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FY26 'Work Plan' Released by Corps of Engineers

Corps Headquarters released its Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2026 on April 6th. The Work Plan includes the \$65 million earmarked by Congress as well as additional funding not earmarked by Congress but allocated by the Corps, bringing the total to \$83.8 million that will go to putting sand on beaches compared to the \$0 that had been available the previous year. Another \$14.259 million will go to studies for projects that include beach nourishment. Of interest in this year's Work Plan is a breakout of the amount of each allocation the Corps estimates will go to Corps District salaries and other expenses. This is the first time Corps Headquarters has created this information. At the same time as the Corps released its Work Plan, it also issued an amendment to its allocations for the 2025 Disaster Supplemental. The amendment adds funding for a beach nourishment project in New Jersey. A complete listing of the studies and projects allocated funded in the FY26 Work Plan and the 2025 Disaster Supplemental can be found [here](#).

President Releases FY27 Budget Proposal for the Corps, EPA, NOAA

President Trump released his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2027, which begins October 1st of this year. With the exception of Defense, most agencies received cuts. His overall proposal for the Corps totals \$6.663 billion. That would amount to a cut of more than a third from its current level of \$10.44 billion. In the last several years, Congress has done its best to increase the Corps' budget, but it becomes harder to do that when the President proposes such a low starting point. For the President's proposal, \$0 went to beach nourishment construction; however, two project studies – one in Texas and another in New Jersey – would get a combined total of \$1.034 million. Trump proposed to zero out funding for all Continuing Authorities Programs as well as providing no funding for the popular Planning Assistance to States program.

Coming in for a 52 percent cut under the Trump proposed budget is the Environmental Protection Administration. Targeted in the cuts are EPA's popular loans and grants for water projects which the Administration feels should be a state responsibility. The budget also proposes cutting the Clean Water Revolving Fund by 90 percent and its Drinking Water sibling by 87 percent. These programs provide grants and low-interest loans for projects such as new water treatment plants and lead pipe

removal among others. The President's budget proposal does provide an increase in funding to expedite environmental reviews of infrastructure projects.

For the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the President proposes a cut of about 27 percent which would eliminate nearly all of the agency's climate labs. The budget proposal would also have a significant impact on NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, cutting its budget by \$485 million down to \$171 million. The Trump proposal would also cut the National Ocean Service's budget in half and reduce funding for the National Weather Service.

Rep. Van Drew Testifies at Energy and Water Member Day

New Jersey Representative Jeff Van Drew, a reliable coastal champion for South Jersey, testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water at this year's Member Day Hearing to highlight the importance of beach nourishment projects to the state and local economy. Van Drew highlighted Community Project Funding requests for several nourishment projects along New Jersey coasts and emphasized the importance of beaches not just for tourism but for infrastructure and public safety. See his testimony [here](#).

Homeland Security Secretary Mullin Revokes FEMA's \$100,000 Approval Process Rule

New Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin made his first big act as Secretary, repealing the DHS policy stating every project over \$100,000 must be personally approved by the Secretary's office. After then-Secretary Noem implemented the controversial rule in June of 2025, FEMA experienced a backlog of delayed projects awaiting funding. At the time of Mullin's repeal, projects totaling about \$2.2 billion were still waiting for approval. Democratic senators, in a [letter](#) to Noem in August, warned that the policy was causing delayed emergency response to natural disasters and undermined FEMA's effectiveness.

DHS hopes the April 1 decision will streamline contracting processes; however, the agency is still delayed by the continuing partial government shutdown, with funding for its Disaster Relief Fund running low.

North Carolina Considers Repealing its Ban on Hard Structures

North Carolina has held firmly to its ban on hardened shoreline erosion-control structures since 1985, save for a pilot program allowing "test" terminal groins in 2011. However, the tide may be turning. Local communities are witnessing accelerating shoreline erosion and homes collapsing into the ocean. Even with no hurricanes making landfall during the 2025 hurricane season, the state saw sixteen homes collapse, roadway damage, substantial erosion, and high-water levels. As erosion and flooding continue to increase with intense coastal storms and sea level rise, the state's Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) has heard the call from Dare and Hyde counties and is rethinking its strategy on hard structures.

The CRC is currently working on a Report on the Effects of Hard Structures on Coastlines. This study will map current and existing challenges in erosion management and assess the potential impacts and tradeoffs of hard structures that serve to either trap sand or harden shorelines. The commission has provided its [draft outline](#), with the report anticipated to be completed by June 2026. The state currently has functioning terminal groins in place in Bald Head Island and Ocean Isle Beach as part of its 2011 pilot program.

After Over a Year, FEMA's BRIC Grant Funding is Reopened

FEMA has announced it will follow the court-ordered ruling to reinstate its Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program nearly a year after it was terminated. BRIC was launched in 2018 as part of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act to shift federal focus toward proactive, long-term, pre-disaster mitigation for states and local communities. Since its start, BRIC has invested over \$5 billion to support local mitigation efforts to reduce costs and protect people and property from future disasters.

The Trump Administration paused the program in spring 2025 and terminated previously approved funding for fiscal years 2020-2023, leaving communities without funding for projects already in progress. After a lawsuit filed by 23 states, the court required FEMA to take steps to restore BRIC program funding in December. The Court again ordered BRIC to be reinstated in early March, which was acknowledged this time by FEMA.

[Applications](#) have opened for Fiscal year 2024 and 2025, with the deadline set for July 23, 2026. \$1 billion in funding will be available. More information on funding opportunities is available [here](#). Communities with previously allocated funding are still awaiting payments.

Legislative Update

We are tracking 219 bills affecting coastal communities. The bill that has closed down the Department of Homeland Security is one of them since it also funds FEMA. Over the past few weeks, we have posted stories related to the impacts of the shutdown on FEMA on the *WaterLog* page on [LinkedIn](#) that we recommend you check periodically. Of the other bills we are tracking, two are of special note. **S. 843** (Sen. Markey D-MA) is the Sea Turtle Rescue Assistance and Rehabilitation Act, and **S. 2245** (Sen. Baldwin D-WI) is bill to amend and expand the Digital Coast Act Both have passed the Senate and are awaiting action on the House floor. In the other chamber, the House has passed **H.R. 6422** (Rep. LaLota (R-NY), the American Water Stewardship Act which updates and reauthorizes provisions of the Federal Water Pollution Act that govern several regional water resources protection programs as well as the BEACH Act's water quality monitoring program funded by EPA. The full list of the bills being tracked can be found [here](#).

Thanks for reading WaterLog!

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