water resources projects underway.

How states and nonfederal stakeholders utilize PAS funding:

- Flood risk reduction and mitigation comprehensive planning (i.e.- Valley Branch Watershed in Minnesota, Devils Lake in North Dakota)
- Sedimentation management studies (i.e.- Kansas River sediment transport, watershed erosion and prevention studies)
- Watershed and water quality studies (i.e.- Lake Wausau in Wisconsin)
- Economics of reservoir sustainability research (i.e.- Tuttle Creek Lake in Kansas)
- State water plan development and support (i.e. Oklahoma and Kansas)
- Targeted small and disadvantaged community water resources assistance

Why PAS&T funding must increase in FY2026:

The \$9M FY2026 funding request ensures that PAS&T is not reduced beyond the baseline funded level for FY2020 which was set at \$9M. Over the last five years, a significant increase in demand for PAS&T funding due to a temporary increase in appropriations under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has fueled a growing backlog of projects. To keep up with such high demand, meet the needs of

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our nation's water projects, and to ensure that priority projects do not get sidelined, ICWP recommends that Congress at least funds PAS&T at \$9M for FY2026.

Thank you for your consideration as Congress works on its priorities for Fiscal Year 2026 USACE budget appropriations. ICWP can connect you with our members to provide more information on PAS&T projects and the utility of these funds. Feel free to contact me at: beth@icwp.org or 307-772-1999.

Regards,



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CC: Joe Redican, Deputy Chief, Planning and Policy Division, USACE
Lacey Thomasen, Planning Assistance to States National Program Manager, USACE institute
for Water Resources