

## WATER INFRASTRUCTURE SUSTAINABILITY AND EFFICIENCY (WISE) ACT (H.R. 2921)

### Talking Points

- The United States Environmental Protection Agency administers the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) to provide states with low-cost financing to design, plan, build, or update water infrastructure like municipal wastewater facilities, nonpoint source pollution control, decentralized wastewater treatment systems, stormwater management and mitigation, estuary protection, and water reuse.
- Traditionally, gray stormwater infrastructure (e.g., pipes, tanks, pumps, etc.) is designed to move stormwater away from the built environment. Whereas green infrastructure or nature-based solutions reduce the quantity and treat stormwater on site, while delivering many other environmental, social, and economic benefits.
- Nature-based solutions like rain gardens, green roofs, detention ponds, bioswales, and permeable pavements have been proven to effectively manage stormwater and improve water quality by filtering pollutants. According to the Congressional Research Service, these techniques can be built for 5-30 percent less and maintained for 25 percent less than gray infrastructure.
- Landscape architects are leaders in planning and designing water and stormwater management projects using nature-based solutions on many scales, including at the site, neighborhood, watershed, and regional scales.
- Extreme heat is causing frequent and intense rainfall leading to severe flooding, property damage, and human health concerns.
- Landscape architects plan and design nature-based systems that reduce the impacts of flooding, contain the movement of pollutants and other debris, help infiltrate stormwater on-site, and integrate these solutions seamlessly into our communities.
- Recognizing the benefits, in 2009 Congress passed funding legislation that included language to allow communities to implement nature-based solutions for water management projects using CWSRF loans. This Green Project Reserve (GPR) has been highly successful but has not been permanently authorized and is subject to annual actions of appropriators and Congress.
- Increased investments in the GPR are needed to ensure that all communities can implement nature-based solutions to address their water management issues.
- The WISE Act would increase CWSRF investments for nature-based solutions projects from 10 to 20 percent, without spending any new money.
- The CWSRF is one of the most-accessed federal funding sources for landscape architects to plan and design water infrastructure projects.
- **The ASK** — House of Representatives: Cosponsor H.R. 2921, the WISE Act, so communities nationwide may continue to realize the benefits of nature-based solutions for water management.
- **The ASK** — Senate: Please consider introducing the Senate companion to H.R. 2921, the WISE Act, so communities nationwide may continue to realize the benefits of nature-based solutions for water management.