

Natural Resources and Environment: Improved Project Authorizations and Agency Practices Can Increase Congressional Control of Water Resources Projects (Paperback)



**Natural Resources and Environment:
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Bibliogov, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 246 x 189 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Congress used two separate authorization methods to control the development of funding of water resources projects--the two-phase authorization for the Corps of Engineers and an authorization ceiling for the Bureau of Reclamation. The two-phase authorization was begun in 1974 to give Congress increased control over the design of water resources projects and the changes which occur during project planning by providing Congress with a second look during the planning phase before authorization of construction. Each of the authorization methods provides some benefits to Congress, but neither is adequate by itself to provide effective control over planning and developing the projects. No Corps projects have been through the two-phase process because of delays by the Secretary of the Army and the Office of Management and Budget in reviewing Corps planning documents. Although the Corps must state that a project is without substantial controversy to allow a continuation of planning, no criteria for defining this term have been established. The Corps has not adequately notified Congress of changes to projects and the reasons for them. It exceeded estimated costs by significant amounts for noninflationary items without notifying the authorization committees and has credited inflation for too much of increased costs. Benefits of the authorization ceiling are that it serves as an early indicator of problems, limits federal expenditures, and controls the nature and scope of projects. Current problems in establishing the authorization ceiling are that it is established too early in the planning process for adequate data to be available, and the Bureau of Reclamation sometimes overstates the ceilings.



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