

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 5, 2019

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

I write to you regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP) and the recent nomination to include the Rio Reimagined project as the 20th designee in this unique initiative.

As you may know, the late U.S. Senator John McCain championed this project and engaged with Arizona stakeholders to re-catalyze the Rio Salado river revitalization project for the benefit of economic, social and environmental vitality within the Phoenix metro area as well as the State of Arizona. With facilitation and convening by Arizona State University and the support of local stakeholders, including elected officials, the project scope spans across a 58-mile stretch of the Salt-Gila river corridor through Maricopa County including six cities and two Native American tribal communities.

Further, a dedicated working group for the project currently includes state, county, municipal and tribal leaders as well as support from the Salt River Project, one of the first federal projects under the Reclamation Act, all of whom formally agreed to pursue this vision, dubbed the Rio Reimagined project, at a ceremony in Tempe, Arizona on March 30, 2018. In addition, we continue to garner support from allied stakeholders including the Maricopa Association of Governments, non-profits, non-governmental organizations, and key private sector entities. For this grand civic initiative to be successful, it will require constant coordination between these stakeholders, including the many federal agencies that have a nexus in the river.

The EPA's award-winning Urban Waters Federal Partnership strives to break down barriers between federal agencies to improve urban waterways, which is exactly the aim of Rio Reimagined. Currently, this ambitious initiative works on 19 different watershed pilots across many states that greatly benefit from this partnership. In compliance with the Clean Water Act, UWFP projects successfully address a multitude of challenges including flood control, infrastructure, community engagement and water quality, which are critical to the Rio Reimagined project.

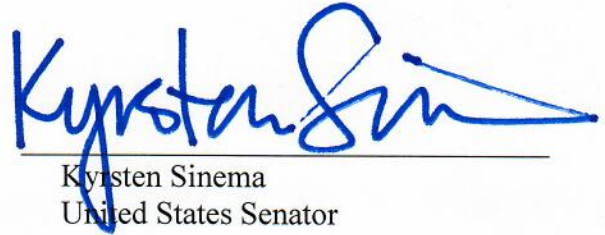
To that end, we request that you and your partner agencies officially include the Rio Reimagined project to the Urban Waters Federal Partnership so that this project can successfully utilize your leadership and your partner's agency's expertise.

Thank you for all the work your agency does, and for the consideration of this request. I look forward to your response.

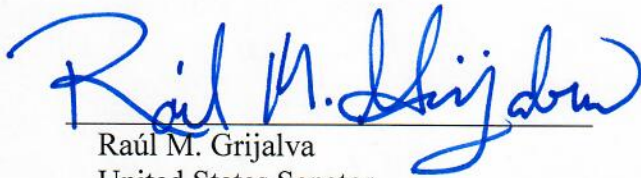
Sincerely,



Martha McSally
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



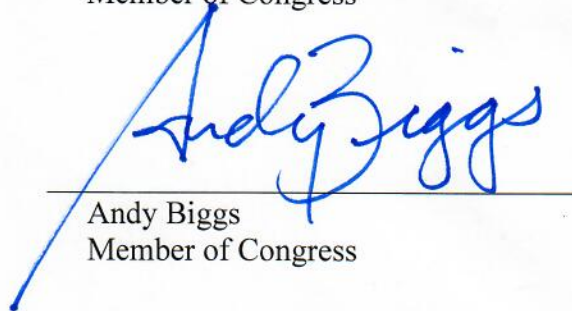
Raúl M. Grijalva
United States Senator



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



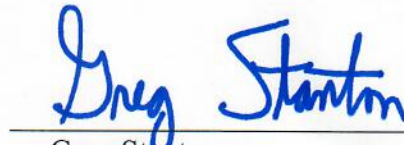
Debbie Lesko
Member of Congress



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



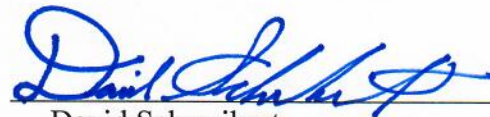
Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress



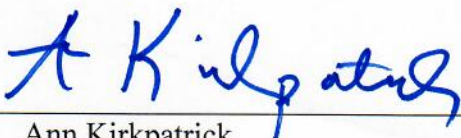
Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



David Schweikert
Member of Congress



Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress

Cc:

Acting Administrator David Bernhardt, U.S. Department of the Interior
Secretary Sonny Perdue, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Secretary Rick Perry, U.S. Department of Energy
Secretary Ben Carson, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Secretary Wilbur Ross, U.S. Department of Commerce
Assistant Secretary R.D. James, U.S. Department of the Army (Civil Works)

Enclosures:

Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Resolution of Support – March 28, 2018