

Project Factsheet for: Civil Works Budget & Appropriations Process

Date Last Updated: 09/03/2008 10:42

Project Location Information

Location: NONE PROVIDED

River Basin(s): Des Moines, Des Moines, Illinois, Illinois, Iowa / Cedar, Iowa / Cedar, Mississippi, Mississippi, Rock, Rock

State(s): IA , IL , MN , MO , WI

Congressional District(s): IA-1 , IA-2 , IA-3 , IA-4 , IA-5 , IL-11 , IL-13 , IL-14 , IL-15 , IL-16 , IL-17 , IL-18 , IL-19 , IL-2 , IL-3 , MN-1 , MN-7 , MO-6 , MO-9 , WI-1 , WI-2 , WI-3 , WI-5 , WI-6

Status

Description

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Program

Army involvement in works "of a civil nature" goes back almost to the origins of the U.S. Over the years, as the nation's needs have changed, so have the Army's Civil Works missions. Those missions today fall in four broad areas: water infrastructure, environmental management and restoration, response to natural and manmade disasters, and engineering and technical services to the Army, DoD and other Federal agencies.

At Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Washington, DC, the Directorate of Civil Works oversees the program. Civil Works projects are located throughout the United States.

Funds for the Civil Works program come from the annual Energy and Water Development Appropriation, not the Defense budget. Add to that the cost-sharing funds supplied directly by non-federal sponsors for specific projects and the total civil program is about \$5 billion a year.

The process for developing Civil Works projects begins when citizens see a need for flood protection, navigation, or other water-related infrastructure and ask Congress for help. Congress will direct the Corps to do a study to see if a project is warranted. Corps studies are usually done in 2 phases: an initial reconnaissance to determine if a feasible solution is likely, then a feasibility study to examine alternatives and select the project that best meets national and local needs. Most feasibility studies are cost-shared with a local sponsor. If the conclusion is positive, before any construction, Congress must first authorize the project and then appropriate funds. Most projects are built with a combination of Federal funds and contributions by non-federal sponsors. Depending on project purpose, the Corps then either operates and maintains the completed project, or turns it over to local authorities.

Annual Budget Development & Appropriations Process

While many people are familiar with the key events in the annual Civil Works budget and appropriations cycle - the release of the President's budget and the enactment of Congress' appropriations legislation into law - few are as familiar with the year-round budget process engaged in by the Corps and other federal agencies.

USACE Civil Works funding is a two-year development process that can be generally summarized as a develop-defend-execute program cycle. Using January 2007 (FY 07) as a start point, the schedule for development of the FY 09 budget is as follows:

JAN 07 - Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provides budget guidance for FY 08.

MAR/APR 07 - USACE headquarters provides FY 08 budget limits and program guidance within the Corps based on the OMB and additional ASA(CW) guidance.

MAY/JUL 07 - USACE field offices develop FY 08 program requirements based on the USACE guidance.

JUL 07 - USACE headquarters reviews the field-developed FY 08 requirements.

JUL/AUG 07 - The USACE-developed FY 08 budget is worked with the Secretary of the Army.

SEP 07 - The Army's FY 08 budget program is submitted for OMB review.

SEP-NOV 07 - OMB reviews with and then tells Army and USACE what its budget will be for CW program planning in FY 07. This is referred to as the OMB passback.

DEC-FEB 08 - The President's budget for FY 09 is finalized and submitted to Congress. It provides USACE with the specific budget details needed to plan FY 09 Civil Works

program execution.

FEB-MAY 08 - Congress conducts appropriations (and, if necessary, authorization) hearings to discuss and ask detailed questions about the President's FY 09 budget submission. The Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and USACE leadership testify before committees and subcommittees to address congressional concerns about the President's budget for the FY 09 Civil Works program.

JUN-SEP 08 - Appropriations bills for FY 09 are developed and approved by Congress.

SEP/OCT 08 - President signs the FY 09 appropriations legislation into law. The legislation provides USACE with specific CW program execution guidance by funding category and specifically authorized projects and studies.

OCT/DEC 08 - USACE headquarters allocates FY 09 funds within the Corps for fiscal year execution.

In the absence of congressional passage of an agency-specific appropriation, Civil Works annual funding is generally included in an all-encompassing "omnibus" bill as it was in November 2004 with the passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005. This consolidated act included the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2005, which provided \$4.705 billion for the USACE FY 05 Civil Works program.

Key legislation that serves as the "baseline" for the Corps' Civil Works program is Congressional passage of the Water Resources Development Act, expected every two years but last passed in 2000. WRDA is a comprehensive legislative package that provides for the conservation and development of water and related resources. It authorizes the Secretary of the Army, through the Chief of Engineers, to conduct studies and to construct projects and research the various activities that lead to improvements of rivers and harbors of the United States. WRDA is strictly an authorizing document; it does not include funding. The funding of WRDA-authorized studies and projects is accomplished separately as part of the annual appropriations process. WRDA legislation has been reintroduced in the current session of Congress and is undergoing debate.

Congressional committees and subcommittees that oversee the Corps and normally meet on an annual basis to address Senate and House member concerns about the President's budget and the need for additional Authorizations for the Civil Works program include the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, the Senate Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee.

Authority

SI - Special Interest --

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