WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013

The Water Resources Development Act of 2013 promotes investment in the nation's critical water resources infrastructure, accelerates project delivery, and reforms the implementation of Corps of Engineers projects.

Project Authorization
This legislation authorizes projects with completed Chief of Engineers reports that have been referred to Congress by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works by the date of enactment. Currently, this represents 18 projects that address all of the major mission areas of the Corps of Engineers including flood risk management, navigation, hurricane and storm damage risk reduction, and environmental restoration. The average annual benefits of the flood and storm risk management reduction projects alone exceed $690.3 million.

Project Delivery Reforms
The legislation contains important reforms to increase flexibility for non-Federal sponsors of Corps projects and accelerate project delivery. These include codifying a Corps initiative to finish new feasibility studies in less than three years, improving the environmental review process while maintaining environmental protections, and creating two pilot programs to expand the local role in project implementation. The bill also establishes a new program to promote levee safety and improves inland waterways project delivery.

Harbor Maintenance
The legislation addresses the growing surplus of funds in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund by ensuring all revenues will be spent for port maintenance without impacting other important Corps of Engineers projects.

Innovative Financing
The legislation establishes a 5-year innovative project financing pilot program, which is modeled on the successful TIFIA program. This new pilot program will provide loans and loan guarantees for important flood control, water supply, and wastewater projects.

Project Deauthorizations
The legislation includes a provision that requires the Corps to provide Congress with a complete list of all uncompleted, authorized projects and creates a Commission to identify projects for deauthorization. The Commission will hold public hearings and solicit comments to make final recommendations to Congress. Congress will have the opportunity to disapprove of the deauthorizations proposed by the Commission.