

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

COMPLETE STATEMENT OF

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
(CIVIL WORKS)**

BEFORE

**COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT
OF THE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ON

**BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA:
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WATER RESOURCES REFORM AND
DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2014 AND THE WATER RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2016**

JULY 19, 2017

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee:

I am honored to be testifying before you today to discuss the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) and the Water Resources Development Act, 2016 (WRDA 2016). Through its Civil Works program, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) supports the shipment of goods through our Nation's coastal ports and on the inland waterways, helps communities to reduce their flood and coastal storm risks, is restoring several significant aquatic ecosystems, provides drinking water, generates renewable electricity, and offers water-based recreation opportunities to the public.

For over a century, Federal, State, local, and tribal governments have made large investments in our water resources, including by constructing locks and dams, and deeper and wider coastal navigation channels to support commercial navigation; and by building levees, reservoirs, and other features to reduce flood risks. In the 21st Century, we must continue to look for the best ways to maintain the key features of this infrastructure, reliably and safely – in a manner that is responsible, economic, and sustainable.

The U.S. Army executes a complex Civil Works mission in a setting that requires collaboration and trust with the beneficiaries of our projects, other stakeholders, our Federal and State partners, and the public. Increasingly, State, local, and tribal governments, and private entities have been taking on greater roles in water resources investments – including some that the Federal government may have provided for them in the past. We look forward to continuing to discuss innovative partnerships with our partners and the private sector, so that we can, working together, continue to make progress in addressing the Nation's water resources challenges of the 21st Century.

The Administration recognizes the need to invest in our Nation's infrastructure for America, including its water resources infrastructure. The 2018 Civil Works Budget supports this effort by providing \$5.002 billion in gross discretionary appropriations for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Civil Works Program, focusing on investments that will yield high economic and environmental returns or address a significant risk to public safety. The Budget focus on our three major mission areas, allocating: 42 percent to commercial navigation, 27 percent to flood and storm damage risk reduction, and 7 percent to aquatic ecosystem restoration. Other areas of significant funding in the Budget include our hydropower program, the clean-up of sites contaminated during the early years of the Nation's nuclear weapons program, and our regulatory program.

The FY 2018 Budget supports the key features of the water resources infrastructure that the Corps owns and operates. The Budget also provides \$965 million to be derived

from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, the highest amount ever budgeted, to maintain coastal channels and related work.

The Army submitted the 2017 Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development (Annual Report) in March of this year in response to Section 7001 of WRRDA 2014, including an accounting of Post Authorization Change Reports. The process for developing this report includes a Federal register Notice requesting proposals from non-Federal interests for proposed feasibility studies and modifications to authorized water resources development projects. Those proposals are evaluated strictly based on the five statutory criteria from the WRRDA 2014. The five criteria that the proposals must meet are: must be related to missions and authorities of the Corps; require specific congressional authorization, including an act of congress; the proposal must not have been congressionally authorized; the proposal must not have been included in the report table of any previous annual report; and if authorized, the project could be carried out by the Corps. A total of 53 proposals were received this year. Of these proposals, 13 met the criteria and are listed in the Annual Report Table. The 40 proposals that did not meet the criteria are included in the appendix. The two primary reasons proposals are included in the Appendix are that either the proposal did not fit within the identified Corps core mission areas or authority already exists to perform the requested work. Where authority already exists, inclusion in the Appendix to the 2017 Annual Report does not preclude the Army from carrying out either a study or construction.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with you and appreciate this Committee's support for the Nation's water resources and infrastructure. Mr. Chairman, this concludes my written statement.