



The Water Resources Development Act of 2022 (S. 4136) *Delivering for Delaware*

The Water Resources Development Act of 2022 (WRDA 2022) authorizes much-needed investments in the projects and programs of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in Delaware. This legislation continues the 2-year reauthorization cycle for Water Resources Development Acts, ensuring timely congressional approvals for Corps studies and projects. Through its civil works missions, the Corps assists in the construction and maintenance of Delaware's ports, intracoastal waterways, and other critical infrastructure essential to the First State's economic growth, the movement of goods throughout the country, and trade beyond our borders. The Corps' vital flood and coastal storm risk management and ecosystem restoration programs also help make Delaware's coastal communities more resilient and sustainable.

Protect Delaware's Beaches and Shorelines from the Threat of Climate Change

Delaware is the lowest-lying state in the nation, and the impacts of climate change are already being felt in our coastal communities. According to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), coastal flooding — even in the absence of storms or heavy rainfall — is expected to occur more than 10 times as often by the year 2050.

The bill reorients the Corps' civil works program to proactively address climate change and streamlines the implementation of shoreline protection and restoration projects to aid communities most vulnerable to climate change impacts.



WRDA 2022 helps protect Delaware's coasts by:

- Updating the Corps' emergency authorities to provide greater support to Delaware's beaches following hurricanes, Nor'easters, and other damaging storms.
- Providing increased support for the Bay Beach reconstruction project, including changes to reduce project costs and make the initiative more affordable.
- Authorizing the Corps to protect and restore other federal lands, such as those in the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge.
- Designating Delaware as a priority area for the Corps' implementation of shoreline and riverbank protection and restoration projects under the bill's enhanced programmatic authority for those projects.
- Extending the authorization for the Indian River Sand Bypass project.
- Allowing non-federal interests in Delaware and throughout the nation to request studies that directly address climate change impacts such as tidal flooding.
- Expanding the Corps' authority to enhance resilience and increase the benefits of shore protection projects in Delaware and across the country during emergency repair and restoration efforts.



Prioritize Equity in the Corps' Civil Works Program to Assist Disadvantaged Communities

Over the last 20 years, the Corps' has been criticized for not doing more to spur economic opportunity in historically marginalized and disadvantaged communities. WRDA 2022 builds on the significant inroads made in WRDA 2020 to help communities in Delaware by:

- Authorizing a new \$50 million Corps environmental infrastructure project in Delaware to help improve sewers, stormwater treatment systems, water storage, and other related wastewater infrastructure throughout the state.
- Establishing a new Tribal and Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Committee to help the Corps more effectively deliver projects, programs, and other assistance to economically disadvantaged communities.
- Reducing the local contribution requirement for economically disadvantaged communities participating in shoreline protection and restoration projects.
- Prioritizing assistance to economically disadvantaged communities under the Planning Assistance to States program.
- Authorizing a new Corps workforce development and STEM outreach program with priority given to economically disadvantaged communities.
- Helping disadvantaged communities participate in the Corps projects to elevate homes in flood-prone areas by authorizing payment of temporary relocation benefits.



Recognize Community Contributions to Project Delivery

Despite Congress authorizing communities to assist in the study, design, and construction of water resources development projects, Corps policy has discouraged communities from taking full advantage of these opportunities. WRDA 2022 empowers communities to participate in the project delivery process by:

- Giving non-federal sponsors, like the Delaware Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), that are owed reimbursements from the Corps, the option to apply the amount owed to reduce a non-federal cash contribution for another study or project.
- Expanding options for the transfer of in-kind contribution credits across studies and projects.
- Authorizing the Corps to advance federal funds for the acquisition of lands, easements, and rights-of-way for projects constructed at full federal expense.