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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6050

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March 7, 2016

The Honorable Patrick Murphy
Acting Secretary of the Army
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Acting Secretary Murphy:

I write to inquire about the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project in Flagstaff, Arizona, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project that has been plagued by complications that threaten its completion.

With future flood events in the Rio de Flag potentially causing hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of damages that could affect large swaths of Flagstaff's population, the need for the Rio de Flag project is clear. Yet, the construction of a detention basin, river crossings, berms, and floodwalls has been delayed by a stifling Army Corps bureaucracy, continual funding issues, and endless repairs to parts of the project that have been mishandled. I am concerned that if this project continues unfinished, the surrounding community will be exposed to a significant risk of harm due to a major flood event.

Since 2008, the City of Flagstaff has sought an updated economic analysis of the project and reauthorization of federal funding through a Limited Reevaluation Report (LRR). I, and other members of the Arizona congressional delegation, have been repeatedly assured that the LRR would be completed in the past. In response to my letter I sent in 2013 to Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Jo-Ellen Darcy, I was told the timeframe for completion of the LRR would be "mid-summer 2014". And in April 2015, the Assistant Secretary said that the LRR would be completed by the end of the year. But, the LRR is still not completed and the Army Corps cannot provide a reliable completion date. The City of Flagstaff must obtain an updated LRR to seek federal funding next year.

Last week, in testimony before the House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Assistant Secretary Darcy, and the Chief of Engineers, Army Corps of Engineers, Lieutenant General Thomas Bostick, committed to having the Army Corps conduct its Regional and Headquarter review at the same time as the Army's own review of the LRR. Such a concurrent review would ensure the LRR is completed on an expedited timeline.

Both Assistant Secretary Darcy and Lieutenant General Bostick committed to completing the LRR in time for inclusion into the next Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) in 2016. However, in a January 2016 report to the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, the

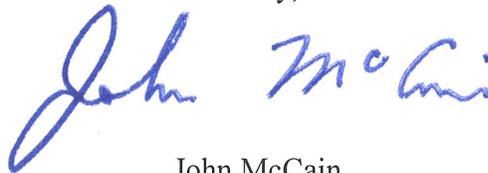
Rio de Flag project was not included in a list of Army Corps priorities the agency believes must be completed in time for the next WRDA bill.

In light of these developments, please answer the following by April 1, 2016:

1. What will the Army and the Army Corps do to satisfy Assistant Secretary Darcy and Lieutenant General Bostick's commitment to Congress to complete a concurrent review of the Limited Reevaluation Report (LRR) timely vis-à-vis WRDA?
2. Specifically when will the Army and the Army Corps complete their reviews of the LRR for inclusion in the 2016 WRDA bill?
3. If there impediments to the timely completion of these reviews, please explain.

Thank you for your attention to this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John McCain". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John McCain
Chairman