

@TRANSPORT

#WRDAWORKS

2018

# WRDA

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT



HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

JUNE 2018

# INVESTING IN AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE

America's ports, inland waterways, locks, dams, flood protection, and other water infrastructure are essential to our prosperity. Every state in the nation depends on a segment of our water infrastructure to move approximately \$3.8 billion worth of goods each day to markets at home and around the world.

Maintaining our water resources infrastructure is an essential responsibility of Congress and the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is the legislation that makes it happen.

## #WRDAWORKS

The Water Resources Development Act of 2018 (WRDA) represents Congress' continued investment in vital American infrastructure. Our ports, inland waterways, locks, dams, flood protection, ecosystem restoration, and other water infrastructure are essential to generating economic growth, moving goods throughout the country and beyond our borders, and protecting our communities.

### **FOR EXAMPLE:**

America's ports connect us with the rest of the world – and are not just important to our coastal communities. Our ports are responsible for over a quarter of U.S. GDP and more than 23 million jobs. On average, every state depends on 15 seaports to handle a total of nearly \$4 billion in imports and exports each day. In total, the United States boasts 926 coastal, inland, and Great Lakes harbors.

Comprised of 12,000 miles of navigable waterways, our inland waterways annually move more than 575 million tons of cargo valued at \$230 billion. Waterways are also the most fuel-efficient, environmentally sound, and safest way to transport large amounts of cargo. They are ideal for moving bulk commodities, such as grain, iron, steel, coal, petroleum, intermodal containers, and other cargo. One 15-barge tow can move as much freight as



1,050 tractor trailer trucks or 216 rail cars and six locomotives.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates and maintains approximately 700 dams in the United States, and over 14,000 miles of levees are in the Corps' Levee Safety Program. Millions of Americans and over a trillion dollars' worth of property and goods are protected by these flood protection systems. In general, every \$1.<sup>00</sup> invested in flood protection provides \$8.<sup>00</sup> in economic benefit.

Through the regular consideration of WRDA legislation and by providing direction and reforms to the Corps of Engineers, Congress enables locally driven, but nationally important, federal investments in water resources infrastructure.

Prior to 2014, Congress had not passed a WRDA in seven years. As a result, many improvements languished while project costs rose and regulatory burdens remained unaddressed. With WRDA 2018, following the successful passage of the 2014 and 2016 laws, Congress is now back on track.

## **Simply put, WRDA works.**



## WRDA Follows an Approval Process Established by Congress

In 2014, Congress passed the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) and established a new, transparent, locally driven process for Congressional review and approval of Army Corps water resources development activities. WRDA 2018 follows this established process, and also continues the two-year cycle of addressing infrastructure that is vital to America's economy and job growth.



### WRDA 2018:

- Authorizes locally driven, but nationally vital, investments in our Nation's water resources infrastructure.
- Strengthens economic growth and competitiveness, helps move goods throughout the country and abroad, and protects our communities.
- Follows the transparent process Congress established under the 2014 reforms for considering proposed Army Corps of Engineers activities.
- Builds upon previous reforms of the Corps to further accelerate the process for moving projects forward more efficiently and at lower cost.
- Upholds Congress' constitutional duty to provide for infrastructure and facilitate commerce for the Nation.





## IMPROVES AMERICA'S WATER RESOURCES INFRASTRUCTURE:

- Provides for needed investment in our ports, channels, locks, dams, and other infrastructure that supports the maritime and waterways transportation system and provides flood protection for homes and businesses.
- Authorizes Army Corps of Engineers Chief's Reports received since the last WRDA law of 2016.
  - » Chief's Reports are the final recommendations to Congress by the Corps' Chief of Engineers for thoroughly studied water resources infrastructure priorities.
  - » These infrastructure improvements have been proposed at the local level, in cooperation and consultation with the Corps, and provide national economic and environmental benefits.
  - » All Chief's Reports have been fully vetted by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee at hearings this Congress.
- Authorizes studies for future water resources improvements included in the Corps' 2017 and 2018 annual reports to Congress.
- Reauthorizes the Levee Safety Initiative, and the National Dam Safety Program through 2023 to help protect American communities from flooding.
- Keeps American jobs in America by strengthening our competitiveness and ensuring that our transportation system remains attractive to private sector job creators.



Turkey Creek Project Tunnel Repair, Missouri



## **BUILDS UPON WRDA REFORMS:**

- Eliminates barriers that result in project delays and improves the utility of the contributed and advanced funds provisions from previous WRDA laws. This allows the Corps to accept funds from non-federal sponsors to advance studies and project elements.
- Maintains process reforms established under WRRDA 2014 that allow greater local participation in project selection.
- Directs the National Academy of Sciences to evaluate the current organizational structure of the Corps' civil works functions, identify impediments to efficient project delivery, and provide recommendations to Congress.
- Requires the Corps to directly engage stakeholders in the development of implementation guidance.

## **PROMOTES FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

- Fully offsets new authorizations with deauthorizations.
- Sunsets inactive project authorizations to prevent future project backlogs.
- Reduces the inventory of projects that are not needed for the missions of the Corps.



Dredging being undertaken during the Savannah Harbor Deepening Project. Photo: GA Ports Authority



## ENHANCES OVERSIGHT, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

- Follows the transparent process established by Congress in WRRDA 2014 to review and prioritize water resources development activities with strong Congressional oversight.
- Improves transparency for non-federal partners by requiring the Secretary to support greater awareness of the Corps' Annual Report process established in WRRDA 2014.
- Requires added transparency with Army Corps reports on maintenance backlog obligations.

## MAINTAINS REGULAR ORDER:

- Ensures proper Congressional oversight of the Army Corps of Engineers, provides regular opportunity for reform, and enables Congress to address infrastructure needs by maintaining the two-year cycle of considering WRDA legislation.
- Saves money by allowing needed infrastructure improvements and project modifications to move toward completion, preventing unnecessary project cost increases that occur with delays.

# WRDA WORKS BECAUSE WRDA IS...

