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news release

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DE LA GARZA SUPPORTS CIVIL WORKS PROJECTS

Testifying before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development on Wednesday, South Texas Congressman Kika de la Garza (D-Mission) supported three Corps of Engineers' Civil Works projects in the President's Fiscal year 1993 budget package.

First is the Corpus Christi Ship Channel Navigation Project which is budgeted for operation and maintenance at \$5,228,000. "Allowing the Channel to silt into a depth of 40 feet would cause a loss of 7,230 jobs and \$1.6 billion in sales revenues, and the Port of Corpus Christi and the people of the Coastal Bend need your help in assuring that adequate funds continue to be appropriated in order to realize the full project depth of 45 feet," de la Garza told Subcommittee members.

Second is the Lower Rio Grande Basin Arroyo Colorado Project. This is budgeted at \$170,000 for preconstruction engineering and design. This is a project which would provide a gated concrete water control structure and an improved low flow channel in the Arroyo Colorado near Mercedes, Texas, and bank protection and channel modification in four reaches along the Arroyo Colorado in Harlingen, Texas. These improvements are necessary to accommodate an increased frequency of low flows resulting from upstream flood control improvements on tributaries of the Arroyo Colorado. The tributary improvements, which are being constructed by local interests, will reduce crop damages due to flooding and allow increased agricultural productivity in the Arroyo Colorado watershed in Hidalgo County. The project provides a five year level of protection.

The third project is the Lower Rio Grande Basin South Main Channel Project which is budgeted at \$350,000 for preconstruction engineering and design. It would provide the major outlet component of an overall flood protection plan for Willacy and Hidalgo Counties. Lateral channels and on-farm measures would be provided by others. The authorized plan calls for the construction of a major channel extending from near McAllen to the Laguna Madre, and related fish and wildlife mitigation measures. The plan would provide two year protection to rural areas which drain into the South Main Channel; one hundred year flood protection to the cities of Raymondville, Edinburg, McAllen and Lyford; and fifty year flood protection for the cities of La Villa and Edcouch.

Noting that all three projects are included in the President's Fiscal Year 1993 budget package, de la Garza said, "I cannot stress enough the need for the continued funding of these very important projects, and I hope that you will see fit to include each of these in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill."

Citing the value and importance of these projects, the South Texas Congressman emphasized that failing to properly fund and maintain these sites would be a "waste of taxpayers' money."