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Chief, Int. Sec.

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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D C 20548

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RESOURCES AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

MAY 2 1974

Mr. Kenneth E. Grant
Administrator, Soil Conservation
Service
Department of Agriculture

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Dear Mr. Grant

We have completed our review of the coordination between the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture in planning for irrigation projects

In a draft of a proposed report to the Congress, we suggested that the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture have their respective agencies jointly establish (1) uniform policies and procedures for determining irrigation benefits in planning for multi-purpose water resource projects, and (2) a coordination process for comprehensive planning of irrigation projects. Also, we suggested that the Water Resources Council encourage and assist the Departments in establishing a coordination process and review the jointly established policies and procedures for making irrigation benefit determinations for conformance with the Council's Principles and Standards for Planning Water and Related Land Resources.

Department of Agriculture's comments on the draft of our proposed report stated that the Principles and Standards may well provide the opportunity for better accommodation and coordination. We were advised that, under the Principles and Standards, water resource development projects must be formulated to meet national economic development needs within the principles of economic efficiency and that uniform procedures for planning and evaluation of the projects are required. Further it was pointed out that while the coordination procedures provided within the Principles and Standards have not yet been tested, they would result in the type of coordination suggested in our proposed report.

We believe the actions being taken by the Departments and the Council should bring about improvements in the coordination process and in achieving uniformity in computing irrigation benefits. Further, our planned report on need for improvement in benefit-cost determinations for Federal water resource projects, which was also commented on by your

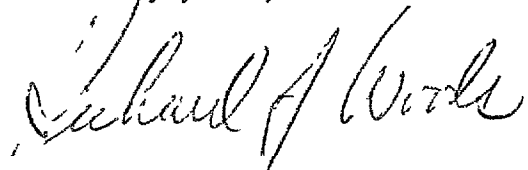
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Department, deals more comprehensively with the subject of benefit determinations We therefore do not plan any further reporting on our coordination review at this time.

We appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended to us during our review.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard J. Woods". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Richard J Woods
Assistant Director

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