

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

COMPLETE STATEMENT OF

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(CIVIL WORKS)

BEFORE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ON

THE ADMINISTRATION'S SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST FOR THE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

NOVEMBER 29, 2017

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee:

I am honored to testify before you today to discuss the recent recommendation of the Administration for supplemental appropriations for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)/Civil Works program, to address impacts from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. I am Ryan Fisher, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works). I am joined today by Major General Donald E. Jackson, Deputy Commanding General, Civil and Emergency Operations.

2017 Hurricane Season – With regard to hurricane activity, 2017 has been an unusually active season. The Corps has been involved in the FEMA-led Federal response and recovery operations for Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

Hurricane Harvey –On August 25, 2017, Category 4 Hurricane Harvey made landfall along the central Texas coast near Rockport, Texas, between Port Aransas and Port O'Connor and the President approved an Expedited Major Disaster Declaration for Texas. Large amounts of rainfall fell across the greater Houston metropolitan area causing record flooding, damage to infrastructure, businesses, and private residences.

Hurricanes Irma and Maria – Category 5 Hurricane Irma made landfall over the U.S. Virgin Islands on September 6, 2017, while also impacting Puerto Rico with Category 2 winds, 12 foot storm surge and up to 20 inches of rain. Hurricane Irma made landfall in southern Florida/Florida Keys on September 9, 2017. Soon thereafter, Category 5 Hurricane Maria made landfall over Puerto Rico on September 20, 2017 and on September 24, 2017 hit Florida as a Category 4 storm, causing major damage to infrastructure and homes, loss of life, and widespread power outages.

CORPS ROLE IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACTIONS

The Corps conducts its emergency response activities under two basic authorities: the Stafford Disaster and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act); and Public Law 84-99, as amended, 33 U.S.C. § 701n (PL 84-99).

Under the Stafford Act, the Corps and other Federal agencies support the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the National Response Framework (NRF). Under the NRF, the Corps serves as the lead Federal agency for Emergency Support Function 3 (ESF 3-Public Works and Engineering), working under FEMA's direction. ESF-3 involves providing Temporary Emergency Power, Temporary Roofing, Debris Management, Emergency Infrastructure Assessment, Critical Public Facility Restoration, Temporary Housing, Demolition/Structural Stabilization, and support to FEMA Command and Control Nodes/ESF3.

In addition, PL 84-99 provides authority for the Corps to prepare for floods, hurricanes, and other natural disasters through planning, coordination, and training with local, state, Federal partners; to assist state and local entities in implementing advance measures to reduce the flood risk of an approaching storm; and to support emergency operations

during the event. After an emergency event, PL 84-99 authorizes the Corps to repair damage to authorized Corps projects, and work with states/municipalities to rehabilitate and restore eligible non-Federal flood infrastructure to pre-storm conditions.

CURRENT PROJECT STORM DAMAGE DATA

In response to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, the Administration has been collecting storm damage data from all relevant Federal agencies. The Administration's recommendation for the Corps totals approximately \$500 million.

The request includes \$14,535,000 for the Corps to repair to pre-storm condition projects that were under construction at the time they were damaged by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, or Maria. The request also includes \$322.7 million to restore to pre-storm condition projects that the Corps operates and maintains, which were damaged by Hurricane Harvey, Irma, or Maria; and finally, the request includes \$162.1 million for the Corps to repair to pre-storm condition non-Federal projects that are eligible for assistance under PL 84-99, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 701n that were damaged by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, or Maria.

The Corps is still working to evaluate the status of the potentially impacted projects Nationwide. As the Corps refines its estimates, through further surveys and Project Information Reports (PIRs), for example, cost estimates for specific projects may change. The Corps is also working to determine cost estimates for outstanding damages to projects associated with any event.

CONCLUSION

The Corps played an important role in the immediate response efforts following Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. Our attention now is focused on repairing infrastructure damaged during those events. The Administration's request would enable us to carry out this important work.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions you or other Members of the Committee may have.