



Water Resources Development Act Resource Guide

2024 WRDA Instructions And Information

As the House prepares to develop a Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) in 2024, Rep. Carbajal welcomes requests for local U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) projects. WRDA authorizes studies and projects within the Corps' Civil Works mission area, including navigation; flood, hurricane, and storm damage reduction; shoreline protection; and ecosystem restoration. Additionally, WRDA authorizes Environmental Infrastructure (EI) assistance to support local governments in the design or construction of specific water and wastewater infrastructure.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee has indicated they will accept the following requests as they develops the 2024 WRDA bill:

- Requests to authorize or modify a Corps project or study;
- Requests to deauthorize an existing Corps project; and
- Requests to transfer, exchange, or convey lands or real property owned by the Corps, or to modify an existing easement held by the Corps over property.
- Authorization of specific Environmental Infrastructure assistance;

To submit a request for Rep. Carbajal's consideration for please fill out and email the corresponding form to [Johanna Montiel \(Johanna.Montiel@mail.house.gov\)](mailto:Johanna.Montiel@mail.house.gov). If you are looking to modify existing authorized projects or studies, please email Johanna Montiel directly for more information. **You may submit multiple requests.** If you do so, please rank your requests in order of priority. **Please submit all requests by 5pm PT, Friday, January 5, 2024.** Submitting a request does not guarantee that the Committee will include the request in the 2024 WRDA.

Additional information regarding WRDA is below, including further information on local cost share and EI assistance.

Background on the *Water Resources Development Act*:

The *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)* authorizes studies and projects within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Civil Works mission areas, including navigation, flood damage reduction, hurricane and storm damage reduction, shoreline protection, and ecosystem restoration. Regular consideration of locally driven, rigorously studied, and nationally significant Corps infrastructure is key to preserving our nation's economy, to protecting our communities and businesses, and to maintaining our quality of life.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has successfully enacted a bipartisan *WRDA* in each of the last five Congresses and is in the process of developing a new *WRDA* for 2024.

The Committee has indicated they will not consider requests for programs or activities outside of the Corps' jurisdiction for inclusion in *WRDA* for 2024.

General information regarding past *WRDA* legislation, Corps' reports, and other related information can be found on the Committee website (<https://transportation.house.gov/wrda-2024/>).

Overview:

Traditionally, *WRDAs* include provisions related to both **projects** (including studies) carried out by the Corps, as well as the underlying **policy** that guides how the Corps implements its civil works authority. Members can submit requests under both provision categories—project-specific requests (including requests for new or modified Corps’ studies) or general policy—using the electronic database. The enclosed instructions describe the process for submission of Member requests under both provisions.

Project-Specific Requests (including studies):

The Corps constructs projects for the purposes of navigation, flood control, hurricane and storm damage reduction and shoreline protection, hydroelectric power, recreation, water supply, environmental protection, restoration and enhancement, and fish and wildlife mitigation.

Typically, a Corps project begins with a Congressional request, enacted through a *WRDA*, for the Corps of Engineers to partner with a non-federal interest in conducting a feasibility study for one (or more) of the authorized purposes listed above. Member requests for new feasibility studies (or modification of existing feasibility studies) would be appropriate for consideration in a new *WRDA*.

A completed feasibility study is then submitted to Congress in the form of a Report of the Chief of Engineers (Chief’s Report)¹ that would also need to be enacted to proceed to construction. Member requests to authorize a Chief’s Report submitted to Congress would be appropriate for consideration in a new *WRDA*.

Other types of project-specific requests appropriate for consideration in a new *WRDA* would include:

- Requests to authorize or modify a Corps project or study;
- Requests to deauthorize an existing Corps project; and
- Requests to transfer, exchange, or convey lands or real property owned by the Corps, or to modify an existing easement held by the Corps over property.

In the *Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA)* of 2014, Congress directed the Corps to annually solicit and compile project-specific requests from non-federal interests for potential congressional authorization through future *WRDA* bills. These "Annual Reports to Congress on Future Water Resources Development" reports (more commonly referred to as Section 7001 reports) identify completed Chief’s Reports, proposed feasibility studies, and proposed modifications to authorized water resources development projects or feasibility studies, submitted by non-federal interests that are related to the missions and authorities of the Corps.

These Section 7001 Reports, which are required by law to be submitted to Congress by February 1 of each year, provide a valuable framework in the formulation of *WRDAs*.

¹ A list of pending Chief’s Reports is maintained on the Committee’s website.

The information contained in these reports serves as a baseline for locally- supported studies, projects, and project modifications from which the Committee can assess for potential inclusion in future *WRDAs*, including *WRDA* for 2024.

A list of Section 7001 Reports that have been submitted to Congress can be accessed through the Committee website (<https://transportation.house.gov/wrda-2024/>).

Policy Requests:

WRDAs also provide the Corps with statutory authority on how the agency carries out its general missions and authorities. Proposals to amend this authority, or to create new authority, would be considered policy requests, and can be submitted for consideration in a new *WRDA* bill. Generally speaking, if a Member request does not directly relate to a specific Corps study or project, it is likely that such a request should be submitted as a policy request.

Examples of policy-related provisions include:

- Changes in how the Corps utilizes its federal resources under the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) or Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF);
- Provisions related to how the Corps considers and evaluates future water resources development projects, including potential modifications to the Corps' benefit-cost ratios (BCR) or affordability guidelines;
- Provisions on how the Corps acts and reacts to emergencies, such as flooding, drought, and coastal storms, under its P.L. 84-99 authorities;
- Provisions related to how the Corps identifies and evaluates potential project alternatives in the formulation of projects (e.g., consideration of natural or nature-based features); and
- Provisions related to the role of non-federal interests in the development and funding of Corps' studies and projects.

Environmental Infrastructure Requests:

Since *WRDA* 1992, Congress has authorized the Corps to carry out environmental infrastructure projects to address local water supply, wastewater, and stormwater projects in partnership with non-federal interests.

In *WRDA* 2016, Congress specifically amended the requirements for the formulation of Section 7001 Reports to allow for the inclusion of environmental infrastructure project requests in future 7001 Reports.