



Chairman Mike Simpson

*Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and
Related Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations*

**Hearing on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Civil Works and the Bureau of Reclamation
FY 2018 Budget
May 24, 2017
Opening Statement As Prepared**

I'd like to call this hearing to order. Good morning - this is our first hearing since the release of the fiscal year 2018 budget request. Although we just received the President's budget yesterday, we begin our oversight hearings today. As we do every year, we will now work to understand what is contained in this proposal and ensure that the fiscal year 2018 Energy and Water appropriations bill provides responsible funding to the programs under our jurisdiction.

We are here today to look at the fiscal year 2018 budget request for the Civil Works program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. I'd like to welcome our witnesses, Doug Lamont, The Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works; Lieutenant General Todd Semonite, the Commanding General and Chief of Engineers; Scott Cameron, the Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science of the Department of Interior; and Alan Mikkelsen, the Acting Commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation.

The Bureau of Reclamation and Corps' Civil Works programs include a wide variety of water resources and power activities essential to the public safety, economic, and environmental goals of our nation. This Committee works hard each year to build an appropriations bill that provides strong support to these programs and that strikes a good balance across mission areas. The omnibus included \$1.3 billion for the Bureau of Reclamation and provided more than \$6 billion to the Corps. Funding within the Corps met the new Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund target established in WRDA and made full use of estimated annual revenues in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. Congress clearly recognizes the importance of both these programs.

While I was disappointed to see that the budget request has proposed a cut to Corps funding, the good news is that this is a better Corps number than we saw during the last several years of the Obama Administration. I am hopeful that this is an indication that this Administration recognizes the importance of this infrastructure work. I look forward to hearing from each of you on this budget request and learning more about the priorities included in this proposal and how you plan to address the various challenges facing your agencies.

Again, I'd like to welcome our witnesses to the subcommittee. I would ask all of you to please ensure that the hearing record, questions for the record, and any supporting information requested by the Subcommittee are delivered in final form to us no later than four weeks from the time you receive them. Members who have additional questions for the record will have until the close of business Friday to provide them to the Subcommittee office.

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