

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

**WRITTEN STATEMENT
OF**

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**ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
FOR CIVIL WORKS**

AND

**MAJOR GENERAL SCOTT SPELLMON, DEPUTY COMMANDING
GENERAL FOR CIVIL AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS**

BEFORE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

ON

**WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACTS: STATUS OF
IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSING FUTURE NEEDS**

JULY 10, 2019

Chairwoman Napolitano, Ranking Member Westerman and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Civil Works program and the status of implementation of recent Water Resources Development Acts.

I have been in the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA(CW)) position for 15 months and my goals today are the same as they were when I started, to focus on outcomes, over process, in order to make the best use of the available funds. Since last year I have had the pleasure to meet with most of you one on one to discuss your views on the Corps Civil Works program. That input is appreciated and I remain committed to working with each of you.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Budget provides over \$4.8 billion for the Corps, with a focus on investments that will yield high economic and environmental returns or address a significant risk to public safety. This Budget relies on a foundation of strong relationships between the Corps and local communities, which allow us to work together to help manage, develop, restore, and protect their water resources. The Budget focuses on the highest performing work within the three main mission areas of the Corps, which are:

- commercial navigation;
- flood and storm damage reduction; and
- aquatic ecosystem restoration.

The FY 2020 Budget supports a Corps program that has a diverse set of tools and approaches to working with local communities, whether this means funding projects with our cost-sharing partners, providing planning assistance and technical expertise to help communities make better informed decisions, or participating in the national and international conversations on how to best address our future water resources challenges. The Budget helps us maintain and improve our efforts on resiliency and sustainability – one of the challenges associated with the ways that we have used our water and related land resources in the past.

The Budget also funds two new, innovative programs in the Construction account:

- \$150 million for the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) Section 1043 Non-Federal Construction of Federal Projects program, under which the Corps would transfer appropriated funds to non-Federal sponsors who decide to construct a project on their own. This approach will improve project delivery and achieve cost savings; and

- \$150 million for the Innovative Funding Partnerships program, which would be used in conjunction with funds voluntarily provided by non-Federal interests in excess of the non-Federal cost share to accelerate the completion of construction of specifically authorized projects.

In addition, the Budget proposed to extend the authorization for Section 1043 of WRRDA 2014, as amended, which under current law expired on June 10, 2019.

Since the enactment of the Water Resources Development Act of 2018 (WRDA 2018), the Chief of Engineers has issued a report with recommendations on the following eight proposed water resources projects:

- Little Colorado River (Winslow), Arizona
- Sacramento-San Joaquin, Delta Islands and Levees, California
- Anacostia Watershed Restoration, Prince George's County, Maryland
- Pawcatuck River, Rhode Island
- City of Norfolk, Virginia
- Souris River Basin, North Dakota
- Great Lakes & Mississippi River Interbasin Study – Brandon Road, Illinois
- Yuba River Fish Passage (Englebright and Daguerre Point Dams), California

Since receiving my appointment to be ASA(CW), I've focused on how the Corps executes its funds. This involves identifying the highest priority investments and ensuring that we finish that work in a more timely and efficient way. This approach will ensure a better return on taxpayer's investment and better the lives of Americans. Under my oversight and direction and with the help of Lieutenant General Semonite and his team, the Corps is committed to working on improving the performance of the Civil Works program. The Corps also is using its engineering expertise and its relationships with project sponsors and stakeholders to develop new approaches to address some of the most pressing water resources challenges facing the Nation.

Improving performance and timely delivery of quality products continues to be one of my highest priorities. To that end, we have completed the guidance for all provisions of the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 and the WRDA 2018 that we determined will require such guidance.

I am committed to ensuring that the Corps continues to do what it does better than any other organization in the world, which is to identify the best ways to manage, develop, restore, and protect water resources. Our goal is to achieve a high economic, environmental, and public safety return for the Nation, which will benefit all Americans.

Thank you for inviting me to be here today. I look forward to your questions.