



Summary of Select Provisions

House Water Resources Development Act of 2026 (H.R. 9497)

Section 101. Program Offices with the Corps Civil Works Directorate

Establishes 4 new offices at Corps Headquarters:

- Inland Navigation Construction
- Water Supply, Water Conservations, and Drought Resiliency
- Technical Assistance and Community Outreach
- Alternative Delivery Methods.

Duties are provided for each of these including establishing a program manager for each.

Section 102. Contracting Efficiency.

Includes a Sense of Congress that the Corps should maximize efficiency through use of multi-year or continuing contracts. This section also requires the Comptroller of the United States to study the benefits of the Corps using multi-year or continuing contracts for construction of authorized water resource development projects.

Section 103. Removal or Remediation of Contaminated Sediment.

This section authorizes the Secretary to develop a joint plan, in coordination with the non-Federal interest for the covered project and approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to carry out covered projects with contaminated sediment concerns.

Section 105. Categorical Permissions for Section 408 Permits

Directs the Secretary to establish categorical permissions for activities related to Section 408 permits to modify a project constructed by the Corps.

Section 106. Contributions by non-Federal Interests

Authorizes the Corps to accept non-Federal funds for a project that has exceeded or is expected to exceed its maximum cost threshold (Sec. 902(b)) so long as the acceptance of these funds does not increase the Federal share of the project's cost.

Section 107. Electronic Submission and Tracking of Permit Applications

Requires the Corps to implement an electronic system for project permit application, submission, and tracking.

Section 108. Project Study Schedule and Cost Estimate

Requires Districts to establish deadlines for milestones and a total study cost estimate. Requires the Corps to complete feasibility studies as efficiently and expeditiously as possible; align the scope of the feasibility study with the goals of the non-Federal interest; carry out the study in a manner that ensures that personnel from District, Division, and Headquarters concurrently conduct required reviews; and provide sufficient information for Congress to fully review the study including remaining cost uncertainties and the maturity of project design. Makes other provisions to provide a non-Federal interest with greater control over study schedules and costs.

Section 109. Continuing Authorities Programs

Establishes a new CAP program to determine whether a flood risk management project can be improved to provide greater flood risk management benefits or meet applicable Federal levee standards. The non-Federal interest will be 75 percent of the cost of measures implemented using this CAP authority. Also establishes a drought resiliency CAP authority and increases the authorized limits for the Section 14, 205, and 1135 CAP programs.

Section 110. Dredged Material Management Plans

Requires dredged material management plans to identify placement capacity for a minimum of 10 years.

Section 111. Dredging Coordination

Directs the Corps to consult with all Federal, state or local stakeholders on scope and timelines when entering into contracts or making changes to contracts for maintenance dredging. Enables the Corps to share maintenance dredging capability numbers with relevant non-Federal interests.

Section 112. Federal Standard for Dredged Material Disposal or Placement

Directs the Secretary to update regulations for dredged material management, to align with requirements in prior Water Resources Development Acts and the national goal of beneficially using not less than 70% of suitable dredged material. This includes consideration of economic benefits and costs of placement, coastal resiliency, the need for restoration projects, and the capacity of disposal sites

Section 117. Minimum Real Estate Interest

Requires the Corps to update its policy and guidance documents on the “appropriate minimum interest in real property necessary to support” a project, along with the real estate appraisal process for projects (Sec. 118). Delegates to the District level the determination of what a minimum interest is.

Section 131. Benefits and Costs of Natural and Nature-Based Features

Creates a pilot program to treat benefits to be at least equal to the costs of projects utilizing natural and nature-based features during cost-justification analysis, consisting of 10 projects and sunset in five years. In selecting the 10 projects, the Secretary shall prioritize projects eligible

under Sec.1217 of WRDA 2024 (NJ hot spot erosion mitigation), as well as projects associated with NJ/NY Harbor and Tributaries.

Section 132. Use of all Corps Authorities and Missions

The Corps should fully utilize all the authorities and programs it has in addressing its mission areas and fully identify and analyze all national and regional benefits as well as environmental quality benefits and other societal effects of proposed projects. Lists the Corps mission areas (including “flood risk management and coastal storm risk management”). Supports maximizing development of project alternatives.

Section 133. Comprehensive Feasibility Studies and Approaches for Flood Risk Management and Coastal Storm Risk Management

Clarifies that studies for these two missions should address all types of flooding and utilize both structural and nonstructural approaches to flood risk management. Includes riverine discharges, extreme weather events, coastal and tidal flooding, sea level rise, subsidence, and stormwater as causes of flooding.

Section 135. Update of Corps Policy

Requires the Secretary to provide implementation guidance documents within 120 days of enactment to ensure consistency with and to implement the amendments made in this Act. Revokes any policy that is not concurrent with this Act.

Section 136. Availability of Project Information

Counters recent Defense Department policy that restricts communication between the Corps and Members of Congress. Establishes that feasibility studies, Chief’s Reports, project justification and scope, authorization and implementation status, estimated project costs and schedules, operational capabilities, and other information relating to such projects should be provided expeditiously to offices of Members of Congress.

Section 137. Fish and Wildlife Mitigation

Clarifies the mitigation requirements for all Corps projects and establishes transparency and coordination requirements.

Section 138. Evaluation of Flood Risk Management Projects

Urges the review and update of the “minimum real estate interest necessary” for projects that have been constructed and communicate that information to the non-Federal interests.

Section 140. Munitions Disposal

Urges the Corps to work with the Secretary of Defense to identify the specific agency responsible for remediation of ordinance disposal in connection with a beach nourishment project.

Section 141. Corps of Engineers Workforce

Sense of the Congress that the Corps should maintain a workforce “capable of addressing the varied statutory responsibilities” of the Corps “in a timely manner. Urges Corps to improve its recruiting efforts and requests a study of Corps workforce demands and needs.

Section 201. Authorization of Studies

Authorizes 107 new feasibility studies and 24 modifications of existing studies. Coastal studies of interest: San Clemente, CA; Broward County, FL; Flagler County, FL; Horseshoe Beach, FL; St. Petersburg, FL; Honolulu, HI; Provincetown, MA; Mississippi Sound, MS; Atlantic Beach, NY; Point o’ Woods, NY; South Shore Long Island, NY; Topsail Beach, NC; Puerto Rico (various).

Section 205. Corps of Engineers Reports

Requires various new reports to Congress including one on hurricane and storm damage easements and another on the increased beneficial use of dredged material.

Section 207. GAO Studies

Directs various General Accountability Office studies including a study of the various authorities and programs used by the Corps “to support beach renourishment cycles, including initial construction, periodic nourishment, and emergency nourishment activities” and an evaluation of barriers that contribute to delays in carrying out beach renourishment activities. Also, this report shall include the Corps’ process for evaluating the beneficial use of dredged material for beach nourishment and recommendations for “legislative, regulatory, or administrative actions...to improve the efficiency, predictability, and effectiveness” of the Corps’ beach renourishment efforts.

Section 212. Assessment of Nonstructural Approaches to Flood Risk Management and Hurricane and Storm Risk Reduction

Directs the Secretary to submit a report to Congress on the status of nonstructural approaches to flood risk management and coastal storm risk management for certain authorized water resources development projects. Includes USACE Buy Outs, NJ Back Bays, FIMP.

Section 214. Updated Plan on Federal Hopper Dredge Recapitalization

Directs the Secretary to update the plan and timeline included in the 2017 Corps report titled, “Hopper Dredge Recapitalization Analysis” and notify Congress.

Section 224. Assateague Island, Maryland and Virginia

Increases the authorized amount for the Assateague Island restoration work in Ocean City, Maryland from \$35M to \$45M.

Section 301. Deauthorization of Inactive Projects

Updates a procedure for deauthorizing projects that lack local support or funding or no longer have a relevant purpose.

Section 302. General Reauthorizations

This section reauthorizes or increases the authorized amounts for eleven Corps programs.

Section 307. Environmental Infrastructure

Provides new authorizations and modifies existing authorities for the Secretary to partner with non-Federal interests on environmental infrastructure projects.

Section 309. Floodplain Management Services

Expands the types of assistance the Secretary can provide under the Floodplain Management Services program, established in section 206 of the Flood Control Act of 1960, to include supporting states' development of integrated floodplain management programs and to add rural communities as a priority area for the Secretary to provide technical assistance under this program.

Section 310. Planning Assistance to States

Expands the types of technical assistance availability to states and localities under this program.

Section 314. Oceanside, California

In carrying out the feasibility study for this City, the Corps should coordinate with the City on a recommended project that maximizes the use of natural and nature-based features, utilizes sediment sampling and analysis, and is acceptable to the City.

Section 330. Surf City and North Topsail Beach, North Carolina

Deauthorizes the North Topsail portion of the authorized hurricane and storm damage risk reduction project in Surf City and North Topsail Beach, North Carolina.

Section 336. Coastal Virginia

Authorizes the Secretary to analyze alternatives on Federally-owned property as part of the feasibility study for the Virginia Coastal project.

Section 337. Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management, Virginia

Authorizes the Secretary to analyze alternatives on Federally-owned property as part of the feasibility study for the modification of the Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management project in Virginia.

Section 401. Project Authorizations

Authorizes 10 projects for construction, including Surf City, Onslow and Pender Counties CSRMs.

Section 402. Expedited Completion of Projects and Activities

Directs the Secretary to expedite completion of various projects and activities that have been previously authorized.