



**Chairwoman Marcy Kaptur**  
**Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development**  
**FY 2023 Budget Request for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and**  
**Bureau of Reclamation**  
**Opening Statement *As Prepared***  
**April 27, 2022**

We are here today to discuss the fiscal year 2023 budget requests for the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. Your agencies are a cornerstone of our economy and play a critical role in sustaining life in our nation and preserving the vitality and sustainability of our nation's precious water resources.

Thank you to our witnesses for joining us today.

Our bill is a jobs and infrastructure bill, investing in our nation's critical water infrastructure and supporting good-paying Middle Class jobs from coast to coast. The investments in annual appropriations bills – combined with the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – will put tens of thousands of people to work in living-wage jobs focused on rebuilding the crumbling infrastructure we see all around us. We are truly building a better America for all.

Last year was an extraordinary period for extreme weather across America. Texas saw a record cold snap in February rendering the power grid inoperable. In August, a water shortage was declared on the Colorado River for the first time ever, triggering looming mandatory water cuts. In Chicago, excess rainfall overwhelmed flood control systems, spilling contaminated runoff into local rivers and Lake Michigan – the region's source of freshwater. California flooded in January only to burst into flames in July, including the record-setting Dixie fire.

The 2021 hurricane season was the third most active on record with 21 named storms. Hurricane Ida landed in Louisiana and worked its way up the East Coast to New England, taking the lives of more than 90 people and resulting in over \$75 billion in damages. In Alabama and Georgia, tornadoes raged for hundreds of miles.

In the Great Lakes, water levels reached record highs in 2019 and 2020, and 2022 levels are projected to be at or above average. At the same time, substantial portions of our country have been left with little to no water. Nearly 100 million Americans are currently living in areas experiencing drought. Six states have areas seeing "exceptional drought" – the highest intensity level on the drought scale. With water resource needs varying from region to region, it is critical that we properly invest in our water infrastructure. Without these investments, the dichotomy of water surpluses in the Midwest and shortages in the West poses a severe threat to our very way of life

All these examples paint a clear and compelling picture of the severe weather events we will continue to see from climate change unless we take action. It is critical for agencies that are



project-based – like the Corps and Reclamation – to plan regionally and implement solutions on a watershed and subwatershed basis to make our communities more resilient.

In the Great Lakes region, projects like Brandon Road are addressing the economic and environmental damage unleashed by invasive carp species, while investments in the Soo Locks are turbocharging the Industrial Heartland’s maritime shipping industries. I hope we can work together to ensure the same level of attention is given to Ohio’s ports, which are in need of additional funding to deliver sustained economic growth for the future.

As we begin our discussion on fiscal year 2023, I am discouraged by the proposed reductions of \$1.7 billion for the Army Corps and \$486 million for Reclamation. While historic investments were made through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in both of your agencies, we have more work to do to rebuild our nation’s crumbling infrastructure.

I’m reminded today of the words of Daniel Webster, “Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered.”

There is bipartisan support in Congress for the work that your agencies undertake on behalf of the American people. Thank you for being here, and we look forward to your testimony.

I’ll now turn to our Ranking Member, Mr. Simpson, for his opening remarks.