

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

COMPLETE STATEMENT OF

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CHIEF OF ENGINEERS**

**BEFORE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ON

**THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET
FOR THE CIVIL WORKS PROGRAM
OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

APRIL 27, 2022

Chairwoman Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, and Members of the Subcommittee, I am honored to testify before your committee today, along with the Honorable Michael Connor, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, regarding the President's Fiscal Year 2023 (FY 2023) Budget (Budget) for the Army Civil Works Program.

Through the Civil Works program, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) works with other Federal agencies, and with state, tribal, and local agencies, as well as others, to develop, manage, restore, and protect water resources, primarily through the study, construction, and operation and maintenance of water-related infrastructure projects. The Corps focuses on work that provides the highest economic, environmental, and public safety returns to the Nation. The Corps also regulates development in waters of the United States and works with other Federal agencies to help communities respond to, and recover from, floods and other natural disasters. The FY 2023 Budget invests in improving the Nation's water infrastructure, including at U.S. coastal ports, while incorporating climate resilience efforts into the Corps' commercial navigation, flood and storm damage reduction, and aquatic ecosystem restoration work.

The Corps uses its engineering expertise and its relationships with project sponsors and stakeholders to develop innovative approaches to address some of the most pressing water resources challenges facing the Nation. I am committed to the Secretary's priorities for the Army Civil Works program, including investing in the Nation's coastal ports and inland waterways to facilitate waterborne transportation and strengthen economic growth; helping communities to reduce their risks and adapt to climate change; restoring aquatic ecosystems in ways that will make them more sustainable and more resilient to climate change; modernizing the Civil Works program to better serve the needs of disadvantaged communities; investing in science, research, and development to deliver enduring water-resource solutions; and strengthening communications and relationships to solve water resource challenges. I am absolutely focused on ensuring that we deliver studies and finish quality projects safely, on time, and within budget. These priorities will ensure a better return on taxpayer investment and improve the lives of all Americans. Under my oversight and direction, and with the leadership of Assistant Secretary Connor and his team, the Corps is committed to efficiently and effectively executing the Civil Works program.

The Corps' Military program also continues our work across the globe with a presence in more than 110 countries supporting national security and our Combatant Commanders.

SUMMARY OF FY 2023 BUDGET

The Civil Works program is performance-based. It uses a targeted approach to invest in our water resources and promote climate resiliency, which will benefit the Nation's economy, environment, and public safety – now and in the future. With the requested funds, the Corps will emphasize investments in high return projects; increasing resiliency to climate change; facilitating safe, reliable, and sustainable commercial navigation; and accelerating and improving delivery of water resource projects.

The Corps focuses on high-performing projects and programs within its three main water resources missions: commercial navigation, flood and storm damage reduction, and aquatic ecosystem restoration. The Budget includes \$6.601 billion in discretionary funding for Civil Works activities throughout the Nation.

INVESTIGATIONS

For the Corps Investigations program, the FY 2023 Budget includes \$105.9 million in the Investigations account and \$9.75 million in the Mississippi River and Tributaries account. The Corps uses these funds to evaluate water resources problems and opportunities, design projects within the three main Civil Works mission areas, and support related work. The Budget also supports planning assistance and technical assistance programs, where the Corps shares its expertise with local communities to help them identify and understand their water resources problems and helps them to develop options including ways that they can increase their resilience to and preparedness for flood risks.

CONSTRUCTION

For the Corps Construction program, the Budget includes \$1.221 billion in the Construction account and \$66.7 million in the Mississippi River and Tributaries account.

The goal of the Civil Works program is to produce as much value as possible for the Nation from the available funds. Projects are primarily funded based on their economic, environmental and safety returns. The selection process includes giving priority to investments, on a risk-informed basis, in dam safety assurance, seepage control, and static instability correction work at dams that the Corps owns and operates, and work to address significant risk to human safety, as well as construction of dredged material disposal facilities for high and moderate use segments of commercial deep-draft, shallow-draft, and inland waterways projects. In developing the FY 2023 Budget, we also gave consideration to projects that provide climate change benefits to disadvantaged communities.

The Budget provides \$407 million for the South Florida Everglades Restoration (SFER) program, which includes the Everglades. This amount, as well as the \$1.1 billion included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Spend Plan, will enable significant progress on restoration of this unique ecosystem. The Budget funds four projects to completion: (1) Chickamauga Lock, Tennessee River, TN; (2) Corpus Christi Ship Channel, TX (Main Channel and Barge Lanes); (3) American River Common Features, Natomas Basin, CA; and (4) Pipestem Lake, ND.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O&M)

All structures age and can deteriorate over time, causing a potential decline in reliability. As stewards of a large portfolio of water resources projects, the Corps is working to sustain the benefits that the key features of this infrastructure provide.

The Corps continues to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation and maintenance of its large portfolio of water resources projects. The Corps does so by targeting its investments in infrastructure maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation on a risk-informed basis. It invests in the highest priority needs with emphasis on the key features of the infrastructure that the Corps owns and operates, and in work that will reduce long-term O&M costs in real terms.

Generally, the O&M program supports completed works owned or operated by the Corps, including operation and maintenance of locks and dams along the inland waterways; maintenance dredging of inland and coastal Federal channels; operation and maintenance of multi-purpose dams and reservoirs for flood risk reduction and related purposes such as hydropower; monitoring of completed navigation and flood damage reduction projects; and management of Corps facilities and associated lands, including serving as a responsible steward of the natural resources on Corps lands.

For the Corps O&M program, the Budget includes \$2.599 billion in the Operation and Maintenance account, \$1.704 billion in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, and \$148.5 million in the Mississippi River and Tributaries account. These funds will be used in conjunction with the \$1 billion provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act for FY 2023 for operation and maintenance work, including \$465 million for the maintenance and repair of existing navigation harbors, channels, and navigation locks and dams on the Nation's ports and waterways that support commercial navigation.

REGULATORY PROGRAM

Through the Regulatory program, the Corps protects the Nation's waters including wetlands, and regulates development that could impede navigation, while allowing reasonable development to proceed. The Budget proposes the necessary level of funding for the Regulatory program to enable the Corps to protect and preserve these water resources. The FY 2023 Budget provides \$210 million for this program.

REIMBURSABLE PROGRAM

Through the Interagency and International Services (IIS) Reimbursable program, the Corps assists other Federal agencies, state, local, tribal governments, and those of other countries with timely, cost-effective solutions where these partners do not have the capability to act as their own design and construction agent. The work is principally technical oversight and management of engineering, environmental, and construction projects is financed by the partners we service. We only accept agency requests that are consistent with our core technical expertise, in the national interest, and that can be executed without impacting our primary mission areas.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The FY 2023 Budget includes \$35 million in funding for the Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies account to enable the Corps to prepare for emergency operations in response to natural disasters. The Budget for the emergency management program also includes \$5.5 million for the National Emergency Preparedness Program.

CONCLUSION

The FY 2023 President's Budget for the Army Civil Works Program represents a continuing, fiscally prudent investment in the Nation's water resources infrastructure and restoration of aquatic ecosystems. The Army is committed to a performance-based Civil Works program, based on innovative, resilient, and sustainable risk-informed solutions.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and Members of Subcommittee. This concludes my statement. I look forward to answering any questions you and other Members of the Subcommittee may have.