

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2026

HEARINGS BEFORE A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT, AND
RELATED AGENCIES

CHARLES J. “CHUCK” FLEISCHMANN, Tennessee, *Chairman*

MICHAEL K. SIMPSON, Idaho
KEN CALVERT, California
DAN NEWHOUSE, Washington
GUY RESCHENTHALER, Pennsylvania
MICHAEL GUEST, Mississippi
MICHAEL CLOUD, Texas,
Vice Chair
SCOTT FRANKLIN, Florida
CELESTE MALOY, Utah

MARCY KAPTUR, Ohio,
Ranking Member
JAMES E. CLYBURN, South Carolina
DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Florida
MIKE LEVIN, California
FRANK J. MRVAN, Indiana
SUSIE LEE, Nevada

NOTE: Under committee rules, Mr. Cole, as chairman of the full committee, and Ms. DeLauro, as ranking minority member of the full committee, are authorized to sit as members of all subcommittees.

LAURA CYLKE, PERRY YATES, RICHIE O'CONNELL,
RAYNOR BUCKLEY and SYKES CONNELL
Subcommittee Staff

PART 4

	Page
Fiscal Year Budget Requests for the Army Corps of Engineers (Civil Works) and the Bureau of Reclamation	1



Printed for the use of the Committee on Appropriations
U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

TOM COLE, Oklahoma, *Chairman*

HAROLD ROGERS, Kentucky,
Chairman Emeritus
ROBERT B. ADERHOLT, Alabama
MICHAEL K. SIMPSON, Idaho
JOHN R. CARTER, Texas
KEN CALVERT, California
MARIO DIAZ-BALART, Florida
STEVE WOMACK, Arkansas
CHARLES J. "CHUCK" FLEISCHMANN,
Tennessee
DAVID P. JOYCE, Ohio
ANDY HARRIS, Maryland
MARK E. AMODEI, Nevada
DAVID G. VALADAO, California
DAN NEWHOUSE, Washington
JOHN R. MOOLENAAR, Michigan
JOHN H. RUTHERFORD, Florida
BEN CLINE, Virginia
GUY RESCHENTHALER, Pennsylvania
ASHLEY HINSON, Iowa
TONY GONZALES, Texas
JULIA LETLOW, Louisiana
MICHAEL CLOUD, Texas
MICHAEL GUEST, Mississippi
RYAN K. ZINKE, Montana
ANDREW S. CLYDE, Georgia
STEPHANIE I. BICE, Oklahoma
SCOTT FRANKLIN, Florida
JAKE ELLZEY, Texas
JUAN CISCOMANI, Arizona
CHUCK EDWARDS, North Carolina
MARK ALFORD, Missouri
NICK LALOTA, New York
DALE W. STRONG, Alabama
CELESTE MALOY, Utah
RILEY M. MOORE, West Virginia

ROSA L. DELAURO, Connecticut,
Ranking Member
STENY H. HOYER, Maryland
MARCY KAPTUR, Ohio
JAMES E. CLYBURN, South Carolina
SANFORD D. BISHOP, Jr., Georgia
BETTY MCCOLLUM, Minnesota
DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Florida
HENRY CUELLAR, Texas
CHELLIE PINGREE, Maine
MIKE QUIGLEY, Illinois
GRACE MENG, New York
MARK POCAN, Wisconsin
PETE AGUILAR, California
LOIS FRANKEL, Florida
BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, New Jersey
NORMA J. TORRES, California
ED CASE, Hawaii
ADRIANO ESPAILLAT, New York
JOSH HARDER, California
LAUREN UNDERWOOD, Illinois
SUSIE LEE, Nevada
JOSEPH D. MORELLE, New York
MIKE LEVIN, California
MADELEINE DEAN, Pennsylvania
VERONICA ESCOBAR, Texas
FRANK J. MRVAN, Indiana
MARIE GLUESENKAMP PEREZ,
Washington
GLENN IVEY, Maryland

SUSAN ROSS, *Chief Clerk and Staff Director*

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2026

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 2025.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET REQUESTS FOR THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (CIVIL WORKS) AND THE BU- REAU OF RECLAMATION

WITNESSES

**ROBYN COLOSIMO, P.E., ACTING PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SEC-
RETARY OF THE ARMY (CIVIL WORKS)**

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM H. "BUTCH" GRAHAM, JR., CHIEF OF
ENGINEERS AND COMMANDING GENERAL, U.S. ARMY OF CORPS EN-
GINEERS**

**SCOTT CAMERON, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY, EXERCISING
DELEGATED AUTHORITY OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, U.S. DE-
PARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. The hearing will come to order. Thank you. I know this seems like deja vu all over again, but this wonderful group was just before us just about a month or so ago. So always welcome back. Thank you so much.

It is my pleasure to welcome acting principal deputy assistant secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Robyn Colosimo, thank you; and chief of engineers and commanding general of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Lieutenant General Butch Graham, to discuss the fiscal year 2026. And I think I forgot somebody, didn't I? Oh, it is further down. You took care of me. Okay, let's see. I am equally pleased to welcome senior advisor to the Secretary, Scott Cameron. Mr. Cameron. Good morning, sir. To discuss the request for the Bureau of Reclamation and Central Utah Project.

We scheduled this hearing with the expectation that we would have the full budget request for these critical programs. I appreciate the challenge facing any new administration in submitting a timely budget request to Congress. However, we cannot do our work without those details. I hope we can expect that information soon so that we can begin the important work of funding our Nation's Water Resource Development programs.

In the meantime, the administration has provided a top line budget request for the Corps and Reclamation, highlighting specific areas where reductions are proposed. The request for the Corps totals \$6.7 billion, a reduction of \$2 billion, or roughly 23 percent. Within the total for the Corps 1.7 billion is proposed for harbor maintenance trust activities, which is approximately 1.8 billion

below the maximum offset provided in law. Consistent with prior years, the budget request does not maximize investment in our Nation's ports and harbors.

One of my top priorities, continuing the progress on the recapitalization of our Nation's inland waterway system. I was pleased to see a \$32 million included—\$32 million included in fiscal year 2025 work plan to award additional option for the final contract at Chickamauga Lock, which is in my district. I want to express my gratitude for the Trump administration's prioritization of this important project. I look forward to working with our witnesses to get Chick Loc across the finish line. In fact, I am going to visit there again next week.

I appreciate the plan's robust investment in construction on the inland waterway system more broadly, and I hope the full fiscal year 2026 budget continues that support. We expect significant out-year demands for this work and the longer we wait to address today's need, the more difficult it will be to manage tomorrow's.

For the Bureau of Reclamation and Central Utah project, the request proposes a total of \$1.2 billion, a stated reduction of \$609 million, or approximately 35 percent below the enacted level. I am concerned that at this level we will not be able to address the most pressing water resources needs across the West.

Of particular concern is the ability to continue progress on existing Indian water rights settlements. Upholding our Nation's treaty and trust responsibilities is among the Department of Interior's highest priorities. And we cannot afford to fail delivering access to safe and reliable water supplies across Indian Country.

We will wait for the details of the request to analyze the proposal's impact on farmers, ranchers, and households across the West that depend on Reclamation's water and power delivery mission.

I appreciate our witnesses for being here today to explain your budget requests and discuss the administration priorities for these agencies. I look forward to working with you and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to develop a bill that addresses our Nation's most pressing water resource development challenges.

With that, now I will turn to my friend, the distinguished ranking member, Ms. Kaptur, for her opening statement. Ms. Kaptur.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining us. You build America and we respect that. I welcome this opportunity to examine recent actions for the budget requests for the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation.

Thank you to our witnesses for devoting your lives to the Nation and for joining us today. Your agencies play a critical role in developing the resources of our land while mindful of our obligations to future generations. Your vital work strengthens our economy, sustains life on Earth, and ensures public safety against the now constant onslaught of both increasing natural and human-caused disasters across our country, which is growing in population headed to a half a billion people.

For example, the Corps played a vital role in clearing the waterways after the Key Bridge collapse in Baltimore. Thank you so much. And you are currently carrying out wildfire debris removal

in Los Angeles County. Thank you for your exemplary service to our country. You hold us together and all those who serve in the Corps and the Bureau.

The proposed cuts to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation are not just misguided, they are dangerous. Slashing their budgets and eroding their workforce endangers people's lives and public safety, undermines economic growth, and weakens the national welfare of the country in the face of climate change.

Let's start with the Corps of Engineers. Your work is not just about dams and levees. It is about protecting lives and building America's public infrastructure to manage flood control systems that safeguard our communities from the devastating effects of extreme weather. And we saw that this past week with the terrible tornadoes from St. Louis and all surrounding states. Along the shores of Lake Erie, the largest freshwater system in the world, we know what is at stake: erosion, rising lake levels, problems with algal blooms, and increasingly violent storms threaten homes, businesses, and public assets. We cannot build safety and a habitable environment for our growing population on shrinking budgets and shrinking staff.

In the Great Lakes region, modernization of projects, like the Soo Locks, are a prime example of long overdue investments that will turbocharge our economy. One hundred percent of America's domestic iron ore passes through the Soo Locks. Think about how important that makes this strategic infrastructure. Steel is a \$500 billion industry. It supports 123,000 middle class jobs, and I am a strong advocate for reshoring the U.S. steel industry and growing those numbers. But we have to modernize the shipping lanes and the waterways and our ports for today and the future. This project will ensure our heartland's maritime, industrial, agricultural, and commercial products are safe and efficiently moved.

Think about our region as the shortest distance by way of the Atlantic Ocean to the ports of Northern Europe and beyond. Canada, the Great Lakes, and St. Lawrence Seaway hasten global trade. And President Eisenhower understood its place within our continental enterprise and global defense. So must we as we witness the dawn of the new Arctic age.

Similarly, the Brandon Road Project aims at arresting the potential enormous economic and environmental damage that can be unleashed by the invasion of the Asian carp. They could exterminate local and regional aquatic fish and species, and that would be devastating to our Great Lakes \$7 billion fishery and its \$16 billion recreational boating industry. These are astounding numbers.

The Corps of Engineers has a return of investments of over 200-to-1 in terms of economic benefits for every dollar invested. Ports, locks, and inland waterways maintained by the Corps are vital arteries for our very large Nation and its commerce. In the Great Lakes region alone, these investments ensure that goods from American steel to Ohio soybeans can reach domestic and global markets. And cuts to this work would cause costly delays, limit our competitiveness, and harm local economies.

Now, to the Bureau of Reclamation. Though it serves primarily the western United States, its importance cannot be overstated.

The Bureau manages water supply for over 31 million Americans in the dry, and I guess I would say coming from my part of the country, drier Western states, irrigates 10 million acres of farmland, and generates hydropower for millions of homes. In this time of unprecedented drought and water stress, we must bolster, not diminish Reclamation's capacity to invest in sustainable water systems and innovative conservation technologies. Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover understood what development west of the Mississippi would require. So must we.

Let's be clear. Disinvestment in the Corps and Bureau now will lead to higher costs down the road. Deferred maintenance becomes disaster recovery. Preventable failures become national emergencies. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, this is not the time to retreat. It is time to lead. We must provide these agencies with the resources they need to protect our growing population, strengthen our economy, and safeguard our environment for generations to come.

Finally, I truly condemn the extreme politicization of critical Army Corps construction funding decisions as we saw in last week's work plan. It is yet another reminder that Congress must reclaim its authority over funding decisions by passing full year appropriation bills.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members and our guests. I yield back.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, Ms. Kaptur.

Once again, thank you to our witnesses for being here today. Without objection, your full written testimonies will be entered into the record.

With that in mind, we would ask that you please summarize your opening statements in 5 minutes. And the significance of that is I am sure we are going to probably have two rounds even of questions and the like, but I want to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to ask you questions.

With that, Ms. Colosimo, you are now recognized for your opening statement. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF ROBYN COLOSIMO, P.E., ACTING PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (CIVIL WORK)

Ms. COLOSIMO. Thank you, Chairman Fleishmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, and distinguished members of the committee. I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss the President's budget request for the Civil Works Program of the Army Corps of Engineers.

As you know, the President's discretionary funding request for the fiscal year 2026 was submitted to Congress earlier this month. That request laid out the President's priorities for discretionary funding with recommendations to reach balance and restore competence in America's fiscal management.

The President's top line discretionary funding request for fiscal year 2026 includes 6.663 billion for the Army Civil Works Program. The Civil Works Program has dedicated its primary missions of commercial navigation, flood and storm damage reduction, and aquatic ecosystem restoration. The budget focuses on opportunities to support these missions that provide high return to the American

public, such as facilitating maritime commerce and addressing the most significant floods facing communities.

The details of the President's budget, which will present a unified comprehensive plan for America to address the overlapping challenges we face in a fiscally and economically responsible way, will be released in the coming weeks. I look forward to discussing the details of the fiscal year 2026 funding request for the Civil Works Program of the Army Corps of Engineers soon thereafter. Since the detailed budget for fiscal year 2026 has not yet been finalized and released, we will not be able to discuss capabilities of individual projects or studies at today's hearing.

While the President's detailed budget request for fiscal year 2026 has not been released, we did recently release the fiscal year 2025 work plan for the Civil Works Program. The work plan supports our coastal ports and inland waterways, invests in projects that will reduce floods risks, and includes 446 million to advance the President's commitment to restore Florida's Everglades. I would like to highlight a few examples of the projects funded in the '25 work plan today.

The fiscal year 2025 work plan will improve commercial navigation at our Nation's ports and waterways. It includes 264.13 million for the Sault Ste. Marie Replacement Lock in Michigan; and 172.711 million in the Sabine-Neches Waterway in Texas; and 33.436 million for the Houston Ship Channel in Texas, to prepare and place—in that case, to prepare placement areas for future dredging; and 1.62 million to complete the validation study for the Matagorda Ship Channel widening and deepening project in Texas. It also provides 32.19 million for the Chick Lock and Tennessee River Project; 44 million for the Upper Ohio, Allegheny, and Beaver Counties, Pennsylvania project; and 122.9 million to complete the major rehabilitation of the Illinois Waterway, T.J. O' Brien Lock and Dam. The work plan also funds important dam safety projects, including 283.719 million for the Rough River Kentucky Project; 65.33 million for the Pipestem Lake, North Dakota, project.

Finally, the Work Plan advances reforms to bring better value to the American public. For example, it includes 49.25 million for the hydraulic structures validation test bed in Vicksburg, Mississippi, which will provide a new fiscal modeling capability that will enable large-scale testing of lock and down components. This facility will empower the Corps to innovate infrastructure more efficiently.

The work plan also reflects on the Corps commitments with its non-Federal partners to accelerate projects and create efficiencies in their delivery through non-Federal implementation where appropriate. To that end, the Corps is developing guidance to implement Section 1043(b) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2014, as amended. This will allow the Corps to transfer funds to non-Federal sponsors for the implementation of projects. The President's '26 budget will build on this momentum and continue to advance the primary missions of the Corps.

Thank you for inviting me today and I look forward to the discussion.

[The information follows:]

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

**WRITTEN STATEMENT
OF**

**MS. ROBYN COLOSIMO
SENIOR OFFICIAL PERFORMING THE DUTIES OF
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
FOR CIVIL WORKS**

**BEFORE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT,
AND RELATED AGENCIES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ON

**THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET
FOR THE CIVIL WORKS PROGRAM
OF THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

MAY 21, 2025

Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss the President's Budget request for the Civil Works program of the Army Corps of Engineers.

As you know, the President's discretionary funding request for Fiscal Year 2026 was submitted to Congress earlier this month. That request laid out the President's priorities for discretionary funding with recommendations to reach balance and restore confidence in America's fiscal management.

The President's topline discretionary funding request for Fiscal Year 2026 includes \$6.663 billion for the Army Civil Works program. The Civil Works program is dedicated to its primary missions of commercial navigation, flood and storm damage reduction, and aquatic ecosystem

restoration. The Budget focuses on opportunities to support these missions that provide a high return to the American public, such as by facilitating maritime commerce and addressing the most significant flood risks facing communities.

The details of the President's Budget, which will present a unified, comprehensive plan for America to address the overlapping challenges that we face in a fiscally and economically responsible way, will be released in the coming weeks. I look forward to discussing the details for the Fiscal Year 2026 funding request for the Civil Works program of the Army Corps of Engineers soon thereafter.

While the President's detailed budget for Fiscal Year 2026 has not yet been released, we did recently release the Fiscal Year 2025 Work Plan for the Civil Works Program. The work plan supports our coastal ports and inland waterways,

invests in projects that will reduce flood risks, and includes \$446 million to advance the President's commitment to restore Florida's Everglades.

I would like to highlight a few examples of the projects funded in the 2025 work plan today. The Fiscal Year 2025 work plan will improve commercial navigation at our Nation's ports and waterways. It includes \$264.13 million for the Sault Sainte Marie (Replacement Lock), Michigan project; and \$172.711 million for the Sabine-Neches Waterway, Texas project; and \$33.436 million for the Houston Ship Channel, Texas project to prepare placement areas for future dredging; and \$1.62 million to complete a validation study for the Matagorda Ship Channel (Widening and Deepening) project in Texas. It provides \$32.19 million for the Chickamauga Lock, Tennessee River, Tennessee project; \$44 million for the Upper Ohio, Allegheny and Beaver Counties, Pennsylvania project; and \$122.9 million to complete the

major rehabilitation of the Illinois Waterway, T.J. O'Brien Lock and Dam, Illinois project.

The Work Plan also funds important dam safety projects, including \$283.719 million for the Rough River, Kentucky project and \$65.33 million for the Pipestem Lake, North Dakota project.

Finally, the Work Plan advances reforms to bring better value to the American public. For example, it includes \$49.25 million for the Hydraulic Structures Validation Testbed in Vicksburg, Mississippi, which will provide a new physical modeling capability that will enable large-scale testing of lock and dam components. This facility will empower the Corps to innovate infrastructure safely and more efficiently. The Work Plan also reflects the Corps commitment to working with its non-Federal partners to accelerate projects and create efficiencies in their delivery through Non-Federal

implementation, where appropriate. To that end, the Corps is also developing guidance to implement Section 1043(b) of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, 2014 (WRRDA), as amended, which will allow the Corps to transfer funds to non-Federal sponsors for the implementation of projects.

The President's 2026 Budget will build on this momentum and continue to advance the Corps primary missions.

Thank you all for inviting me here today. I look forward to your questions.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you so much for your opening statement.

General Graham, you are now recognized, sir, for 5 minutes for your opening statement. Thank you, sir.

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM H. "BUTCH" GRAHAM, JR., CHIEF OF ENGINEERS AND COMMANDING GENERAL, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

General GRAHAM. Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, and members of the subcommittee, I am honored to testify before you today in regard to the President's fiscal year 2026 top line discretionary budget request for the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Civil Works Program.

Through the Civil Works Program, the Army Corps works with our partners to study, build, and operate water resource projects focusing on our three main mission areas of commercial navigation, flood and storm damage reduction, and aquatic ecosystem restoration. The navigation program underpins the national economy, ensuring that commodities can move reliably and efficiently among 12,000 miles of inland waterways, 13,000 miles of intercoastal waterways, and into 1,000 coastal great lakes and inland harbors. Our flood and storm damage reduction program maintains 746 dams and over 13,000 miles of Federal levees that provide over 200 billion, which is an astonishing number, in flood damages avoided when averaged over a 10-year period.

The Army Corps is also the largest owner-operator of hydroelectric power plants in the United States with 75 plants producing approximately 25 percent of the Nation's total hydropower.

As Ms. Colosimo spoke to the Civil Works program is performance based and focused on high-performing projects and programs. The Corps uses a targeted approach to invest in water resources which benefit the Nation now and into the future. The discretionary request includes nearly 6.7 billion for the Civil Works Program.

As we discussed when I was last in front of this committee back in February, our objective every day is to safely deliver quality projects on schedule and within budget. To this end, our current, as of yesterday, on-schedule rate across the Civil Works portfolio is an 81 percent. That is a low B. This performance is influenced by factors both controllable and uncontrollable.

Focusing on those things we can control, the Army Corps is absolutely committed to procedural improvements in the following three areas. We got to get the engineering right. The focus here is on the maturity of the design. I remain committed to my pledge that I made last time I was here to not request project authorization unless the engineering design is at the 35 percent level.

Second imperative is to get the project management right. Here we are focusing on crafting logical, fully resourced schedules and sticking dogmatically to them, ensuring that we are delivering these important projects with a great sense of urgency.

Third thing is to get the team that is building these right. We are striving to bring together the right mix of talent either by on-board professionals within the Corps or by leveraging the private sector.

So the path to success is clear. Plan projects thoroughly and then build them rapidly with the right team of master craftsmen. I look forward to working with this committee to stay on that path.

Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to answering any questions.

[The information follows:]

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

COMPLETE STATEMENT OF

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM H. "BUTCH" GRAHAM, JR.
CHIEF OF ENGINEERS**

BEFORE

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT**

ON

STATE OF THE CIVIL WORKS PROGRAM

FEBRUARY 25, 2025

Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Army Civil Works program as part of this oversight hearing titled "State of the Civil Works Program."

CIVIL WORKS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Through the Civil Works program, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) works with other Federal, state, Tribal, and local agencies, as well as other entities, to develop, manage, restore, and protect water resources, primarily through the study, construction, and operation and maintenance of water-related infrastructure projects. The Corps focuses on work that provides the highest economic or environmental returns to the Nation or address a significant risk to public safety. The Corps also regulates development in waters of the United States and works with other Federal agencies to help communities respond to, and recover from, floods and other natural disasters. The Corps uses its engineering expertise and its relationships with project sponsors and stakeholders to address some of the most pressing water resources challenges facing the Nation.

The Corps is involved in studies of water resources challenges and opportunities across the country and in the construction of projects based on those studies. Currently, the Corps is actively working on nearly 100 ongoing feasibility studies and general reevaluation reports. The Corps also is managing dozens of ongoing construction projects across the country.

Through its commercial navigation program, the Corps facilitates the safe and reliable movement of cargo through 237 lock chambers at 192 sites and over 12,000 miles of inland and 13,000 miles of coastal waterways. There are over 1,000 authorized Corps coastal, Great Lakes, and inland ports in 45 states and territories. A significant majority of the goods entering the United States moves through Corps-maintained coastal ports, including 98% of overseas trade, 70% of imported oil, and 48% of consumer goods bought by Americans. The Corps flood risk management program maintains 746 dams and 4,000 miles of levees to help communities reduce their flood risks. At more than 400 reservoirs, the Corps provides recreational opportunities to millions of visitors each year. The Corps is the largest owner-operator of hydro-electric power plants in the United States, with 75 plants producing approximately 25% of the Nation's total hydropower output.

CHALLENGES

Over many years, the Corps has experienced significant project cost growth across multiple projects in the Civil Works portfolio, driven by a combination of internal and external factors. Projects often span multiple fiscal years, during which cost estimates may become outdated, and project designs may require revision. As a result, previously anticipated project costs can increase significantly. The inherent complexity of large-scale infrastructure projects, evolving market conditions, and other factors continue to pose challenges. Gaps in early project design maturity and feasibility-level engineering

have required significant changes to our cost estimates in many cases, and supply chain disruptions, workforce shortages, and inflation have also contributed to escalate costs beyond our initial projections.

In many cases, the difficulties that we face in developing an initial reliable cost estimate reflect insufficient design maturity at the feasibility phase. When the Corps shortened the study phase of our process, we sometimes deferred critical engineering analyses — such as geotechnical data collection, site surveys, and hydrology and hydraulics (H&H) modeling — to the pre-construction engineering and design, and to the construction stages. This deferral can lead to unforeseen changes in project scope and costs.

Evolving market conditions also affect the Corps' ability to complete its projects within its cost estimates. To address this concern, the Corps works with industry associations through formal and informal engagements to better understand market trends, and occasionally executes studies to obtain objective data. Observed trends in skilled labor shortages, material price volatility, and escalating project costs due to economic uncertainties have established clear correlations to observed project cost growth.

A recent observed trend in limited contractor participation in the bidding process has contributed to escalated bid prices. As project size increases, contractor availability shrinks significantly, with only 25 firms nationwide capable of bonding for large-scale projects over \$500 million.

In addition, real estate acquisition and environmental compliance can lead to substantial delays and cost escalations. For many projects, securing necessary land rights can be a complex and time-consuming process, particularly when projects require acquisition from multiple landowners, involve relocations, or affect properties with legal encumbrances. Non-federal sponsors' ability to acquire Lands, Easements, Rights-of-Way, Relocations, and Disposal Areas in a timely manner is critical, yet can be constrained by legal, financial, or administrative hurdles. Additionally, projects requiring coordination with Tribal Nations, state agencies, or private entities face further complexities in negotiating easements and resolving jurisdictional concerns.

Environmental compliance, including coordination under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and Clean Water Act, can also extend timelines, particularly when projects require extensive mitigation efforts or involve sensitive ecosystems. Unanticipated findings during environmental review, such as the discovery of protected species or the difficulty of identifying suitable habitat for restoration, must be resolved before construction can proceed.

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE PROJECT DELIVERY

Recognizing these challenges, the Corps has implemented several strategies to enhance project delivery efficiency and cost predictability. By strengthening preconstruction engineering and design (PED) requirements and using risk management principles, the Corps is working to improve cost and schedule accuracy.

Increased industry engagement, including early contractor involvement and market research initiatives, is helping to align expectations and ensure more competitive bids.

A sustainable Civil Works program requires effective project delivery methods, and strong partnerships with federal, state, Tribal, and local stakeholders. By refining acquisition strategies, enhancing early-stage project development, and proactively managing risks, the Corps is working to ensure that its infrastructure investments will continue to provide net benefits to the Nation at a reasonable cost.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to addressing questions from the subcommittee.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. General, thank you for your opening statement.

Mr. Cameron, good morning, sir. You are now recognized for 5 minutes for your opening statement. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF SCOTT CAMERON, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY, EXERCISING DELEGATED AUTHORITY OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

Mr. CAMERON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, members of the subcommittee, delighted to be with you this morning to talk about the President's fiscal 2026 budget blueprint request for the Bureau of Reclamation and discuss what our team is doing to make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

Reclamation's projects and programs serve as the water and power infrastructure backbone of the American West, constituting an important driver of economic growth in hundreds of basins throughout the 17 Western states. Reclamation manages water for agriculture, hydropower production, municipal and industrial use, and provides flood control and recreation for 90 million people. Reclamation's activities support economic activity valued at \$64 billion and support approximately 500,000 jobs. Reclamation delivers 10 trillion gallons of water to millions of people each year and provides water for irrigation of 10 million acres of farmland, which yields approximately 25 percent of a Nation's fruit and nut crops and 60 percent of the Nation's vegetable harvest.

Bureau of Reclamation's 2026 budget blueprint of 1.2 billion focuses on the core mission of maintaining assets that provide safe, reliable, and efficient management of water resources throughout the Western United States. The Water and Related Resources Appropriations Account is a primary source of discretionary appropriations for carrying out Reclamation's mission to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in the Western U.S. This account supports the planning, construction, operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation of reclamation projects that deliver water for agricultural, municipal, and industrial use; generate significant amounts of hydroelectric power; and support environmental stewardship and recreation. It also supports programs that promote water conservation, improve infrastructure reliability, and ensure compliance with applicable environmental laws.

Within the Water Related Resources Account, appropriations are organized into several functioning categories. Land Management and Development covers the stewardship of Federal lands associated with reclamation projects, including recreation, cultural resources, and public safety. The Fish and Wildlife Management Area Development support species and habitat protection, ensuring compliance with the Endangered Species Act and other environmental statutes. Facility Operations ensures that Reclamation's dams, canals, and power plants operate safely and efficiently to deliver water and power generation to our communities.

As the chairman mentioned earlier, Indian water rights is a significant concern for the Bureau of Reclamation, and within a budget constrained environment we intend to do everything we can to meet our obligations to Indian tribes.

The Central Valley Project includes multiple divisions, including the American River Division, Delta, and the Trinity River Division. Together they maintain and modernize facilities and increase water conveyance to Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley. The Klamath Project in Oregon and California ensures operational flexibility for irrigation deliveries and natural resource management.

The Bureau of Reclamation's work on the Colorado River is increasingly important, especially in light of the 2026 expiration of a number of agreements. We are working very closely at a senior level, very intensively with the governor's representatives of all seven basin states to help them find a mutually agreeable path forward, realizing that it needs to be a state-driven solution.

In summary, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I look forward to answering your questions and thank you for your time.

[The information follows:]



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Washington, D.C. 20240

**Statement of Scott Cameron, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Exercising
Delegated Authority of the Assistant Secretary
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Before the
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
on the President's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Blueprint
May 21st, 2025**

Thank you, Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify in support of President Trump's Fiscal Year 2026 budget blueprint request for the Bureau of Reclamation and discuss what our team is doing to make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous. I am Scott Cameron, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Exercising Delegated Authority of the Assistant Secretary.

Reclamation's projects and programs serve as the water and power infrastructure backbone of the American West, constituting an important driver of economic growth in hundreds of basins throughout the 17 Western States. Reclamation manages water for agriculture, hydropower production, municipal and industrial use, and provides flood control and recreation for 90 million people. Reclamation's activities support economic activity valued at \$64 billion and support approximately 450,700 jobs. Reclamation delivers 10 trillion gallons of water to millions of people each year and provides water for irrigation of 10 million acres of farmland, which yields approximately 25 percent of the Nation's fruit and nut crops, and 60 percent of the vegetable harvest.

Reclamation serves 17 Western States: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Reclamation works with a wide range of stakeholders, including water and power customers, Tribes, State and local officials, non-governmental organizations and others.

The Bureau of Reclamation's FY 2026 budget blueprint of \$1.2 billion focuses on the core mission of maintaining assets that provide safe, reliable and efficient management of water resources through the western United States.

Water & Related Resources Overview

The Bureau of Reclamation's Water & Related Resources (W&RR) account is the primary source for carrying out its mission to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in the western United States. This account supports the planning, construction, operation,

maintenance, and rehabilitation of Reclamation projects that deliver water for agricultural, municipal, and industrial use; generate hydroelectric power; and support environmental stewardship and recreation. It also supports programs that promote water conservation, improve infrastructure reliability, and ensure compliance with applicable environmental laws.

Within the W&RR account, appropriations are organized into several functional categories. Water and Energy Management and Development supports projects and programs that enhance water supply reliability, , and water infrastructure development. Land Management and Development covers the stewardship of Federal lands associated with Reclamation projects, including recreation, cultural resources, and public safety. Fish and Wildlife Management and Development supports species and habitat protection, ensuring compliance with the Endangered Species Act and other environmental statutes. Facility Operations ensures that Reclamation's dams, canals, and powerplants operate safely and efficiently to meet delivery and power generation commitments. Facility Maintenance and Rehabilitation addresses aging infrastructure, conducting major repairs, and modernizing facilities to maintain system reliability and performance. This account also funds the ongoing operational and maintenance needs of completed Indian Water Rights projects as well as work to help meet statutory compliance of enacted settlements. Together, these categories ensure the Bureau can meet its core mission while addressing long-term sustainability and risk management.

The W&RR account ensures reliable water and energy for agriculture, industry, and rural populations—foundational pillars of the President's "America First" agenda. These investments deliver tangible results aligned with Executive Orders promoting energy dominance and streamlined governance.

Prioritizing Western Water Deliveries for People and Agriculture

On January 20, 2025, President Trump issued a memorandum titled "Putting People over Fish: Stopping Radical Environmentalism to Provide Water to Southern California." This directive instructs Reclamation to "route more water from the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta to other parts of California" to benefit farms and communities. Reclamation is taking action now to support the President's initiatives by:

Focusing on California Water Supply: The Central Valley Projects (CVP) includes multiple divisions, including the American River Division, Delta, and the Trinity River division. These projects maintain and modernize facilities and increase water conveyance to Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley.

Emphasis on Water Deliveries for People & Agriculture: The Klamath Project ensures operational flexibility for irrigation deliveries.

Streamlining Regulatory Hurdles: Supporting ESA compliance and legal coordination to invoke emergency exemptions.

Colorado River Water

The Bureau of Reclamation's work on the Colorado River directly advances presidential priorities of securing American energy, maximizing domestic water supply, and asserting sovereignty in international negotiations. Through the Lower Colorado River Operations Program, including implementation of Drought Contingency Plans and bi-national agreements

with Mexico under Minute 323, Reclamation enhances water reliability for U.S. communities while maintaining strategic control of cross-border resources. Simultaneously, operation of Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Powell, along with the Upper Colorado River Operations Program, reinforces national energy production through stable hydropower generation, and ensures water delivery certainty across the Southwest, fulfilling directives to prioritize infrastructure, reduce regulatory interference, and deliver for farmers, families, and industry.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank you, Mr. Cameron.

We will now begin with questions for 5 minutes. I am going to ask everybody to please hold their questions to 5 minutes because we have other people having to move in and out with other hearings going on, beginning with my own.

General Graham, thank you again for being with us a second time this year. You and I have already discussed the importance of finishing the job on Chickamauga Lock serve. I was disappointed with last year's setback caused by an uncompetitive bid environment. Many projects have faced similar challenges in recent years.

With the revised contract currently out for bid, what steps has the Corps taken to enhance competition and avoid similar problems? Are there lessons learned that can be applied across the enterprise?

Finally, more generally, it seems like Chickamauga Lock is out ahead of several ongoing inland waterway construction projects. In what ways are you leveraging this project as a learning opportunity to improve project delivery across the Nation? Thank you, sir.

General GRAHAM. Chairman Fleischmann, thank you for that question. Specifically on increasing competition at Chickamauga, a lot of our facilities are in remote areas where, and as the ranking member mentioned earlier, the Soo Lock and Dam is another example, where we have got to go and make the steps necessary to attract contractors and the labor force to go to these remote areas. So the lesson learned from the unsuccessful last project award is we have a targeted marketing campaign that we have had ongoing to reach out to the 26 largest prime contractors that do this work. The pool of contractors, general contractors that do this work that have the bonding capacity to do this level of work is fairly limited. And we know who those are. So this time around, the District and with support from its division were much more targeted in reaching out to those contractors.

They held virtual site visits to attract talent. And I am happy to announce we had 74 attendees join us for that virtual site visit. And then they did, before the proposals went out, they did on site pre-proposal site visits. And we had over a 2-day period 75 contractors showed up on the first day, 24 showed up on the second day. And so that is many, many more than we have had at the pre-proposal visits in the past. And so that is a best practice. And for all of our construction projects in remote areas, Mr. Chairman, we plan to make sure that the districts are following those best practices.

Sir, your second question was how are we getting better at making sure that we have got the right team doing the design work and doing the construction work? We have consolidated that. Chickamauga and the Kentucky Lock and Dam, those two Tennessee River projects, those are legacy projects. We haven't done work that way for 10 years. What we do now is all the design for the inland system is with one center, the Inland Nav Design Center. Just like how you get good at anything, it is reps and sets. And so we are not building locks and dams in all the districts throughout the country. We are doing them in one or two specific districts at any given time. And so that that will concentrate the design reps and sets.

The second thing we are doing then is once you design it, you got to build it. And so we are concentrating the contracting and then the construction into two districts. And those will be Pittsburgh and Rock Island. And that will give them the reps and sets. In fact, Pittsburgh just took over the construction of the Kentucky Lock and Dam. We are leaving Chickamauga with the Nashville district with close oversight. And we are confident that we will get that this contract awarded this summer and we will get this lock up into operation by '28.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, sir. In my remaining time, Mr. Cameron, thank you for your opening remarks about Indian water rights and settlements. Very important to us and I think members on both sides of the dais. Can you provide us a status update for the subcommittee on ongoing settlements? And recognizing you can't share the details about the request, can you please speak to the administration's big picture plans and vision for delivering on those commitments? Mindful we have less than a minute.

Mr. CAMERON. Mr. Chairman, we are focused primarily on the statutory deadlines for fulfilling our financial obligations to Indian Tribes. That is the top priority. The second priority is working with Tribes to figure out how they might contribute to a broader settlement of water rights issues on a regional basis and water allocation, such as in the Colorado River Basin.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, sir.

At this time I would like to recognize the ranking member, Ms. Kaptur, for 5 minutes for questions.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your testimony.

General Graham, I wanted to ask your help, and you already are helping with your FUSRAP program for the areas that have been contaminated around our country. And one of these is in Northwest Ohio, in the town of Luckey, not far from where I grew up and still live today. The Toledo Blade, over the last couple of months, has done superb reporting on the history of this site and the whole horrors done to the workers and surrounding community during the Cold War as part of the nuclear weapons race under the purview of the former Atomic Energy Commission.

Mr. Chairman, if I could, I would like to place on the record two important articles from the Blade on this topic.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you very much. General Graham and Ms. Colosimo, as part of this reporting, the Blade discovered radioactive substances in multiple locations around the Luckey site which were above normal. You have been very proactive, thank you, in communicating with me and my staff on this topic. However, one of the things you told my office was that you had confirmed that the radioactive materials discovered by the Blade were not related to the Luckey site. Did we understand that correctly? Is that still your position?

General GRAHAM. Yes, ma'am, it is.

Ms. KAPTUR. Okay. Can you please explain to me what other possible sources of this magnitude of radiation might be responsible for its presence in this area if not for the Luckey site?

General GRAHAM. Ranking Member Kaptur, thank you. We remain confident that no FUSRAP-related material has migrated off the Luckey site and we are committed to a safe remediation of that site.

Ms. KAPTUR. I understand what happened in St. Louis is a possible analog to what is happening in our area. In that case, the contamination was migrating through the soil to the water. Is that a possible explanation here?

General GRAHAM. Not that I am aware of.

Ms. KAPTUR. I am very concerned about this situation and would like to have more clarity on what is in the water, what is in the soil, and what the dangers are to this region. Can you commit to me that you will get the water and soil tested?

General GRAHAM. Working with our state partners, with Ohio EPA, they are the ones that are currently doing the water testing. And so we are being absolutely transparent with them with what is on the Luckey site and our remediation plan.

Ms. KAPTUR. Can you commit to me that you will continue to keep us informed of everything that is going on out there, even to do a public briefing at some point, in the region?

General GRAHAM. Absolutely.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you very much. I want to change topics to Brandon Road. The Brandon Road Project is aimed at arresting the economic and environmental damage unleashed by the unfortunate migration of Asian carp species that will definitely eliminate our massive fishery if allowed to proceed up into the Great Lakes. It is vital that the Brandon Road Project proceed in a timely manner.

Could you kindly, General Graham, tell us the status in getting all Federal and state entities on the same page to proceed with the project?

General GRAHAM. Ranking Member Kaptur, thank you for that question on Brandon Roads. The President had signed a memo in support of that on the 9th of May, and on that same date, Governor Pritzker had a press release saying that his needs are met and that Illinois is working to get the necessary real estate. So with that in hand, we released the solicitation for contract 1(a) last Friday. And what that first contract is for is for the bubbling system and the acoustic system. This is part of a multilayered defense. And so that contract has been released. And once that is awarded and constructed, that will be the start of fish deterrence, which is great news.

Ms. KAPTUR. All right. Is it possible for your staff to get us the press release or whatever went out seeking contractors in that area?

General GRAHAM. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. KAPTUR. Appreciate that very much. Do we assume that the fiscal year 2026 budget request will include the full capability for the Brandon Road Project?

Ms. COLOSIMO. Ma'am, we are certainly going to put forth the best estimate we can and have the administration consider it. We do expect to have the fiscal year 2026 here soon, but the President signaling his interest in this project, in support of it, will be helpful action there.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you very much. I am going to really switch to another subject here.

General Graham, do you share General Spellman's goal of 70 percent use of dredge material for beneficial use by 2030?

General GRAHAM. Absolutely.

Ms. KAPTUR. You do. Thank you very much on that.

My time has expired. And thank you so very much for answering our questions this morning.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And thank you, Ranking Member Kaptur. We will have a second round for anybody who would like to ask additional questions.

At this time, I would like to recognize my friend Mr. Simpson of Idaho. He is chairman of the Interior Subcommittee of Appropriation and has also served as distinguished chair of this subcommittee in the past.

Mr. Simpson, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you all for being here today. You are the largest construction company in the world and you do a great job. And you have projects in every congressional district, I believe. And we sometimes complain, but we are really good at that. So I will start off by complaining just a little bit. Not really.

I have been working on a project, Gooding, Idaho, the Gooding Wall replacement, for about 20 years now. In fact, I have been told by some of my constituents down there that I can't retire and enjoy the rest of my life until this gets done. So you are affecting my future by not getting this done.

The design for the project seemed to be moving along just fine until the Corps recently had to increase its cost estimates for the project. Now the city of Gooding will have to consider alternatives, including shrinking the project's footprint and attempting to get more funding in order to keep the project moving forward. Seems to me we are going in a—we are going a bit out of order here. Are there ways the Army Corps of Engineers could do things differently or authorities that Congress could provide you all that we have better ideas of the true cost of these projects before we have funded them?

And along that same line, depending on how Gooding wants to proceed, we may approach the 902 limit for the project. Should we hit that limit, do I have your commitment that the Corps will do its part in providing the information needed to increase the project's authorized level and will continue to do the work to express capabilities in future fiscal years?

General GRAHAM. Representative Simpson, thank you for that question. On the last part of the question first, absolutely on the 902 limit.

On the cost increases, we absolutely have to do a better job. Last hearing that was our commitment to this subcommittee, and that all starts with getting the engineering right. No more putting out a programming number where we are unsure about what it is we are going to build. Right? You can say, hey, I want to go build a house and put a number out there. But until you know you want a three-car garage, four bedrooms, and three bathrooms with a

walk-in pantry, you don't really know with good certainty what that construction project is likely to cost.

And in the past we have done that. We have asked for authorization where we don't really have the scope defined and—because we don't have the engineering advanced at least up to 35 percent design. So on Gooding, that is a case where we absolutely have to make sure we get the engineering right at the beginning.

Mr. SIMPSON. Thank you, I appreciate that. And just remember, you are affecting my future and the enjoyment of my future.

Anyway, one other question or a couple others. Snake River quagga mussels, as you know, in 2023, we found quagga mussels in the Columbia Basin starting in the Snake River, and the Department of Agriculture in Idaho started an eradication program. The Corps is currently partnered with the state of Idaho in its efforts to control the spread of these quagga mussels in the Columbia River Basin and is authorized to provide up to 50 percent cost share for rapid response efforts on quagga mussels. What is the current status of the Corps' reimbursement to the state of Idaho for eligible expenses in the quagga mussel treatment?

General GRAHAM. Representative Simpson, thanks for that. The Aquatic Plant Control Project remains currently funded, but we will run out of funding in that program at the end of fiscal year 2026.

Mr. SIMPSON. We will try to make a change in that.

Okay. I am going to ask a question about Albeni Falls Dam in North Idaho on Lake Pend Oreille. The Corps has determined that the locks are inadequate or are defective and that probably all of them are, and so they are going to have to be replaced. The community in North Idaho, I mean, this affects the level of the lakes and so forth, and the community—recreation is a huge issue up there. And so the lake levels change because of that because you are conservatively monitoring that. The communities are concerned that this—your estimate that it may take till the end of the decade to replace this. Is that where we still are, that it will take that long?

General GRAHAM. Representative Simpson, we absolutely understand that the risk reduction measures we have had to take place by lowering the pool that that affects the users around the lake and we take that very seriously. But the spillway gates need repair. They are in design right now. And like I said earlier, with a good engineering estimate, then we can put a good construction estimate out there. But our commitment to you is to get those gates repaired and get the lake level back to its water control manual levels as soon as possible.

Mr. SIMPSON. Thank you. Mr. Cameron, one other question. I am glad, as the chairman is, that you mentioned the Indian water rights. It is going to eat the Interior budget. These water rights settlements are enormous cost. We have wondered why they don't come out of the judgment fund, like other settlements do that the Federal Government engages in. But that is something we will have to explore. But I wanted to ask you what is the water outlook for Idaho right now for the upcoming growing season?

Mr. CAMERON. Mr. Simpson, the West is in chronic drought in most places. It varies, obviously, regionally. My understanding is

that Idaho is probably not much worse than most of the rest of the West. And some parts of the state are actually in better shape.

Mr. SIMPSON. Thank you all for being here and for what you do.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Simpson, I thank you again, for all you do and for your questions.

At this time, I would like to recognize my friend and colleague, Mr. Levin of California, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank my friend, the chairman, and I thank you all for being here.

The Army Corps Civil Works Program has a long history of funding critical infrastructure work for water resource development. In California, where I am from, that has often included flood control and beach nourishment. And the Corps strength as an institution rests in nonpartisanship and in its ability to provide engineering and construction support regardless of political affiliation. The non-partisan nature of the Corps ensures that projects are executed objectively and meet the needs of the public. And I think that all of us in this room can agree that our vital infrastructure simply should never be partisan.

So, Ms. Colosimo, I was shocked when I saw the Corps released its fiscal year 2025 work plan last week, which zeroed out funding for critical construction projects in California. And when you dig deeper into the numbers, you see that the administration has shifted more than \$250 million away from the construction of critical infrastructure projects in the so-called blue states, like California and Washington, and moved it to the so-called red states.

Ms. Colosimo, do you agree that the Corps should operate in a nonpartisan manner?

Ms. COLOSIMO. Yes, sir. We should always be nonpolitical.

Mr. LEVIN. I appreciate that. I have the numbers right in front of me that indicate that that may not be taking place. The Corps decided not to fund projects in California that were in the fiscal year 2025 budget request and included in both the House and Senate bills on a bipartisan basis. That includes \$34.4 million for the American River Common Features Project, \$38.5 million for the Pajaro River Project, \$10 million for the San Joaquin River Basin Project, and \$43.5 million for the West Sacramento Project. It simply does not make sense that the most populous state in the country should receive \$0 for construction work.

And this isn't limited to California. In total, the so-called blue states saw a reduction of nearly half a billion dollars, while the so-called red states saw an increase of \$257 million. I am going to repeat, these Corps projects should be nonpartisan. They should be focused on saving lives, reducing damage to property, and spurring local economies.

And this is what I think a lot of us feared when we saw that our colleagues rushed through the continuing resolution that stripped Congress' ability to direct funds with state and local input, and instead gave all discretion to the administration to unilaterally decide how to dole out taxpayer funds. I would hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle find this as distasteful as I do. This is a lousy precedent that is being set here.

Ms. Colosimo and General Graham, can you both commit to standing up against efforts in future work plans and budget re-

quests that would further politicize the Army Corps budgeting decisions?

Ms. COLOSIMO. Yes, sir. If I may, we always put forth the best projects. In this case, it is a dicey situation, as you said. You know, the House and Senate marks were around 3 billion and we were at the continuing resolution of about 1.8. So they made hard choices, the administration did, and they had that discretion.

Mr. LEVIN. Do you—reclaiming my time. Do you have any other possible explanation for the way the administration wants to distribute these funds other than partisanship?

Ms. COLOSIMO. They wanted to prioritize life safety, flooding, and American prosperity.

Mr. LEVIN. And you think all of the projects in California, Washington, and other states don't do that?

Ms. COLOSIMO. It is not my judgment to make. That was what they prioritized within the funds that they had discretion to allocate.

Mr. LEVIN. Right. General, would you care to comment on this?

General GRAHAM. I go with Ms. Colosimo.

Mr. LEVIN. I guess no, you don't want to comment on this.

Mr. CAMERON, you want to comment on this?

Mr. CAMERON. Sir, I have gotten no insight at all into the Corps' budgetary process. I can tell you at Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, we try to invest our dollars where we can manage—produce the greatest benefit and the greatest public safety.

Mr. LEVIN. Based on the technical and the engineering aspects of these projects, do you feel that that has been done, that taking money, \$250 million, away from the so-called blue states, giving it to the so-called red states? Do you think that that is consistent with solid engineering and technical work that is been done on these projects? Do you really believe that, Ms. Colosimo?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I believe all the projects put forth are good projects.

Mr. LEVIN. That is not what I asked.

Ms. COLOSIMO. What I said was I believe they were all good projects. How they stack against the projects one by one is difficult to answer in one sound bite.

Mr. LEVIN. Well, you have 33 seconds.

Ms. COLOSIMO. I do believe they represent—

Mr. LEVIN. You have 33 seconds.

Ms. COLOSIMO [continuing]. The priority of the administration of life safety, flooding, and coastal.

Mr. LEVIN. And you already said that. Try again.

Ms. COLOSIMO. That is what I believe.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay. You think that this was all on the level? You don't think there is any partisanship at all?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I believe they had to make trade-offs that I was not privy to.

Mr. LEVIN. Right. And those trade-offs were of a partisan nature, weren't they?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I don't believe they were partisan, but that is their decision.

Mr. LEVIN. You don't believe they were partisan? So what is the explanation if it is not partisanship.

Ms. COLOSIMO. It is the priorities they placed that were different than priorities than other projects. You would have to ask them directly.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay. I am out of time, but I find your testimony to be completely unbelievable. Thank you.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, Mr. Levin.

Going in the order of how folks showed up, I now recognize my friend and colleague, Ms. Lee of Nevada, for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. I was waiting for a Republican, but, okay, thank you.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Give me these rules and I try to be even-handed, so.

Ms. LEE. All right. I like it. I like it. I will take it. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here.

Mr. Cameron, I obviously am concerned about the water negotiations on the Colorado River. And as we gather here, as you know, the American Southwest is confronting the effects of the worst drought in 1,200 years. In fact, our local newspaper just had an article on basically saying we expect Lake Mead, the water runoff to be about at 55 percent of average in this summer. So it is just getting worse. And so these negotiations are incredibly important; 40 million people, including my constituents, rely on the Colorado River. So, you know, successfully coming to an agreement and implementing new operating guidelines is incredibly important.

I heard you say, I just want to get confirmation, that the Bureau is prioritizing a consensus-based approach to crafting these guidelines as it has done during previous negotiations. Is that correct?

Mr. CAMERON. Absolutely, Congresswoman Lee. When I first briefed the Secretary on the Colorado, he gave me three orders. The first, is the Department's senior political leadership will be working intensely with the seven states. The second priority or second decision was he really wants a seven-state solution and we are to work aggressively with the seven states to achieve that. The third is in the unfortunate, we hope unlikely, circumstance that the seven states can't come to an agreement, he will exercise his responsibility as watermaster in Lower Basin.

Ms. LEE. Great. You know, I would be remiss if I didn't alert you to an amendment that was passed in the middle of the night during the natural resources markup of this big bad bill that is being negotiated in the Rules Committee as we speak. And I may have to leave to go propose an amendment, but it sets a precedent for the, one, for the selling of public lands, which my colleague Mr. Simpson adamantly opposes. But more concerning to our work is it sets the stage for a potential water grab by the state of Utah, throwing a wrench into these already enormously complicated negotiations.

And so I hope to get reassurance from you and the Bureau that we can ensure that this type of water grab would be addressed in these negotiations.

Mr. CAMERON. Congressman, I am unfamiliar with what happened last night. What I can tell you is as recently as last week, in Sacramento, met with the representatives of seven basin states and they were making substantial progress together in a very cooperative fashion. And I have got to give John Ensign, the Nevada

state rep, credit. He has been a real leader and been very creative on these things. So really value Nevada's active involvement.

Ms. LEE. Absolutely. Well, you know, our economy and our life depends on it. So I just want to alert you to that. I hope that you and your staff will take that into consideration.

I want to now turn to the skinny budget that we saw that saw a \$609 million reduction for the Bureau, which is crazy. And, you know, we didn't get too many specifics, but I am hearing some concerning reports that this includes—may include zeroing out funding for the Water Smart Program altogether. Now listen, this is a highly successful program. When you want to talk about dealing with these negotiations, I think we should be doing everything possible for reduction and reuse of water. But this basically allows the Bureau to work with Western states to limit water loss by providing grant funding that has been critical for projects in Nevada, such as converting 1.45 million acre feet—or square feet of athletic fields to water-friendly turf.

You know, I hope—I just want to confirm am I hearing only rumors or is this what is coming down the pike?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I'm not in a position, as you know, to talk about the details of the President's budget at this point. I can tell you that water conservation, particularly in the Colorado drainage, is a priority of this administration. And we will look—use every tool at our disposal to work with the seven basin states to achieve the water conservation goals in both the upper and lower basins.

Ms. LEE. All right. You know, it is already been, just before I close out, it is been brought to my attention that existing Water Smart funding opportunities have been under review. So I hope we can get your assurance that these already appropriated Water Smart initiatives will still remain open for application.

Ms. COLOSIMO. Congresswoman, I believe actually we are—sometime this summer we are going to be coming out with the fiscal year 2025 Water Smart Notice of Funding opportunity. So, yeah, they are in the pipeline.

Ms. LEE. Okay, thank you.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Ms. Lee, I thank you for your questions. At this time I would like to recognize my friend, the distinguished gentleman from California and the chair of the Defense Subcommittee of Appropriations, Mr. Calvert. Thank you.

Mr. CALVERT. Great, thank you, thank you. And General, thank you for what you are doing in L.A. I know you are ahead of schedule, I hope to be done but by July, I understand, on the cleanup part of that disaster. And so we want to work with you to make sure that it is done. Right. Most of the people signed up for just a de minimis number, unfortunately did not. But so it looks like it is on schedule and you are going to get it all done by July?

General GRAHAM. We are on track right now to meet that need. I know that it was important to try to get Pacific Coast Highway open, and we are working with the governor of California on that as we speak.

Mr. CALVERT. And I understand that some of your facilities are going to be used for the '28 Olympics. And so are they budgeting for that? Is the budget going to support the Corps involvement in that national effort?

General GRAHAM. Representative Calvert, I don't have the answer to that question right now, but as soon as we know that, we will share that with you.

Mr. CALVERT. Let us know. And regarding these negotiations with the upper and lower basin states here in California, obviously, California is, like, always a donor state. And so, you know, with the water rights primarily with Imperial Irrigation District and other agencies in Southern California. So I know those negotiations are ongoing, but obviously you have to recognize those previous water rights. And we love our friends in Nevada and Arizona and elsewhere, but that has to be worked out delicately. More water lawyers involved in that than I can count.

But to make up for that, we are going to need additional water delivery from the north to the south, and obviously the San Joaquin Delta and trying to move this conveyance system along. How are we—how is that moving along?

Unfortunately, we didn't go with a dual pipe system. We would have had it built by now. But nonetheless, how is the single pipe system coming?

Mr. CAMERON. So, a couple thoughts, Mr. Calvert. The first is, I can assure you, I am reminded almost on a weekly basis of who has got senior water rights everywhere in the Colorado Basin. So it is not something anyone lets me forget, and, you know, we are very mindful of that.

Speaking in terms of the Delta and the Central Valley Project more generally, the administration is working very hard with the water districts both north of the delta and south of the delta to come up with a water management regime that will allow more water to head south. We are lucky this year, Shasta is fairly close to full, which is a good thing. But it is unlikely that that will be the pattern, you know, year after year after year. So we definitely need more water storage in California. There is no doubt about that.

We have got no particular position on the governor's latest proposal for an additional conveyance. We are watching that closely. We are interested. Anything that creates more flexibility in terms of how we manage water in California would be very helpful and very much appreciated.

Mr. CALVERT. Well, obviously we need to build sites. I am going to have a meeting on that later today and, you know, hopefully that is going to be—all the approvals are going to be finalized here very soon and that we are actually going to get that under construction. And of course, I hope Shasta, you know, to me as we have been going through the permitting process for so long on Shasta, that hopefully we can get an agreement. We are initially going to raise that, what, 16, 18 feet, but that delivers about 600,000 acre feet of wet water. So it also works well for water management. So I hope we can do that, also.

One last question to you, General. Obviously the L.A. district's been actively involved in several projects in my district. The Prado Dam, Murrieta Creek Project, which I would like to hopefully see completed in my lifetime, not just like Mr. Simpson's time in Congress, within my lifetime. So how are we doing on those projects?

General GRAHAM. Representative Calvert, on Murrieta Creek, Phase 2—Bravo should be awarded in June of this year. So we are excited to see that move forward and we are reengineering the Phase 2—Charlie and we will work to fit that in within available funding.

On Prado, delighted to see that the base preconstruction service contract was awarded in April of this year. And what that allow us to do is to make sure that we have a construction contractor looking at our design and they will have an opportunity to go ahead and do the construction which we hope to get out next year.

Mr. CALVERT. Just one final comment if I can, Mr. Chairman, but I was around when we had the devastating floods in the early '90s that wiped out all those helicopters at Camp Pendleton. Santa Margarita Creek overflowed and it is a huge cost when—I forget the number, but it was a big number. So we don't want that to happen again. So I hope we can keep Murrieta Creek on track and finish that up.

General GRAHAM. Sure.

Mr. CALVERT. Great. Thank you. And that does have downstream consequence, even to my friend Mr. Levin, because that goes into his district. So there is a project I hope to get funded in California.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you Mr. Calvert.

At this time I would like to recognize my friend and colleague from Indiana, Mr. Mrvan, for 5 minutes.

Mr. MRVAN. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Panel. I want to follow up on a line of questioning from our oversight hearing in February.

There is an issue with finding storage for contaminated sediment in the harbors. This is extremely costly. In the case of the Michigan City harbor, this hampers the Corps ability to dredge the entirety of the channel. When I asked Major Condrey about the issue in February, there was not clear answers on the path forward to address this issue. Specifically, what is being done to find additional capacity for dredged materials and what are some of the specific challenges that you can point to that Congress might be able to help—be helpful in addressing?

General GRAHAM. Representative Mrvan, thank you for that question. And we are tracking closely the dredge material disposal site at the edge of the Calumet River where it meets Lake Michigan. With the change of support from Illinois, what that has allowed us to do is to—and the lawsuit being dismissed, now we can have open discussions with the state which are ongoing right now, which is, okay, what is next? We weren't able to do that before, so we got that cleared out of our way. And so those, those discussions are ongoing.

Mr. MRVAN. What are the discussions? What are the hurdles that have to be overcome with those discussions?

General GRAHAM. It is location, location, location. Where is the material going to go?

Mr. MRVAN. What are the options?

General GRAHAM. I don't have that at my fingertips, but we can get that to you.

Mr. MRVAN. What is the timeline in which a decision might be made?

General GRAHAM. I don't know.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. What as a Member of Congress can we do or Congress can we do to find new capacity? What is your percentage of that working out with Illinois?

General GRAHAM. So right now, we have nowhere to put that material, I believe, as you well know. And our commitment is to continue to work with the state to find a viable solution.

Mr. MRVAN. So you are working with the state of Illinois for a viable solution?

General GRAHAM. That is correct.

Mr. MRVAN. If that is not a viable solution, what is option B or C?

General GRAHAM. We have taken a look to see if we can use other CDFs around the area, particularly maybe down in Indiana. But the district reports that the capacity for those are already claimed, so that is not viable right now.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. As my colleague mentioned, it is viable. Obviously, this sentiment is going to keep coming up when we talk about commerce, when we talk about the steel industry, when we talk about having the navigable ability to be able to get through those waters, it all is contingent upon the dredging of the sentiment. But yet we don't have an answer to where that sentiment might go, which is holding up projects.

General GRAHAM. Absolutely agree. The importance of the Great Lakes harbors to the economy of the region is tremendously important. Also acknowledge that there is a great deal of concern out there that from the legacy pollution that is in those sediments that the public rightfully fears that they don't want that to do any more harm. And so, that is our commitment. And I know that is not your—

Mr. MRVAN. We are absolutely on the same page.

General GRAHAM. Right.

Mr. MRVAN. I want to protect the community first.

General GRAHAM. Absolutely.

Mr. MRVAN. Clean waterways second.

General GRAHAM. Absolutely, sir. Absolutely. And so right now, or before, we had a roadblock that we couldn't advance discussions with the state because of the lawsuit, that roadblock has been cleared, and so now those discussions are ongoing. So if we believe that and more engagement by any of the Great Lakes congressional representatives would be helpful, we will certainly reach out.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. What I am asking for and getting to is that we have an open line of communication that my office, along with the department, and the Army Corps is able to understand what the path forward is. So the impact that it has on those projects going forward we have an understanding of what will be going on and the protection of our communities.

General GRAHAM. Absolutely.

Mr. MRVAN. And then on a micro scale, Northwest Indiana is near Chicago. Chicago headquarters was on the list to be eliminated. It is now off the list. There is a small office in Griffith that allows people to use as a workstation, that is on the list. What is the current situation with obviously to assure me that the Chicago headquarters stays there, because that is the capacity that the

Federal building didn't have the ability for them to move into. And then secondly, what is the Calumet office and Griffith's future look like?

General GRAHAM. Representative Mrvan, the district is staying put. The area office, we are still working this with GSA, but we have our own real estate authorities that I can enter into year by year by year leases if we need to, and we will exercise that real estate authority if we have to. We are trying to find a more efficient way.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. If we can find an efficient way to keep that, simply because it has to do with the—the productivity—

General GRAHAM. That is right.

Mr. MRVAN [continuing]. Of what goes on in my district. And I thank you very much for your time. I yield back.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, Mr. Mervyn. At this time, I would like to recognize my friend and colleague from Washington, Mr. Newhouse, for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Appreciate that very much. Thank you all for being with us this morning, and thanks for your work, such an important topic in the arid West. I want to direct my first question to you, Mr. Cameron. First of all, appreciate your response to a letter that my office sent to you, as well as some of my colleagues co-signed the letter regarding the imminent failure of the Yakima Titan Irrigation District Canal. It is in my district. Certainly look forward to working together with you to find solutions to prevent this canal from devastating impacts of impending failure. I know the Bureau's aware of the current state of the canal and certainly the importance to the area and the lives and livelihoods literally hanging in the balance because of the situation there.

What I would like to do is just respond and what some of you mentioned in your letter, that you have directed the Bureau to provide any assistance necessary to the district to prepare and submit an application for the aging infrastructure account and to further evaluate whether the activities qualify as an emergency extraordinary operation and maintenance work, and that you expect a final decision sometime very soon by this fall, so that work could commence as early as 2026. I just want to tell you how important it is to adhere to the timeline in order to prevent the catastrophic impacts of failure of this canal, which, you know, usually we like to say it could happen. This is imminent. It is just the situation is such that it is not a matter of if, but it is a matter of when, and so we have to be as prepared as possible. So would just love to have your commitment to continue working with my office and the Irrigation District to make sure that this work happens.

Mr. CAMERON. Mr. Newhouse, you are absolutely correct. It is a very bad situation. I have met with representatives from the area on at least one, maybe two, or three occasions, actually. We were able to provide a small emergency grant. We were able to provide a loan. And as you indicated, there will be an opportunity to submit a proposal. It is a very bad situation, and we are monitoring carefully. We want to be as cooperative as we possibly can to reduce the public health and safety risk and the economic risk to the area.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. It truly is an all-hands-on-deck situation. So I appreciate your commitment. Thank you. Then I would like to direct a question to you, General Graham, Lieutenant General. Thank you for being with us this morning. I wanted to draw your attention to two very important construction projects that are imperative to the movement of over \$31 billion—billion—worth of cargo annually on the Columbia Snake River system. Certainly, the first of that is the South jetty located at the mouth of the system that requires at least \$30 million in additional funding to complete the rehabilitation project, which is certainly critical for preventing sand from impeding the navigation channel in the event of a breach.

Second, it is my understanding that the gate replacement at Bonneville and McNary Locks is being planned for 2030. As you know, an unplanned outage could be detrimental to the entire system, and there are no redundant locks. I must acknowledge the men and women of the Corps who perform regular maintenance on this infrastructure that is critical to prevent an outage that impacts navigation on the entire system.

These projects were not included in the recently released fiscal year 2025 work plan, and I am concerned that the work will extend beyond the 2030 date target because of a series of components and systems that need to be repaired or replaced in sequence between now and then to stay on track. So, just a question as to how you will work with the Portland and Walla Walla districts to ensure they are able to complete the jetty rehabilitation that was started almost 10 years ago, I believe, as well as stay on track for the 2030 gate replacements in a planned and coordinated fashion.

General GRAHAM. Representative Newhouse, thank you for those questions. Absolutely committed to making sure that the Columbia River system is maintained as a reliable engine of commerce for the Pacific Northwest. I have got a daughter that lives in Portland, and so I get out there as often as I can.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. It is a great state.

General GRAHAM. It is. It is amazing. So our commitment to make sure that the South jetty work, critical work, that continues, as well as on Bonneville and McNary, making sure that the cranes are in good repair to be able to move the gates and that the gate maintenance and is on track for 2030. And we will continue to work with your office to keep you informed.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Okay. I look forward to that as the work plan moves forward. So thank you very much. Again, thank you all for being here. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank you, Mr. Newhouse. At this time, I would like to recognize my friend and the Chairman of the House Ethics Committee, Mr. Guest of Mississippi, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To our witnesses, thank you for joining us today. As we begin, I want to first mention the incredible work of the research and development that we see the Army Corps conducting at your ERDC sites across the country. Know that there are seven labs across four states: New Hampshire, Illinois, Virginia, and my home state of Mississippi. So I always want to take a moment to brag about the incredible work and what I believe is a substantial return on investment that those sites pro-

vide not only to the Army Corps of Engineers, but the American public as a whole.

As we start looking at fiscal year 2026 budgets, I see that, at least the information we have, we see a reduction in the Army Corps of Engineers budget. And while I, and other members of this committee, want to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, I believe that the funding of the Army Corps of Engineers is an investment. It is an investment for the American public. Unlike some other spending that the Federal Government may authorize, the money that we spend on the Army Corps of Engineers is extremely important, and you do some amazing work.

And so, as we look at the potential of a reduction in budget going into the next budgetary cycle, I know that the Army Corps manages a large portion of the portfolio of infrastructure across the country. Some of that infrastructure is aging. And so can you talk just generally about how we are going to make sure that with the reduction in budget that we are delivering on the commitments that we have made to various communities across our Nation?

Ms. COLOSIMO. So, if I may, I think just like we were talking about earlier with Mr. Levin, we are going to continue to focus on the priorities of the administration, right? So I would expect those same priorities to be focused on life, safety, flooding, and American prosperity. That extends a broad net. It doesn't mean other things aren't included. But we believe that will be the initial umbrella under which we will fall. And there are many, many investments there.

Mr. GUEST. And then I want to talk just about one instance specific to my district. I know that as we continue to move forward, we have issues at times with staffing, with personnel. A press release came out just today from the Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District announcing the closure of roughly half a dozen recreational sites across their area of control. One of those there in my home state of Mississippi, in which is a 3,800 acre lake, about 11,000 total acreages within the recreational area that has been closed, at least temporarily, no timeframe as to how long those closures will last as we come into Memorial Day, as we come into the Fourth of July, the summer months where people would be much more likely to use these recreational areas. And also, these recreational areas have an economic impact on the businesses that serve those. I am concerned that these temporary closures may last through the summer, well into the summer, again, the times in which these facilities would be most used. We see at least this facility that I am talking about specifically is being shuttered indefinitely.

And so I just ask one, and I hope that this is the exception to the rule, that we don't see widespread closures across the country. But I would just ask for a commitment from each of you that you would look into the closings of this facility and the facilities in general to see that these facilities reopen as quickly as possible, knowing that we need to make sure the facilities are properly maintained, that we are providing safety for those individuals that use those facilities, but balancing maintenance and public safety also with the use of those facilities. And so if you all would each promise me that you all would look into the reopening of these facilities as quickly as possible. I would greatly appreciate it if anyone would

like to respond further, would be happy to, but not asking for a more thorough response than that.

Ms. COLOSIMO. I would like to respond briefly if that is okay. Appreciate you raising this, right? Recreation is an incidental mission for all of our projects, right? But a huge one to the local economy, and what people see every day in their lives. And yet, we find ourselves in the situation where we are downsizing our workforce because of voluntary departures from Federal service, and that has hit some places hard. And recreation is the first one that is really coming about. And so, we are working with the corporate Corps to work through a process to figure out how we can start to bring folks on during a hiring freeze. It is challenged by how close this was happening as the Memorial Day to Labor Day season opens, right? And so that seasonal workforce is hard to gather. We are still hoping to get some of it, but we are working through it with a goal of at least partial opening, knowing that we are going to have some workforce challenges across. And to the workforce point, broader workforce, we are just now starting to see the numbers. And so we are actively managing it across portfolios, including recreation.

Mr. GUEST. Well, thank each of you for being here today. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, Mr. Guest. At this time, we are going to engage in a second round of questions. Consistent with the first, I would ask that folks keep their questions to 5 minutes so that we all can ask additional questions. I will begin with myself.

General Graham, a matter that has been discussed earlier but of prime importance to me and members on both sides of this dais, is Asian carp. It is of tremendous importance to my home state, the great state of Tennessee, in preventing the spread of invasive carp further into the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. Program implementation has faced repeated and avoidable delays despite robust funding provided by Congress. I appreciate the Nashville District's renewed commitment to this work. Time, however, is of the essence on this, and we cannot afford to be discussing this program development this time next year. Sir, where are we on finalizing the program implementation? And as a follow-up to that, what steps are you taking to work with the state, state of Tennessee and other prospective sponsors so that projects can be ready for funding and execution as soon as the program management plan is finalized? Thank you, sir.

General GRAHAM. Mr. Chairman, thank you for that question. And we absolutely—our commitment is to do everything we can using our facilities to help limit the spread of invasive carp both into the Great Lakes and throughout the Tennessee and Cumberland system, and down through the Alabama and Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway. And so this program is tremendously important to us. And Chairman, the direct answer to your question is we will continue to work with the states to see if we can get them to act as a non-Federal sponsor. We will continue to work with great partners in the Tennessee Valley Authority to make sure that when the programmatic are ready to go, that we aren't trying to figure out the PPAs, and that ideally that those are on the shelf ready to go.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank the General for his comments. And I just want to comment by saying as issues come up from time to time throughout the district, this is an issue that I literally hear from constituents throughout the year. They have meetings to discuss the invasive carp species, and they are literally scared environmentally, economically, because where the carp have become a major problem, it has been extremely devastating. So I thank the General for his efforts, but we really want to get that done because I am doing my best to assure these constituencies that I and the Corps and all the other partners are doing their very best to address this—this pressing concern. And I thank you, sir.

And in that regard, and in the interest of time, I am going to recognize my dear friend again, Ms. Kaptur, the Ranking Member, for 5 minutes for her questions. Thank you.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, you know, I share your concern about the Asian carp. And I do wonder whether we have the right architecture as a country to solve this. In other words, you have got the big burden on your back as the core. But, for example, in terms of genetic research, I don't know if the Vicksburg lab of the Corps is sufficient. I look at other instrumentalities that we have at NOAA, at the Department of Commerce. I keep thinking about our own research labs at DOE. We need a genetic solution, perhaps. I don't know. But it just seems like the carp are getting ahead of us, and we have a fish-out strategy working with the Department of Interior. And I don't think it is enough.

And I had one member from your state, Mr. Chairman, I won't say who it was, he came up to me. He never cared about it until it hit his district, and then all of a sudden he went crazy. Okay. So I really do need your advice, not now, but think about who else could help across the government of the United States. What can we do to stop this spread? We are going to put up engineering barriers. That is part of it. But there are probably genetic controls. We can't seem to get to the scientific answer. And so I am just asking for your advice there. Who else would you like to have partners around the table? I don't know how you feel about it, Mr. Chair.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Well, I share the ranking member's sentiments. And of course, for years, the ranking member has been a champion for the Great Lakes watershed, and I thank her for that. God forbid these invasive species get there. So I will commit to working with the ranking member and anybody who will work with us in Congress on this issue to get a viable solution. I yield back to the gentle lady.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much, and just we really appreciate your advice and welcome your advice, General, in this area. I wanted to just switch for a second on the dredge material issue also. In our region, we have the largest budget in the Great Lakes for Lake Erie, as you well know. It fits—every year, if you were to put all that material together, it would rise 400 feet high in the Cleveland Browns stadium. And some people have said to me, well, you should fill the Cleveland Browns stadium. But, you know, when you think about that year after year after year, and I think of our scientific capabilities, my goodness, what can we do with that dredged material?

I keep thinking, can we put—Cleveland has the largest sewage treatment plant in all of Ohio, and it does amazing things. Because of science, we are able to produce fertilizer at the end of the process that the EPA approves. And I keep looking at this dredge material. Again, I go to the high science. We have all these research labs. Is there a bigger answer here where we can use the dredged material? We wouldn't have to go to, you know, the 20th-century solution of confined disposal facilities, but where we can put it through tubes, right? And we can figure out whether there is dissolved reactive phosphorus, whether there is beryllium in there, whatever it is. It seems to me that there is a way for detection. If we are going to Mars, you mean to tell me we can't decide what to do on Earth with our dredged material?

Again, I ask you for your scientific and engineering recommendations that would guide us as mere house representatives here from our region, trying to do the best for the people going forward. If you put a consortium table together with the EPA, with our energy research labs, with Vicksburg, whatever, let's go after this from another way that is perhaps more promising going forward. Maybe it is impossible.

And in this regard, I will just put on the table this interesting fact. As we try to look at new forms of power, we are realizing we are wasting a lot of power, and this committee is energy and water. We have solutions nobody else can come up with. The Cleveland sewage treatment plant, in one year, throws into Lake Erie the equivalent of 400,000 barrels of oil and waste heat. Imagine if we could use that power all across America, all across the Great Lakes, and create a sub-utility to help process this very stuff, this dredge material. Imagine if we could do that. We are thinking in the past. We have nuclear power plants along our shore. I believe by regulation, they throw that waste heat into Lake Erie at a temperature of 93 degrees. That is wasted thermal heat. We have the ability to do things that other centuries haven't had. But I don't see the thinking across the government. I think it is too stovepiped into different agencies rather than sort of cross-bred. And I just share that with you as we try to figure out what to do with this dredge material.

So please answer a question about if you could reshape how we find the answer to both the Asian carp threat and to the contaminated sediment. Help us. Help us put that architecture together across the Federal Government.

Final question, Mr. Chairman, real quickly. In terms of enlistment in the Corps, do you have skills that you are short and have you considered creating a program like Starbase that works across DoD to help encourage young people to come into the sciences, engineering, solving real problems for this country? There is one called Starbase that is used in different places, that is already authorized. I would love to have your suggestion on what we could do through the Corps. You touch every community in the country. I mean, you have an unbelievable ability to draw young people in, and I just want to push you a little bit in that direction.

Thank you very much. My time has expired.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank the ranking member for her questions. Folks, ladies and gentlemen, we have had some addi-

tional members show up, so I want to welcome them. At this point in time, I would like to recognize Ms. Maloy of Utah, my friend, for 5 minutes. She is a water attorney by profession, so not only is she more than welcome on this committee, but she is going to help me on the water side.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman. Does the Chairman yield?

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Yes.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to compliment you because, under your leadership, and I hope I have helped, we have had such a great turnout on our subcommittee. If you look across the Congress and what happens, this is a working subcommittee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members that have come.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank the ranking member, and I appreciate that the ranking member has chaired this subcommittee before. I do it, we have had other members do it, but there is a tremendous degree of cooperation, and it really is a source of pride and inspiration, I hope. But I thank the ranking member. With that, I recognize Ms. Maloy.

Ms. MALOY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the benefit of the people who are here to testify, I apologize that I missed the first round. I had another hearing at the same time, so I got here as quick as I could. Mr. Cameron, my constituents appreciate the funding and efforts Reclamation provided earlier this year to complete the 12-mile SLU modification work pursuant to the 2024 SEIS. Given that last year's bypass of Glen Canyon Dam's hydropower generators cost the basin fund nearly \$20 million and deferred critical maintenance, can you assure this committee that you will seriously consider a non-bypass or no-action alternative in your summer 2025 operational decision making to avoid further financial and grid reliability impacts?

Mr. CAMERON. Ms. Maloy, coincidentally, I was just briefed on this topic yesterday, and we are looking at it. We are trying to be creative. We are trying to figure out ways that we cannot add to the financial, you know, burden of the power users, for instance, and WAPA. So yeah, we are looking for—looking for options. But we also need to figure out a way to get rid of those small mouth bass, as you are very much aware.

Ms. MALOY. Yeah. Thank you. Anything you can do to help avoid the ratepayers, my constituents, bearing that cost directly, I would really appreciate it. And we are happy to work with you as you move forward.

Okay, for either Ms. Colosimo—I don't know if I am saying your name right. I am sorry, I haven't been here.

Ms. COLOSIMO. Colosimo.

Ms. MALOY. Colosimo, thank you. Or Lieutenant Graham. Panguitch Lake Dam in my district. It is a small dam; it serves a small town. But the dam started to crack last year, and they have been working to try to repair the dam, and they keep running into delays. So they are trying to get a stream alteration permit, and they keep getting more requests for information, requests for information. They don't feel like they are getting a lot of help, just a lot of letting the clock run while, you know, it is spring, and the lake is filling back up and the pressure is back on the dam. And what they need is a solution so that they don't lose that lake. Will

you work with us to make sure we can get them the help they need in a timely manner, so we are not losing a dam and losing the water supply for a rural part of my district?

General GRAHAM. Ma'am, absolutely. This is a private dam, and they are looking for assistance, probably, with both the permitting and the repair.

Ms. MALOY. I think they are just looking for assistance with the permitting, but I will get you——

General GRAHAM. Okay. We will contact your office, ma'am, and get in contact with the dam owner operator——

Ms. MALOY. Thank you.

General GRAHAM [continuing]. And see how we can help.

Ms. MALOY. Thank you. I appreciate that. Another one for the two of you. In Tooele County, Utah, the local government is trying to plan transportation, and some of it requires navigating a process to obtain transportation rights away—across the Tooele Army Depot, which is DoD managed land. Recognizing the Army Corps of Engineers' engineering and environmental expertise, how can our local government, somebody, like, Tooele County, leverage the Corps' assistance to assess feasibility and impacts of new transportation corridors to improve regional mobility while maintaining National security interests? And I know the National security interest is really important to them, but that area is growing quickly, and they have got to be able to have transportation infrastructure.

General GRAHAM. You have our absolute commitment that we will meet with them to see if we can come in with a win-win solution that manages and balances out both of those needs, the National security interests, and the needs for improved transportation to a growing region.

Ms. MALOY. Okay, thank you. Last question. I am moving quickly. This is one of those days where everything is happening fast. How is Reclamation working with Utah stakeholders to streamline permitting or NEPA compliance for our local water infrastructure projects, particularly in rural counties that may lack capacity to navigate Federal processes?

Mr. CAMERON. Thank you very much for that question. So we work with our local water district partners on a regular basis to try to provide technical assistance. One of the things that we are also exploring is whether we can leverage the expertise and, frankly, the streamlined acquisition processes that our non-Federal partners often have so that we can leverage their ability to get contracts issued faster and at a lower price than might be the case for our Federal agencies. That would stretch this committee's dollars as well. So we are always open to creative thinking about how to work more effectively with our partners.

Ms. MALOY. Please work closely with my staff. And we would love to be the bridge between our Utah partners and both of your offices to make sure we are getting that assistance to people in a timely manner. The speed at which the Federal Government moves on these projects is a huge source of frustration.

Mr. CAMERON. We share that frustration, believe me.

Ms. MALOY. Thank you. With that, I yield back.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank you, Ms. Maloy. At this time, I would like to recognize my friend and colleague, again from California, Mr. Levin, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Cameron, back in February, DOGE published a list of agency offices whose leases were to be terminated. The Bureau of Reclamation, Southern California Area Office, which provides water management support throughout Southern California, including in my district, was and is, I just checked the list again, on that list, along with hundreds of other facilities across the Nation. The Southern California Area Office administers several essential programs that assist with water conservation and efficiency strategies, water recycling and desalination programs, and other watershed management activities. The decision to close this office and others like it makes our water less secure. And now Southern California is doing everything it can, charging ahead with innovative desalination and water recycling and reuse technologies. But when I look at what DOGE is doing regarding these lease cancellations, I fear that they will leave communities like mine vulnerable, despite our best efforts to develop a resilient local water supply. Mr. Cameron, were you personally involved in the decision to close this office? Were you in the room?

Mr. CAMERON. No, sir, I wasn't. My understanding is that the General Services Administration provided the department and other departments, a list of leases that they were planning to cancel. And we have been very actively involved in terms of going back to GSA and indicating situations where we thought eliminating those leases would be problematic.

Mr. LEVIN. That includes this office. Do you agree with the decision to close this office?

Mr. CAMERON. I am not aware of that particular lease, to be honest with you, Congressman. I am happy to look into it. I can tell you that there are quite a few Bureau of Reclamation leases where we have been actively talking about GSA, about why it would be a real problem. But I am happy to look into that one in particular.

Mr. LEVIN. What criteria do you think that DOGE used to decide which offices to close?

Mr. CAMERON. My impression is that it was actually a General Services Administration directive. Whether it was the DOGE people at GSA, I don't know. I think they were looking at leases that were about to expire across the whole government, across all Federal agencies.

Mr. LEVIN. Do you think it is contrary to Reclamation's mission of protecting water resources in the interest of the American people to be closing these offices all over the place?

Mr. CAMERON. We clearly have an interest and a need to operate the government as efficiently as possible to stretch the dollars that the subcommittee provides. And where we have identified situations where we think it is counterproductive to close offices, you know, we have been actively chatting with our friends at the General Services Administration, and at least in a number of instances, successfully so. I am not aware of this particular situation, but I am happy to look into it, Mr. Levin.

Mr. LEVIN. Well, we will follow up with you on that. Ms. Colosimo, I want to get back to the California projects that I mentioned earlier. Were you personally involved in the decision-making to not fund any of those projects, or not fund all of those projects?

Ms. COLOSIMO. No, sir.

Mr. LEVIN. And do you have any idea who specifically was?

Ms. COLOSIMO. We deliberate the package with the criteria we submit to OMB, and the OMB and the administration make the decision, the final decisions.

Mr. LEVIN. So, do you have an actual human being who was responsible for making the decision? Do you have an email? Do you have—

Ms. COLOSIMO. We don't make the decisions; we make recommendations.

Mr. LEVIN. I understand that you don't personally, but you just said that OMB relayed those decisions to you. Do you have any correspondence with them that would indicate why those decisions were made prior?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I do not have any correspondence, no.

Mr. LEVIN. How did you—

Ms. COLOSIMO. Office of Management and Budget did their business, and they—

Mr. LEVIN. How did you learn?

Ms. COLOSIMO [continuing]. Provided us the product.

Mr. LEVIN. How did you learn that those determinations had been made?

Ms. COLOSIMO. They provided us with the final product.

Mr. LEVIN. Who?

Ms. COLOSIMO. The Office of Management and Budget did.

Mr. LEVIN. Who specifically?

Ms. COLOSIMO. They didn't provide it to me. I don't have a name, but it would be our examining unit.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay. Who in your examining unit received the information?

Ms. COLOSIMO. In my—in our office?

Mr. LEVIN. I am trying to understand who at OMB made the call.

Ms. COLOSIMO. Well, I think it goes all the way up to the Director.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay. So you are telling me, Russ Vought, the Director of the OMB, personally made the decision to take \$250 million away from California and the blue states to give it to the red states. Is that your testimony?

Ms. COLOSIMO. My testimony is that he was engaged with his staff as anybody would be, as far as I know.

Mr. LEVIN. It is a simple yes or no question.

Ms. COLOSIMO. I can't answer that question.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay.

Ms. COLOSIMO. I don't have full visibility on that information.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay, I appreciate that. We will ask questions for the record to try to understand and—

Ms. COLOSIMO. That is fine.

Mr. LEVIN [continuing]. Get to the bottom of it. You said before the criteria used were life safety, flooding, and American pros-

perity. Which of these criteria were not met by the California projects that I mentioned earlier?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I don't know the details of the California projects you are talking about.

Mr. LEVIN. Well, let's unpack one. How about the Sacramento Delta? Do you agree that the Sacramento Delta region is perhaps most at risk for catastrophic flooding anywhere in the Western United States?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I know they have challenges and risks, but I am not at liberty to say what the trade-offs were on which the projects they chose or stacks against other projects.

Mr. LEVIN. Do you not think that it meets life safety, or flooding, or American prosperity to try to protect lives and property in the Sacramento Delta region?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I am sure it does. How it stacks against other projects was not my call.

Mr. LEVIN. Do you agree or disagree that it is one of the most flood-prone areas in the Western United States, if not the entire country?

Ms. COLOSIMO. It is certainly susceptible to flooding.

Mr. LEVIN. All Right. So it sounds like it doesn't meet the criteria that were—that you laid out before. I don't think OMB followed, and I think you are getting played by OMB, and you don't even know who at OMB. And with that, I will yield back.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, Mr. Levin. At this time, I would like to recognize the distinguished Vice Chairman of this subcommittee, my good friend from the great state of Texas, Mr. Cloud, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLOUD. Thank you very, very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you all for being here. The work you all do is extremely important to the economic lifeblood of our Nation and thank you for that. I first want just to say thanks and especially to the—to the Corps, for the great work done at the Corpus Christi Ship Channel over the last several years. June 2nd, I believe, will be whatever you do when the project for—I don't know if you can ribbon cut across the channel—but the great work is under the water level. So a lot of people don't see it. But it is extremely important, and we certainly see the effects of it. So I want to thank you for that.

I do want to touch on the Matagorda Ship Channel. That has been a difficult project to deal with over the last few years. For the first time ever, under the Biden administration, we had a Congressionally authorized project, have the record of decision revoked. And after that, we have worked with the Corps to try to work on timelines, anything we can to speed up those timelines. There has been a number of delays along the way. Some of them with excuses that weren't really appropriate, I guess, or valid. We sent an email to a wrong place, and so we have to delay this for a month, and what have you. And then working with leftist NGOs that really don't have a stake in the area or district to kind of cater to them, and do what they could to drive up the BCR and delay this project in an effort to try to kill it.

So, under new leadership that understands the importance of our ports and the development of it, hopefully we can turn a course on that and get our timeline on track. I will say we have gotten a

timeline on the SEIS, but we still have some work to bring some more detail to that, and then we need a timeline for the whole project. So, could we work on getting that, and when could we expect that?

General GRAHAM. So, Representative Cloud, thank you for that question. And at the beginning statement, I know you just got here, I said one of the first things we have to do in the Corps is we have got to get the engineering right. And on the Matagorda Ship Channel deepening, we did not get the engineering right. In fact, we got the trigonometry wrong.

Mr. CLOUD. Sure.

General GRAHAM. And that is what we sent over to the authorizing committees to authorize. And we didn't calculate correctly. We calculated how much material would need to be removed from the channel, but we didn't calculate correctly where we would place that.

Mr. CLOUD. Right.

General GRAHAM. And so that is what is causing it. We have to go back and fundamentally redo the environmental impact statement because it is—we have double the amount of material we are going to move from one place under the water to another.

Mr. CLOUD. Right. In times past, the practice has been to work concurrently with a revised supplemental impact study and to continue the project. So the fact that it was—the record of decision was revoked, and the whole point of a record of decision is to bring certainty to a project, I mean, that is what in the name of the title, the record of decision. So we undid a decision. So, you know, so that was concerning. But going forward, anything we can do to shorten. You know, sometimes there is like 4 months to make a decision. We have had these discussions before, and anything we can do to shorten those timelines going forward. This project has been pushed back plenty far enough. And, you know, with this President's help, I believe hopefully we will be able to finally execute on it moving forward.

General GRAHAM. So our commitment to you, Representative Cloud, is to get the engineering right on this and to move forward as rapidly as we—as we possibly can.

Mr. CLOUD. Sure. I appreciate it. Thank you for that. I wanted to touch on desal. You know, Corpus Christi is a leader for the region as a water provider. One of the issues we have been looking at is what we can do to continue to provide water for the region. Desal, of course, being along the Gulf of America, being an important option. When we look just generally speaking, at Texas, and Texas has really been overlooked when it comes to water projects.

And I know we are waiting on the ASA to be confirmed, but I am curious how long we think it will take once we have confirmation to stand up the grant process and to be able to move that forward. And then really what we can do to turn the corner on getting funding to the state of Texas that, you know, when you look at the projects that have been funded in the state of Texas, when it comes to water, it is very minimal from a—from a Federal standpoint. Where other states—and certainly when you think of Federal dollars going to region, it is because of Federal purposes. And so, you know, you have states like California that have high regulations

that make it difficult to provide an economic flow into the country. And then Texas, which is, you know, pretty strong and friendly to business and being a lifeblood of commerce into the—into the country, has been overlooked on these water projects. And so, I would like a commitment on what we can do to begin to look at and prioritize Texas in the region when it comes to funding of these water projects. Any comment on how long it would take to stand up at least the grant process?

Ms. COLOSIMO. I think we will have to loop back with you. Just to be clear, though, you are talking about a loan, right? It is from this—it is from this Infrastructure Loan program, I believe. We don't—we don't have grants.

Mr. CLOUD. Right.

Ms. COLOSIMO. Okay. So I think we will have to get the details and loop back with you if that is okay.

Mr. CLOUD. Okay, thank you.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank Mr. Cloud. At this time, I recognize now my friend Ms. Lee of Nevada for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Cameron, I received a—I had a small offline discussion with Mr. Ensminger, and he appreciates too, your leadership in these negotiations. So thank you. I don't envy you at this point. But can you give us any daylight on how you are actively working to build consensus? What you see as the prospect? You know, given Mr. Calvert's line of questioning, obviously, the water rights issue, but ultimately, I think it is imperative that we come to a consensus because if we don't, it is going to be years and years and years of legal wrangling before we see any type of agreement. And I don't think we have it.

Mr. CAMERON. So, Ms. Lee, Reclamation and the seven basin states have a pact to not disclose the details of negotiation.

Ms. LEE. I figured that.

Mr. CAMERON. As you may know.

Ms. LEE. I thought I would ask, okay?

Mr. CAMERON. But what I can tell you is at our most recent meeting in Sacramento, several of the seven basin states reps came up to me and said, we have made more progress in the last 2 days than we had in the last year and a half.

Ms. LEE. That is great.

Mr. CAMERON. So, you know, I think in government, you have to be an optimist, or why are you doing anything in government? So I am quite optimistic that working with the seven states will end up getting to a good place on a timely basis. And I believe all seven states are negotiating with each other and with Reclamation in very good faith. They all want a solution, and they all agree that it is much better for them to come to a deal than have the Interior Secretary impose a deal.

Ms. LEE. Absolutely. Godspeed. So, you know, last month, UCLA released a report which found that states across the Colorado River Basin are squandering a critical opportunity to ease this water crisis. It is water recycling and reuse. While my home state of Nevada reuses 85 percent of our treated wastewater, the seven basin states combined reuse only 26 percent of this water. You know, just to put it in perspective, if these states were able to collectively raise their reuse rates to just 40 percent, we are talking a 14 percent increase.

We could gain nearly 900,000 acre feet of new water annually, enough to supply nearly 2 million homes. UCLA researchers emphasize that this represents a significant percentage of the projected shortfall on the Colorado River and a solution that could be pursued aggressively to ensure sustained management of the river.

So I am asking, is the Trump administration committed to continuing and building on the kind of bipartisan support for water recycling and reuse initiatives which Congress advanced in the legislation that was passed in the bipartisan infrastructure law?

Mr. CAMERON. Water reuse and recycling definitely have to be part of the solutions. Absolutely. No doubt about that. You know, we are obviously dealing in situations where individual states, individual municipal governments have to make their own decisions about what is the smartest thing for their particular locality. So we are mindful of their perspective on their water rights. We are mindful of their own economic decisions. But we are very interested in working with the municipalities across the Colorado Basin to promote and encourage water recycling. And Nevada has been leading the way. You are absolutely right.

Ms. LEE. Thank you. Well, thank you, and thank you for your leadership. And I am finished. I yield.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. And I thank you, Ms. Lee. At this time, I would like to recognize my friend again, Mr. Newhouse, Washington State, from the great state of Washington, for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just let me say, not only has this committee benefited from strong leadership over the years, but certainly the subject matter we deal with impacts every single community and energy and water as our key building blocks to our economic and health success in this country.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, sir.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. So thank you. General Graham, in my state of Washington, the Corps are certainly responsible for the majority of the Federal hydropower facilities, which, as you know, provide clean, renewable power to at least half, I think, well over half of the constituents that I represent. It is my understanding that there has been cuts to the facility maintenance as well as the fish production staff at the four Federal hydropower dams on the Lower Snake. This is particularly concerning because these dams, as you know, produce an average of approximately a gigawatt of power, up to, in emergency situations, 3 gigawatts of power. So I am concerned that such cuts could jeopardize the administration's goal of achieving energy dominance for millions of people in the Pacific Northwest. Could you tell me has the Corps designated any of these staff as essential staff, and either why or why not? And does the Corps have the staffing necessary to truly reliably operate the system for power, but also other Federally authorized purposes?

General GRAHAM. Representative Newhouse, thank you for that question and the importance of those facilities. We absolutely share your recognition of we also share your recognition that for those facilities to operate reliably for your constituents, that they have got to be staffed by well-trained members. And so as we go through workforce optimization right now, critical work such as our power plant operators, critical work such as our maintenance divers, critical work such as any of our crane operators, we are putting that

at the top of the of our list of we have to manage those folks very carefully to make sure that we have the right talent on board to continue to operate these facilities safely.

So to recap all that, we are going through the process right now of looking to see what individuals with what skills are leaving the organization and what we have, and we are in the process of making sure that whatever it takes to move the right people where they have to be to continue to operate these facilities effectively for your constituents will do.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I appreciate that of all the resources we have and enjoy and manage, certainly the human resources one that we have to get right. So thanks for your efforts there.

Both you, General Graham, and Ms. Colosimo, permitting, it is often one of the biggest challenges that we have when it comes to completing projects, and adequate staffing is vital to completing that work as well, especially when there are interagency consultations involved. The fiscal year 2025 Corps work plan again included \$221 million for the Corps' regulatory program. However, I would say other agencies are not as fortunate. There have been staffing cuts at NOAA Fisheries, in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that may have—may impact this process. And the skinny budget proposes significant decreases to these agencies. So, to either your knowledge, have reductions in staffing, staffing, excuse me, had an impact on the permitting processes, and what is the Corps plan for getting consultations completed in a timely manner for these civil works projects, which are so important for these projects sought by a regulated public.

Ms. COLOSIMO. So, sir, thanks for that question. It is a really important subject, as you say. And I think the big thing overarchingly here is for the interagency process to work, right, and we have to get those connections happening, particularly as we are losing staff across agencies because the already existing relationships are weakened the minute you lose one person.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Yeah.

Ms. COLOSIMO. So I think there are things we need to do in D.C. to make sure we are setting up the agencies collectively for success, both on civil works projects, but also to the permitted public through normal permitting processes. I think the other part is that rules are happening and getting updated at the same time. So we have to be current with what the best tools are to make sure we are able to not continue to make a stoppage. If that makes sense. I mean, there is risk when you are doing new rules. At the same time, you are losing staff. There is also opportunity. And so, I think there is a lot of collaboration across the aisle to try and make sure we are doing the right things here. So we need our leader to arrive, to do that with his counterparts, but we are beginning that already.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. General Graham, any comment?

General GRAHAM. So, Representative, the health of our regulators right now, it is—when I—as we are going through the process of looking to optimize the Federal labor force, right now, we are pretty healthy on our regulators. So it is not a great concern for me right now, which is a good thing.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Okay, I appreciate that. I see my time has expired. Mr. Chairman, I apologize. But thank you all for being, again, here with us today.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Newhouse, I thank you again, sir, for your questions.

It has come to my attention that few of the members would like to ask some very brief questions in the third round. Being mindful that it is 11:50, I am going to personally pass on my third round and recognize the ranking member, Ms. Kaptur, for her question, and anybody else who would like to engage in the third round.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you. It is very generous of you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank you, General Graham, for including priority for the Soo Locks and the continuing efforts on that project. And appreciate the fiscal year 2025 work plan included \$264 million. However, that was \$63 million below the House bill and 186 million below the Senate bill. I just want to reemphasize that funding for the Soo Loc is critical because there are many time-sensitive contracts over the next 2 years. And may I ask of both yourself and Ms. Colosimo, what is the Corps' plan to ensure the project receives adequate funding so that the contracts can proceed as closely as planned and not result in further cost increases?

Ms. COLOSIMO. It is a priority, ma'am. And I think we recognize the value of this project and continuing to make sure that happens. So we are going to continue to advocate the merits of completing the work on time and within budget and getting the resources to make those increments happen. It is at a vital stage.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. So, ma'am, to the—to building upon that, the four remaining contract options that would expire at the end of this fiscal year, we believe, with the money that we got in the work plan, that we can award all three of those. And so that is great news.

Ms. KAPTUR. All right. Thank you for trying on the contracting. Is it still open for contractors to—

Mr. NEWHOUSE. So in this case, these options were part of a—there is a base plus option for the people, the contractor that is doing the current work. And so these options are already priced out. And so as long as we provide the funds, which we, with the work plan funding we will be able to do, there should be no issues executing those options four, five, and six.

Ms. KAPTUR. My last two questions are of Mr.—let's see here. In terms of the Bureau of Reclamation over the last several years, what percentage of agriculture has been cut off in the West that simply doesn't get water anymore, or does it continue as it has in the past? I don't have a sense of what is happening on the ground. And then I wanted to also ask the General, again, are you full up on your recruitment, or do you have enlistment shortages? And if so, can you provide us with a list of what are the skills that you need that you don't have?

Mr. CAMERON. So, Ms. Kaptur, the answer to your first question is that it varies a lot from year to year and region, in the West, region to region, depending upon the hydrology. I can tell you that for the first time in a very long time, the Klamath Basin in California and Oregon has got plenty of water. Now that probably

won't be the case 2 years from now, but you know, for this year, we are lucky. And also this year, Reclamation was able to provide more water to Central Valley, California farmers than in the last several years. But we really are at the mercy of the weather and the snow and the rain, plus, of course, the regulatory constraints I know you are aware of.

But while I am answering your question, I do want to point out that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey are both heavily involved in Asian carp. So I hope that if you have friends on the Interior Subcommittee that they are tracking that as well.

Ms. KAPTUR. You know, sir, thank you, Mr. Cameron, for that. The problem is we have all these geniuses, but the discomfort we feel is because it doesn't seem like there is a general consensus. There is a lot of people out there, but we don't really have a coordinated effort, in my opinion. And believe me, we study this a lot. But we don't, on the science front, I don't see the surge. I just don't see it. And so we are fishing out. This is really like, you know, what, 1850 rather than 2050, you know, in the way we are looking at this. And so I just wanted to mention that.

And General, what about the needs in the Corps? What should we be telling audiences? What should we be saying you need?

Mr. NEWHOUSE. So two points. I wear a couple of hats for the Army. One of those is I oversee the tactical engineer branch that does the war fighting piece and the Army's meeting its enlistment goals. A great deal of effort that entails to make sure that we get citizens coming in to continue to join our ranks. And I am absolutely delighted to report that that right now it is going well.

On the Corps of Engineers side, we are primarily a civilian organization with military leadership. Our biggest challenge with our civilian workforce, and it has been that way since I have been here, is the schools producing STEM graduates. And I am sure that that is the same for any of those. And so when I was a district commander, we worked really close, as all of our 44 districts do with the local universities, because that is where it happens, to try to encourage young minds at the high school level to get out and explore careers in the science, technology, and engineering realm. That is where it has got to start. We can't look any different than what the schoolhouses are, and you got to get them in high school.

Ms. KAPTUR. How do we work with the Corps in order to—we have a Corps, small, teeny office in our area. How do we sponsor a symposium for young people? How do we do that? Think about it. Let us know.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Okay.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you. And I yield back.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you. Ms. Kaptur. Ms. Maloy, you are recognized for a third round.

Ms. MALOY. I will keep it brief. I know you guys have been here for a long time. Mr. Cameron, we are going to submit some questions for the record to you on the Central Utah project and the changes in funding there. I would rather have you have some time to do some research and get back to us with thorough answers than put you on the spot here. So just be prepared that that is coming. And like my colleague Ms. Lee, I also represent one of the Colorado

River Basin states. So thank you for the assurance that the state negotiations are moving forward. And with that, I will yield. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Thank you, Ms. Maloy. A few comments. Again, I would like to thank all of our witnesses for being here today. And as the ranking member did allude to in her comments, you saw tremendous turnout on both sides of the dais. That is not only out of respect, it is out of admiration for each and every one of you all. You were here before us in February. That was a very furtive hearing, as was today. So we accomplished an awful lot. So I do sincerely thank you in that regard.

For the record, if you could please ensure that the hearing record, questions for the record, and any supporting information requested by the subcommittee are delivered in final form to us no later than 4 weeks from the time that you receive them. Members who have additional questions for the record will have until the close of business on Tuesday to provide them to the subcommittee office. With that, I say thank you, and the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:17 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES
U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Requests for the Army Corps of Engineers
(Civil Works) and the Bureau of Reclamation
Wednesday, May 21, 2025**

Congresswoman Maloy

1. Central Utah Project Completion Act program

To: Scott Cameron - Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

The Central Utah Project Completion Act program was groundbreaking. It took a project burdened with 57% overhead under the Bureau of Reclamation's management and gave the project to the state water conservation district to run and manage. The Central Utah Project has won awards for its efficiency throughout its ongoing construction as the overhead for the project has been 3%. We hope this administration will recognize that CUPCA must remain its own, separate program under the direct jurisdiction of the Department's Assistant Secretary of Water and Science.

Question: Recognizing the need to continue the efficiencies of federal dollars for the taxpayer, will you continue providing federal funds to this project to bring it to completion? We support full funding for project construction, which will allow for the initiation of full repayment of this federal investment once it is completed. In the context of your review of many programs, this program should be highlighted as a model of taxpayer efficiency.

Response: The Department of the Interior recognizes the effectiveness of the Federal and local partnership established under the Central Utah Project Completion Act (CUPCA). The program has demonstrated accountability and efficiency in the use of Federal funds. Interior remains committed to ensuring Federal appropriations deliver measurable results.

The President's Budget for FY 2026 includes funding to continue construction of the Utah Lake Drainage Basin Water Delivery System (ULS), implement water conservation

initiatives, and support fish and wildlife projects, along with other CUPCA Program priorities.

The CUPCA program advances the priorities of the Administration through completion of authorized infrastructure, energy, environmental, and natural resource projects, as outlined in Secretary's Order 3417, while moving the program toward full repayment.

2. Great Salt Lake Stewardship Act

To: Scott Cameron - Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

I sponsored the Great Salt Lake Stewardship Act, one of the 22 bills signed into law last year. The Central Utah Water Conservancy District is preparing plans for water conservation so Interior can implement the new authority to facilitate water conservation for the Great Salt Lake basin well into the future.

Question: Would you be able to commit to working closely with the District to prepare its planned water conservation measures as authorized under this authority and program?

Response: The Great Salt Lake Stewardship Act amended the Central Utah Project Completion Act (CUPCA) to provide important new tools for water conservation in the Great Salt Lake basin. This amendment authorizes the Secretary to use unexpended budget authority for additional water conservation measures within the basin.

Interior is working closely with the Central Utah Water Conservancy District as they develop conservation measures that may utilize this new authority, and we are committed to continuing that collaboration as plans advance.

3. Smallmouth bass in the Colorado River.

Mr. Cameron, in responding to my question at the hearing this week, you commented about the need to address invasive smallmouth bass in the Colorado River. Should the ultimate objective of this Record of Decision be to protect the threatened Humpback Chub? It is my understanding that the HBC population located near river mile 61 below GCD is 10-fold (approximately 100,000) from what it was in 2021 when this species was downlisted.

Further, that USGS modeling data indicates that SMB have not been found below river mile 15, and the population is most likely to continue contracting (reducing) even under a No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative is zero cost to downstream resources including hydropower, recreation, sediment. The Non-Bypass Alternative would provide a low-risk experimental test to see if similar SMB results seen last year can be realized under similar reservoir elevations and release temperatures as 2024.

These Alternatives comply with Exec. Order No. 14154, 2025; Exec. Order No. 14156, 2025; DOI SO 3417; DOI SO 3418; DOE SO: "Unleashing the Golden Era of American Energy Dominance" by not bypassing at Glen Canyon Dam for voluntary experimental purposes.

Question: Why is the bypassing of hydropower to place cold water in the river required under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA?; 2) how would such releases be consistent with Executive Orders listed above and with the actions of this Administration in other river systems in the West, for example Executive Order “Putting People Over Fish; Stopping Radical Environmentalism to Provide Water to Southern California”?

Response: Reclamation is committed to carrying out its mission, statutory responsibilities and the President’s Executive Orders effectively and efficiently.

The humpback chub is a federally protected threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The most significant and persistent threat to the species remains warmwater nonnative fish, particularly smallmouth bass (SMB). Since the completion of the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) in 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), through Section 7(a)(2) consultation under the ESA, has issued biological opinions requiring the Reclamation to evaluate temperature control strategies to prevent and manage the spread of warmwater invasive species.

In 2024, Reclamation cooled the river as far downstream as mile 60 which impacted hydropower production. To help mitigate these impacts and building on lessons learned from 2024 operations, in FY 2025 Reclamation cooled the river to mile 30 to help continue to reduce the smallmouth bass population while bypassing less than a quarter of the water bypassed last year, reducing estimated energy losses by 60-70%. This action was informed by a collaborative effort comprising the seven basin states, Upper Colorado River Commission, Arizona Game and Fish, four DOI agencies, and Western Area Power Administration which evaluated data including environmental DNA detections of SMB as far downstream as mile 37, hydropower costs, and SMB population modeling. This approach implemented the Executive Orders noted above and maintained emergency and public energy availability while meeting legal obligations under the Law of the River, Grand Canyon Protection Act, and Endangered Species Act.

Congressman Levin

1. Desalination Grants

To: Mr. Scott Cameron, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Exercising Delegated Authority of the Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior

Largely through WIIN Act (Title XVI) Desalination Grants through the Bureau of Reclamation, the Doheny Desalination Plant near Doheny State Beach in Dana Point, CA has been awarded nearly \$30 million in federal desalination grants, including under the first Trump Administration. This project is scheduled to deliver five million gallons per day (MGD) of local water. The project could be scaled up to deliver 15 MGD in future phases. Currently, South Coast Water District (SCWD) is dependent on imported water from the California State Water Project and the Colorado River system for 85%-100% of its water needs. South Orange County has essentially

no ground water supply and water storage is a major challenge. By constructing this desalination project at Doheny, this will provide this area a local, drought-proof supply of clean, safe drinking water.

Historically, the Bureau of Reclamation has set a per-project cap of \$30 million in federal funds for any desalination project. In the FY24 Appropriations Bill, Congress directed the Bureau of Reclamation to not impose any per-project administrative cap on federal funding, but to rather allow for the full statutory max of 25% federal share for desalination projects.

Question: Is the Bureau of Reclamation planning to allow eligible desalination projects to be award up to the full 25% federal cost share for desalination projects, in accordance with direction from Congress?

Response: Reclamation will consider this report language in its evaluation of eligible desalination projects.

I have heard that over the last year, the Bureau of Reclamation may have been contemplating adding new, duplicative, and very onerous feasibility requirements on future desalination grant requests—even for projects that have already provided feasibility data to the Bureau. I strongly oppose the agency adding duplicative and burdensome requirements on desalination grant applications.

Question: Can you please share your understanding of when the Bureau of Reclamation will release the FY25 Notice of Funding Opportunity for Desalination Grants and if the agency is planning to impose new feasibility requirements for applicants who have already provided this information to the Bureau?

Response: The next Desalination Construction funding opportunity is currently under development and expected in Spring 2026. Reclamation is evaluating whether additional feasibility study requirements may apply to desalination projects for large value projects.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT
AND RELATED AGENCIES
U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Requests for the Army Corps of Engineers
(Civil Works) and the Bureau of Reclamation**
Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Congressman Calvert

1. Army Corps Issue

To: General Graham

On April 7, my colleagues submitted a letter to your office regarding the need for additional Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) funding for the Tule River / Lake Success Enlargement Project (the “Project”) located in California’s San Joaquin Valley. As you are aware, Lake Success plays a critical role in the region’s flood control and water supply infrastructure and is a key component of the State’s water resilience strategy.

Following that letter, the Corps allocated an additional \$10 million in BBA funds to cover federal costs incurred to date. While this was a positive step forward, an additional \$15 million is still urgently needed to reimburse the non-federal sponsor for eligible costs already incurred and to support the completion of work required under the 2003 Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA). These additional costs result from budget overruns attributable to the Corps, and it is inappropriate to require the non-federal sponsor to cash flow federal obligations while awaiting reimbursement.

Question: Please provide a detailed update on the Corps’ plan and timeline for allocating the remaining BBA funds necessary to fulfill its commitments under the PCA. We remain concerned that the lack of prioritization of this issue has placed an undue financial burden on the non-federal sponsor, which has been forced to take on debt to maintain progress on the Project in good faith.

Response: The Department of the Army, Central Valley Flood Protection Board, and Lower Tule River Irrigation District entered into Amendment Number 1 to the Project Cooperation

Agreement for the Success Dam, Tule River, California project on April 18, 2019. The Amendment authorizes the Corps of Engineers (Corps) to complete construction of the project at full Federal expense to the extent that appropriations provided under the Construction heading of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA 2018) are available and used for such purpose. The Amendment also enables the Corps to reimburse the Non-Federal Sponsors (NFS), subject to the availability of BBA 2018 funds, for cost they incur in acquiring lands, easements, and rights-of-way from private owners after the effective date of the Amendment. The Corps redistributed \$10M of BBA 2018 funds to the Tule River project for the express purpose of completing physical construction activities, mitigation requirements, water control manual updates, and other closeout requirements related to physical construction. The Corps is aware of the \$14.6M of reimbursements that could be made to the NFS. Due to cost escalation within the BBA 2018 Construction portfolio, the immediate focus is on completion of physical construction. The Corps will continue to look for potential opportunities to fund the reimbursement with BBA 2018 appropriations. Additionally, Section 111 of the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 allows BBA 2018 Construction projects to receive funds from future appropriations and for those funds to be subject to the same terms and conditions as the BBA 2018. Therefore, it is possible for the \$14.6M to be provided, in whole or in part, from future appropriations.

The Corps will execute the remaining BBA funding on remaining contracts – property clearing and environmental mitigation – and project fiscal closeout activities. All BBA funding will be fully executed by the fourth quarter of FY28.

The Corps is actively engaged in the review of all Lands, Easements, Right of Ways, Relocations, and Disposals (LERRDs) packages received from the non-federal sponsors to date. The reviews are anticipated to be complete by October 15, 2025. Final approval will occur approximately two weeks after the receipt of funding for reimbursement. Subsequent issuance of a reimbursement to the NFS generally occurs about 30 days from transmittal of the approved packages.

Congressman Levin

1. California Construction Funds in the FY25 Work Plan

To: Ms. Robyn Colosimo, P.E., Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)

During the hearing, you confirmed that the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) should operate in a nonpartisan manner. However, in the FY25 Work Plan, the construction budget for California was zeroed out. Critical construction projects that prioritize life, safety, reducing flood risk, and American prosperity in California that were included in the FY25 budget request, and both the House and Senate FY25 funding bills on a bipartisan basis were not included in the FY25 Work Plan. Landmark droughts and storms, including atmospheric rivers, are threatening California's

economic, environmental, and overall safety. I am extremely concerned that the Corps is eliminated funding for these critical infrastructure projects.

The four projects specifically cut from the FY25 Work Plan are:

- \$34.4 million dollars for the American River Common Features project.
- \$38.5 million dollars for the Pajaro River project.
- \$10 million dollars for the San Joaquin River Basin project.
- \$43.5 million dollars for West Sacramento project.

During the hearing, you explained that the decision to cut these projects was up to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Question: Who at OMB was responsible for zeroing out the construction funds for critical projects in California?

Response: There was not a specific individual in the Administration who was responsible for assisting in the finalization of the Fiscal Year 2025 work plan. As with all work plans and budgets, it is an iterative process. Ultimately, work plans and budgets reflect Administration priorities.

Question: Given that these projects have previously met the Corps' threshold for federal investment, I am concerned that inconsistent or politically influenced methodologies may have been used to justify defunding projects that are vital for public safety and economic resilience. Has the Corps reevaluated the criteria for the California construction projects excluded from the FY25 Work Plan? If so, were these same criteria applied uniformly across all project evaluations, including those in other states?

Response: The amount Congress enacted in the Construction account for the full year Fiscal Year 2025 Continuing Resolution was less than what was contained in the Fiscal Year 2025 version of the Senate and House Appropriations bills. As a result, the Construction account was constrained.

Question: Has the Corps conducted any analysis of the public safety risks and long-term costs associated with delaying funding for projects that did not receive funding in the FY25 work plan but were included in the FY25 budget proposal? For example, how will the deferral of funding affect the timeline for completion, and what risks will communities face in the interim? Flood protection infrastructure is only effective once completed—can the Corps provide assurance to affected communities that they are not being left vulnerable due to short-term budget decisions?

Response: The Corps has not conducted an evaluation of the public safety risk and long-term costs associated with delaying funding for projects that did not receive funding in the FY25 work plan but were included in the FY25 budget proposal. The Corps will continue to use the \$332 million in anticipated carry over funding into FY26, to advance flood risk management to these communities. Future funding is subject to congressional action.

Question: The Corps has cited constraints from the continuing resolution as the reason for zeroing out construction funding. Given that explanation, will the Corps commit to submitting updated capability estimates that would allow the Committee to fund these projects in future appropriations cycles?

Response: Yes. The Corps will submit capability estimates consistent with work we can accomplish within a given Fiscal Year with the available resources (both in-house and contracted).

Question: Can you please explain the criteria and decision-making process for eliminating funding for the Lower San Joaquin River Project Phase I in the FY25 Corps Work Plan?

Response: The Administration prioritized the funding allocated by Congress as judiciously as possible with an emphasis on those projects that contributed to life-safety, protected the American citizens from flooding risks and supported the Nation's economic prosperity. An attempt was made to balance those priorities.

Question: Given the decision to eliminate funding for the Lower San Joaquin River Project Phase I in the FY25 Corps Work Plan, can you please provide information on how this decision will impact the project's construction time line and ability to protect families in San Joaquin County?

Response: The construction timeline was minimally impacted as project construction, using available funding, will continue through the first quarter of FY28. The optimal construction stream includes FY26 and FY27 funding to initiate design and construction of the next features.

Question: Can you please explain the criteria and decision-making process for not including funding for the Lower San Joaquin River Feasibility Study (Lathrop-Manteca) in the FY25 Corps Work Plan?

Response: The Lower San Joaquin (Lathrop & Manteca), CA was not selected for funding because it was not as competitive as other studies that were selected.

Question: Given the decision to not include funding for the Lower San Joaquin River Feasibility Study (Lathrop-Manteca) in the FY25 USACE Work Plan, can you please provide information on how this decision will impact the study's timeline and ability to protect families in San Joaquin County?

Response: There are no impacts until carry-over funding is exhausted, which is currently projected to occur in the second quarter of FY26. A delay in receipt of additional funds after this time will delay study completion through the Chief's Report milestone, with follow-on impacts to the timeline for construction authorization.

On the Corps' website for the American River Common Features, Natomas Basin website, the Sacramento region is described as facing significant flood risk from the American River. The left bank of the levee system is being modernized and reinforced to combat erosion with an

immediate threat potential of high flows. If the levees maintain their current compromised status, more than half of a million people and \$62 billion in damageable property in the greater Sacramento region will be at great flood risk. With this understanding, the Corps has designated the American River Common Features, Natomas Basin in alignment with their core water missions since Corps construction began in 2019.

Question: What are the economic, environmental, and safety concerns to the greater Sacramento region with the federal funding for this project eliminated?

Response: Although a significant portion of the project will be completed by the third quarter of FY27, there are additional elements that need to be funded to achieve project completion. If the federal share of funding is not provided, the perimeter levee system improvements and environmental mitigation will not be completed, mainly Reaches F and G, the West Drainage Canal, and woodland mitigation. Completion of the ring levee is critical to achieving the authorized project performance and ensuring residual risk reduction.

Question: What is the impact on the State and Municipal agencies who were partnered with the Corps on the American River Common Features, Natomas Basin project?

Response: California state law (Senate Bill 5 (2007)) requires state and municipal agencies to achieve 200-year level of flood protection for urban areas of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley watershed, which includes Natomas, by 2025. A significant portion of the flood risk reduction features will be completed and in-place by the 2025 deadline. However, if progress slows or stops due to lack of federal funding, the project schedule will be extended, which will affect the states and local entities' ability to meet this state law requirement on flood risk reduction, and the non-federal partners may need to find alternate sources of funding to complete the projects.

Question: Please explain for each of the four California construction projects cut from the FY25 Work Plan how the Corps is fulfilling its responsibilities to the American people if it cuts the funding for each of these critical California infrastructure construction projects?

Response: These four projects have a total of \$332 million in anticipated carry over funding for FY26. In FY26, the Corps plans to focus on delivering the prior funded work for these ongoing projects. The construction timeline was minimally impacted as construction of projects, using available funding, will continue through FY26.

For Lower San Joaquin, with existing funding, the Corps expects to complete construction of the first reach, complete the design of the second reach, and make progress on designs of multiple other reaches. As mentioned above, the construction timeline was minimally impacted as project design and construction, using available funding, will continue through the first quarter of FY28.

For Natomas, with existing funding, the Corps anticipates awarding construction contracts for Reach I Contract 2, Pumping Plant 5, and continuing construction on Reach A, Reach E, Pumping Plant 4, and Highway 99 through FY26. As mentioned above, a significant portion of the flood risk reduction features will be completed and in place by the 2025 deadline.

For West Sacramento, with existing funding, the Corps can complete Yolo Bypass East Levee construction, and progress Sacramento River North Levee increments 1 and 2 design and Stone Lock design.

For Pajaro, with existing funding, the Corps has awarded Reach 6, the first federal construction contract. In addition, funding is sufficient to award design contracts for the remaining five reaches in order to produce 100% designs for all remaining reaches.

2. Coastal Ocean Data System

To: Ms. Robyn Colosimo, P.E., Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)

For over a decade, the US Army Corps of Engineers' Coastal Ocean Data System (CODS) has enabled safe and efficient coastal infrastructure planning, maritime commerce, military operations, and emergency response efforts. Through a network of 90 wave buoys across 30 states, island territories, and freely associated states, CODS base funding provides real-time conditions data to inform Corps operations, understand and mitigate for coastal erosion, and improved capacity for real-time hazard warnings and emergency management.

This program has had strong, bipartisan support in Congress for years, and the CODS program supports national infrastructure development, which is a key priority under the Trump Administration's focus on strengthening America's critical infrastructure.

However, the FY25 work plan decimates the essential base funding responsible for providing the real-time data necessary to inform Corps programs. This will have immediate negative consequences in my district and across the U.S. as it will impede the Corps' mission to enhance shoreline protection, regional sediment management, and storm readiness.

Question: Given the FY25 Work Plan cut to essential wave and beach observations, what is your plan to maintain observations critical to data for Corps districts and projects across the country

Response: The FY25 work plan and FY26 budget request prioritize funding for ocean observations supporting the Corps' Navigation and Flood Risk Management missions, aligning with the Administration's assessment of national priorities. The Corps will work with partners to optimize the observation network and refine data needs.

WITNESSES

	Page
Cameron, Scott	18
Prepared statement	20
Colosimo, Robyn	4
Prepared statement	6
Graham, Lieutenant General William H. "Butch" Jr.	12
Prepared statement	14

