Rep. Craig Hosmer warned the western States today that they can expect constantly decreasing appropriations for new reclamation projects if they continue to propose works as costly and impractical as the multi-billion dollar Upper Colorado River Project now before Congress.

"Evidence to support this assertion is plentiful," Hosmer declared. "Congressmen from eastern, southern and midwestern States were appalled by the fantastic costliness of individual irrigation units in the Upper Colorado Project, as well as the overall cost.

"For example, one of the project units in New Mexico calls for the unbelievable expenditure of $200,000 per farm for each of eleven hundred farms. I believe that Rep. John Pillion of New York expressed the feeling of many Congressmen when he learned that fact. Said Pillion: 'I am speechless.'

"Analysis of the Upper Colorado River Project made by qualified organizations and individuals reveal the enormous burden which would have to be borne by the taxpayers of heavily populated States for the project. This amounts to something like four billion dollars for the initial phases of the project.

"Westerners should realize that Eastern Congressmen do not like the idea of imposing additional tax loads on their districts for new
reclamation projects, especially when the warehouses of the Nation are bulging with surpluses of food and fiber which cannot be disposed of, and which will continue to burden the taxpayers in the foreseeable future."

The California Republican, a member of the House Interior Committee which handled the Upper Colorado Project bill, cited the cost per acre of the project as another reason why eastern representatives held up the legislation in the last session.

"The proponents of western reclamation at any cost evidently have a bitter lesson to learn," Hosmer said. "They must learn that they cannot expect easterners to approve irrigation works at altitudes of five to seven thousand feet, at a cost running up to $5,000 an acre. Such figures are not only unrealistic, but they are inconceivable in the minds of congressmen from such areas as the midwest where the finest farm land can be bought for three to five hundred dollars an acre.

"The suggestion that Congress approve a high-altitude project costing $5,000 an acre to grow hay is simply beyond the comprehension of most Congressmen from the humid areas of the Nation."

If western States want more reclamation projects, Hosmer declared, "they had better come to Congress with projects that are within the realm of practicality and which do not stagger the imagination."

"Another thing western States had better do," he added, "is stop falling for the wild and idiotic schemes of the Bureau of Reclamation whose only desire is to build more projects regardless of cost or necessity so that it can stay in business."