

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

COMPLETE STATEMENT OF

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CHIEF OF ENGINEERS**

**BEFORE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT**

ON

**THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET
FOR THE CIVIL WORKS PROGRAM
OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

April 17, 2024

Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, 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 2025 (FY 2025) 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 2025 Budget invests in the Nation's water resources 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 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 decreasing climate risk for communities and increasing aquatic ecosystem resilience to climate change based on the best available science; promoting environmental justice in underserved and overburdened communities and Tribal Nations in line with the Justice40 Initiative; and strengthening the supply chain.

SUMMARY OF FY 2025 BUDGET

The Civil Works program is performance-based and 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. 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.

The Budget includes \$7.22 billion in discretionary funding for Civil Works activities throughout the Nation.

INVESTIGATIONS

The Budget includes \$124 million for the Corps' Investigations program. 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 funds 63 individual efforts including feasibility studies, dam safety modification studies, preconstruction engineering and design (or PED), and dredged material management plans. The Budget funds 18 studies to completion. It also completes PED on four projects - the Valley Creek Flood Risk Management study in Alabama; the Kinzua Dam and Alleghany Reservoir Floor Risk Management study in Pennsylvania; the Arkansas River Corridor Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration study in Oklahoma; and the Lake Pontchartrain

and Vicinity hurricane protection study in Louisiana.

CONSTRUCTION

The goal of the Army Civil Works program is to produce as much value as possible for the Nation from the available funds. We continue to take bold actions to improve our performance, and engineer solutions for the nation's toughest water resources engineering challenges. 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 constructing dredged material disposal facilities for high and moderate use segments of commercial deep-draft, shallow-draft, and inland waterways projects. We also give priority to work that will help disadvantaged communities address their flood risks, including climate change.

The Budget includes \$2.037 billion for the Construction program. This funding will ensure continued momentum on water resources infrastructure improvements across the Nation. The Budget funds construction on 20 projects comprised of three Commercial Navigation projects, nine Flood and Storm Damage Reduction projects, and eight Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration projects.

The three Commercial Navigation projects are: \$264 million for the Soo Lock Replacement Project in Sault Ste Marie, Michigan; \$25 million for the Port of Nome Modification Project in Alaska, and \$18 million for the Dredged Material Disposal Facility for the Calcasieu River and Pass Project in Louisiana.

For Flood and Storm Damage Reduction, the top-four funded Construction projects are: \$280 million for the Rough River Lake Dam Safety Project in Kentucky; \$49 million for the Lower Mississippi River Main Stem Project, which reduces flood risks in seven states; \$43.5 million for the West Sacramento Project in California; and \$38.5 million for the Pajaro River at Watsonville in California.

For Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration, the top three funded Construction projects are: \$500 million for construction of a fish passage facility at Howard A. Hanson Dam in Washington state; \$444 million for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Program to restore the Everglades; and \$75.2 million for the Columbia River Fish Mitigation program. The Budget also includes \$13 million in the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP 206) for small-scale aquatic ecosystem projects to help protect wetlands that may be negatively impacted by the Supreme Court's Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency decision.

The two Construction projects budgeted for completion in 2025 are flood risk management projects: the Iao Stream Flood Control Project in Maui, Hawaii, and the Pipestem Lake Project in North Dakota.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O&M)

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.

The Budget provides a total of \$4.344 billion for the Operation and Maintenance program. Of that amount, the Budget provides \$935 million for specific projects to maintain and improve navigation on our inland waterways and gives priority to those waterways with the most commercial traffic. The Budget includes over \$1 billion to operate and maintain the top 50 U.S. coastal ports across the nation, which handle around 90 percent of the waterborne cargo that is shipped to or from the United States in foreign commerce. The Budget also includes \$60 million, financed through the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, for donor and energy transfer ports.

The Budget provides \$33 million for operation and maintenance investments to improve climate resilience and/or sustainability at existing Corps-owned projects, \$50 million to mitigate for adverse impacts from existing Corps-owned projects, and \$28 million to install the necessary refueling infrastructure to support zero-emission vehicles at existing Corps-owned projects. The Budget also includes the completion of 11 project master plans and 12 water control manuals.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

As the Corps is working to address current challenges across the Civil Works missions, the Budget advances investments to tackle problems of the future and advance technological development. This Budget builds on the prior year's historic President's Budget request for R&D with an FY25 request of \$79 million investment in research and development activities, and an additional \$11 million in data collection and technology transition R&D support activities. This investment will allow the Corps' laboratories, along with partners in academia and industry, to continue addressing the critical knowledge gaps and technology needs such as: \$3 million to explore durability of novel composite materials in future civil works infrastructure; \$2.4M for Engineering With Nature activities to quantify engineering properties of Nature-Based Solutions; and \$10 M to advance Forecast-Informed Reservoir Operations, furthering our understanding of atmospheric river impacts on flood risk management and water supply and evaluate potential application to USACE reservoirs in other geographical locations.

REGULATORY PROGRAM

The Regulatory Program is committed to protecting the Nation's aquatic resources and navigation capacity, while allowing reasonable development through fair and balanced decisions. The Corps evaluates permit applications for construction activities that occur in

or affect the Nation's waters, including wetlands. The Corps continues to streamline the permit processes to eliminate duplicative reviews and expedite permit decisions for infrastructure projects while continuing to protect the environment. The Budget provides \$221 million for this program, which is the necessary level of funding to enable the Corps to protect and preserve these water resources.

FORMERLY UTILIZED SITES REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM

The FY25 Budget provides \$200 million for the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). This funding would continue ongoing investigation and cleanup in eight states at 20 sites contaminated as a result of the nation's early atomic weapons development program. FUSRAP focuses on protecting human health, public safety and the environment at these sites, contaminated with low-level radioactive materials, throughout the investigation and cleanup phases.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Nation continues to face extreme weather events including hurricanes, fires, drought, and flooding. Some of these have significantly impacted communities and the economy. Over the past year, as part of the federal response team working with Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Corps provided disaster assistance in a number of states and U.S. Territories. The Budget provides \$45 million for preparedness and training of Corps staff to enable them to assist communities during a flood, hurricane, or other natural disasters. This is \$5 million more than last year's Budget level. The Corps will use these funds to hire additional emergency management professional staff, provide more training for its planning and response teams and subject matter experts, properly maintain and upgrade its ENGLINK automated information system, and ensure that the P.L. 84-99 program has sufficient advanced contracting capabilities.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE PROGRAM

The Corps Water Infrastructure Financing Program (CWIFP) enables investment in infrastructure projects that enhance community resilience to flooding. Through CWIFP, the Corps will accelerate non-federal investments in water resources infrastructure by providing long-term loans to creditworthy borrowers. The Budget provides \$7 million, including \$5 million for administrative expenses and \$2 million for credit subsidy costs related to non-federal dam safety projects.

CONCLUSION

The FY 2025 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.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a world-class organization offering one of the most diverse mission sets in the federal government — delivering vital engineering solutions to

address water resources challenges. We are committed to a performance-based Civil Works program, based on innovative, resilient, and sustainable risk-informed solutions.

Thank you, Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, and members of subcommittee. This concludes my statement. I look forward to answering any questions you and other members of the subcommittee may have.