To temporarily relieve cost-sharing requirements for Army Corps of Engineers watershed mitigation projects and flood damage reduction projects for counties adversely impacted by Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee, and for other purposes.

A BILL

To temporarily relieve cost-sharing requirements for Army Corps of Engineers watershed mitigation projects and flood damage reduction projects for counties adversely impacted by Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee Community Recovery Assistance Act of 2012”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The devastation that Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee brought to many communities was catastrophic. In addition to the damage sustained from the storms themselves, subsequent flooding destroyed towns, wiped out roads and bridges, and caused thousands of Americans to lose their homes, businesses, farms, and personal possessions. Given the fiscal challenges facing these communities, the task of repairing and rebuilding has been significant. Difficult economic times have created very real challenges and obstacles for local and State governments to overcome.

(2) Members of Congress recognized this devastation and organized a bipartisan coalition of 30 Members whose districts were impacted by Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee. The coalition has worked diligently to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has the resources it needs to support the recovery efforts. As the recovery efforts move forward, it is equally important to conduct studies on what can be done to mitigate disasters of this scale in the future, and the Corps of Engineers is leading the work associated with these studies.
(3) As the Nation continues to recover from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, some communities are financially incapable of making payments immediately to meet cost-sharing requirements for watershed mitigation projects and flood damage reduction projects. Given the fiscal circumstances and the critical need for recovery efforts, it is necessary to provide temporary relief of these cost-sharing requirements, so that ongoing studies can be concluded and mitigation efforts can be implemented. Providing such relief could result in long-term future savings.

SEC. 3. TEMPORARY RELIEF OF COST-SHARING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN COUNTIES ADVERSELY IMPACTED BY HURRICANE IRENE OR TROPICAL STORM LEE.

(a) PAYMENT OF NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—
Upon the request of a State or local government, the Secretary of the Army shall allow a non-Federal interest to make payment of any non-Federal contribution associated with a qualifying watershed mitigation project (including treatment and distributions components) or a qualifying flood damage reduction project over a 30-year period in accordance with section 103(k) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. 2213(k)).
(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) DISASTER COUNTY.—The term “disaster county” means—

(A) a county included in the geographical area covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration; and

(B) each county contiguous to a county described in subparagraph (A).

(2) QUALIFYING NATURAL DISASTER DECLARATION.—The term “qualifying natural disaster declaration” means a major disaster or emergency declared by the President under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) in 2011 due to damaging weather and other conditions relating to Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee.

(3) QUALIFYING FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION PROJECT.—The term “qualifying flood damage reduction project” means a flood damage reduction project carried out by the Corps of Engineers for a disaster county.

(4) QUALIFYING WATERSHED MITIGATION PROJECT.—The term “qualifying watershed mitigation project” means a project or study carried out...
by the Corps of Engineers with respect to a watershed located in whole or in part in a disaster county for one or more of the following purposes:

(A) To reduce the impacts of flooding in the watershed, including through ecosystem restoration.

(B) To enhance rivers in the watershed with respect to use as transportation corridors.

(C) To improve water quality throughout the watershed.

(D) To increase economic opportunities in the watershed.

(E) To utilize new technologies and innovative approaches to benefit the watershed.

(F) To develop and implement a long-term resource monitoring program for the watershed.