

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

MEDIA ROUNDTABLE

The Army Communication and Outreach Office will hold an embargoed in-person and telephonic media roundtable Friday, Feb. 20, 2026, at 12:45 p.m. ET to discuss the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works’ “Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork” initiative for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Adam Telle will discuss how these changes will maximize USACE’s ability to deliver national infrastructure, cut red tape with a focus on efficiency, increase transparency and accountability, and strategically prioritize resources on core missions that serve the national interest.

BACKGROUND

On February 23rd, 2026, the Office of Army Civil Works, led by Mr. Adam Telle, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, will launch our “Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork” change initiative to modernize the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) Civil Works program and maximize our ability to deliver national infrastructure. This transformation plan will provide a greater focus on our core missions that serve the national interest, strategically prioritizing all resources and directing funding to priority water resources projects while minimizing non-core programs. By cutting through bureaucratic red tape, accelerating project delivery, and reducing or eliminating burdensome extraneous regulations and paperwork, we will reduce permitting timelines, attack waste, and instill fiscal discipline. This will empower USACE district commanders to take informed risks in advancing critical water resources projects to completion faster and at less cost. Finally, “Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork” will bring greater transparency and accountability for the program to the American public, our project partners and sponsors, industry, and the elected leaders who make the annual funding decisions for the Civil Works program.

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

Below are five main areas of effort, and 1 featured initiative from each area of effort.

1) MAXIMIZING THE ABILITY TO DELIVER NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

---Accelerate project delivery with smarter contracting, higher design standards, and a reformed partnership pipeline to build the infrastructure America needs, faster.

BLUF: We are rebuilding our capability to deliver major projects by overhauling the entire delivery pipeline, from initial design and contracting, through final execution.

CORE MESSAGE: We will accelerate project delivery with smarter contracting, higher design standards, and a reformed partnership pipeline to build the infrastructure America needs, faster.

FEATURED INITIATIVE – Increasing Dredging Capacity: Smarter Contracting

Problem:

- Increasing dredging costs and demands
- Dredging contract framework is hyper-local, rather than taking nationwide factors into account.
- Frequent non-awardable contract offers (25%+ over government estimate)
- Hopper dredge contracts are often not aligned with market realities

Solution:

- Elevate dredge contracting to HQ for national visibility of dredging market factors.
- Evaluate use of contracting tools and innovations, including regional contracts and new contract structures, to improve resource utilization.
- Improve liquidated damage calculations to minimize cost overruns.
- Drive down costs by leveraging USACE centers of expertise to improve government estimates and develop standardized and specifications.
- Better coordinate contract actions within the enterprise.

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

Benefits:

- Streamlined procedures for hopper dredge utilization, contract estimating and awards.
- Effective delivery of dredging work for new and existing projects
- Reduced dredging costs

2) CUTTING RED TAPE

---Overhaul the entire regulatory and permitting process to eliminate bureaucratic delays and provide fast, clear decisions needed to permit activities and get projects built.

BLUF: We are overhauling the entire regulatory and permitting process to eliminate bureaucratic delays and provide fast, clear, and consistent decisions needed to get projects built.

CORE MESSAGE: We are overhauling our regulatory process to be clear, consistent, and efficient. We will slash bureaucratic delays to provide faster decisions to accelerate the delivery of our vital infrastructure projects.

FEATURED INITIATIVE – Leveraging Technology in Permitting

Problem:

- Uncertainty in Clean Water Act’s geographic scope of jurisdiction (“waters of the United States” or WOTUS)
- Inconsistent and subjective jurisdictional decisions
- Significant volume of permitting actions and the need to reach decisions faster and more efficiently

Solution:

- Develop geospatial tools to reduce subjectivity in identifying and eliminating areas from Clean Water Act jurisdiction
- Continued investment into the Regulatory Request System to make applying for and getting a permit easier and faster

POC – James Lalino (Army Civil Works comms) – James.A.Lalino.civ@army.mil – Cell 703-839-3144

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

Benefits:

- Objective and more transparent jurisdictional determinations and permit decisions
- Tightly aligned with Administration priorities in streamlined permitting and leveraging technology
- Improved ability to measure outcomes of POTUS agenda

3) FOCUS ON EFFICIENCY

---Make the organization leaner and more effective by optimizing our assets, overhauling internal business practices, and enforcing message discipline.

BLUF: We are making the organization leaner and more effective by optimizing our assets, overhauling internal business practices, and enforcing message discipline.

CORE MESSAGE: We will streamline the organization by modernizing our operations, optimizing our assets, and ensuring all communications align with our core mission.

FEATURED INITIATIVE – Consistency in Communications on the President’s Budget

Problem:

- Communications advocating for programs not funded in the President’s Budget
- Damaged stakeholder relationships from inconsistent messaging on Administration priorities and resources

Solution:

- Prohibiting employees from advocating for programs not in the President’s Budget
- Requiring inquiry responses be objective, factual, and clearly state unfunded status
- Protecting budget deliberations by mandating approval for release of budget formulation materials.

Benefits:

- Ensures consistent communications and alignment on Administration priorities.
- Maintains strong relationships with non-federal sponsors, other stakeholders, and congressional representatives.

POC – James Lalino (Army Civil Works comms) – James.A.Lalino.civ@army.mil – Cell 703-839-3144

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

- Prevents misleading stakeholders about resource availability, enabling them to make informed decisions.

4) TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

---Attack waste and inefficiency through fundamental overhaul of financial and operational practices and instill a new culture of fiscal discipline and operational excellence.

BLUF: We are attacking waste and inefficiency across the board through a fundamental overhaul of our financial and operational practices. The objective is to instill a new culture of fiscal discipline and operational excellence.

CORE MESSAGE: We will execute our mission with a higher standard of financial and operational integrity, ensuring every dollar is spent with purpose to achieve clear, measurable results for the American people.

FEATURED INITIATIVE – District Salary Transparency

Problem:

- Limited visibility and a lack of understanding about how Federal funds are spent on Corps projects.
- Inclusion of salaries in project line-item costs masks how Federal funding is spent on projects.

Solution:

- The Corps will identify salary costs charged to specific projects, with district employee salaries shown separately from project line-item costs.

Benefits:

- Return focus to building infrastructure, not districts and paperwork.
- Enhances the ability to control project costs and more closely monitor personnel and overhead costs.
- Greater transparency for stakeholders on the true costs of Corps projects.

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

5) PRIORITIZATION

---Impose strategic discipline by focusing all resources on core missions that serve the national interest, while terminating legacy efforts that divert focus and waste money.

BLUF: We are imposing strategic discipline on the Army Civil Works program by focusing all resources on core missions that serve the national interest, while terminating legacy efforts that divert focus and waste money.

CORE MESSAGE: We are restoring discipline by focusing our resources on the highest-priority projects that serve the national interest. We will discontinue legacy efforts that no longer provide value and concentrate on delivering critical infrastructure.

FEATURED INITIATIVE – Prioritization of Effort

Problem:

- Prioritizing everything all at once.
- Overreliance on USACE to address capabilities beyond primary missions.
- USACE is biased towards use of in-house resources to deliver projects leading to expansive timelines and increasing costs
- Expansive policy and procedural requirements
- Bureaucratic inertia and bad habits

Solution:

- Focus on priority work in alignment with core authorities
- Assign specialized workload to districts with capability to accomplish priority work, regardless of geography
- Leverage non-Federal expertise and available authorities to deliver lower priority studies and projects
- Capitalize on contracting capabilities to manage peak workload and for non-priority efforts
- Augment USACE workforce as needed

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

Benefits:

- Focuses Federal resources on the nation’s most important and complex water resource problems
- Delivers projects faster and cheaper.
- Builds non-federal capacity and ownership.
- Breaks bureaucratic inertia and bad habits.

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

“Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork” consists of 27 change initiatives grouped under five areas of effort:

1. MAXIMIZING THE ABILITY TO DELIVER NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Increasing Dredging Capacity: Smarter Contracting
- Contracting Out New Feasibility Studies
- Non-Federal Interest (NFI) Studies and Project Delivery
- Maximizing Effectiveness of Project Labor Agreements
- Improved Design Maturity

2. CUTTING RED TAPE

- Leveraging Technology in Permitting
- Expanding General Permits
- Increasing Hydroelectric Output from USACE Facilities
- Increasing Dredging Capacity: Better Mitigation Banking for Navigation Projects
- Increasing Dredging Capacity: Expanding Environmental Windows

3. FOCUS ON EFFICIENCY

- Consistency in Communication on the President’s Budget
- Harmonize Enterprise/Refocus Districts on Core Functions
- Increasing Dredging Capacity: Better Use of Simulation When Designing Navigation Projects
- Optimizing Our Footprint: Aligning Civil Works Mission-Critical Locations
- Optimizing of Vehicle Fleet
- Smarter Real Estate Acquisition
- Delegate Recreation Resources
- Modernizing Business Practices
- Harbor Seal of Preparedness

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

4. TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- District Salary Transparency
- Consequences for Project Cost Overruns
- Deauthorization of Inactive Projects
- Consolidating U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Websites
- Cancel Contracts Not in the Interest of the American Taxpayer

5. PRIORITIZATION

- Prioritization of Effort
- Prioritization Within Projects (R.A.P.I.D. Planning)
 - R** – Risk-Informed: Make timely decisions with the minimum required information, not perfect information. Focus on identifying and managing key risks and assumptions from the start.
 - A** – Aligned: Ensure all teams, experts, and leaders are integrated and communicating from day one to address issues quickly and maintain momentum. Create a streamlined path to the decision maker to ensure decisions are made promptly and the study remains on track.
 - P** – Proportional: The level of detail in the analysis should be proportional to the scope and cost of the project.
 - I** – Iterative: Embrace planning as a flexible cycle. Recognize when new information or a realized risk requires a decision and potentially a change in direction. Expect to refine the plan as you go.
 - D** – Decisive: Commit to a path forward once a decision is reached. Avoid getting stalled by the pursuit of more data when you have enough to proceed confidently.
- Early Federal Interest Determination

These initiatives do not affect USACE’s execution of its emergency response support to natural and manmade disasters.

ARMY CIVIL WORKS – “BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, NOT PAPERWORK”

Information provided during the media roundtable is EMBARGOED until Mr. Telle announces the initiative on or around Mon. Feb. 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ET.

“Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork” –

Sec. Telle’s Approved Quotes

“The U.S. Army’s Civil Works program has been an invaluable cornerstone since our Nation’s founding. ‘Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork’ will return USACE to a focus on its core missions and ensure the enterprise continues to be the most trusted national resource delivering water resources solutions. This is only possible with President Trump’s leadership that has enabled our team to maximize our ability to deliver national infrastructure and cut red tape for the American people.”

– Adam Telle, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works

“Our ‘Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork’ initiative will ensure available resources are allocated to the most critical water resources projects that will deliver the greatest benefits to our country. Aligned with President Trump’s vision of American excellence, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will accelerate project delivery with smarter contracting, higher design standards, and a reformed partnership pipeline to build the infrastructure America needs, faster.”

– Adam Telle, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works

“President Trump has empowered his Administration to work with lightspeed efficiency to make our government deliver more for all Americans. The Army Civil Works’ ‘Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork’ initiative will enable the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to deliver critical projects and programs for the nation more efficiently, sooner, and at less cost than the current ways of doing business. This will eliminate bureaucratic delays and provide fast, clear decisions needed to save lives and empower our economy.”

– Adam Telle, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works

“With the Trump Administration hyper focused on cutting red tape and delivering transparency and accountability, the Army Civil Works’ ‘Building Infrastructure, Not Paperwork’ initiative will aggressively attack waste and inefficiency through a fundamental overhaul of our program, which will instill a new culture of discipline and operational excellence for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.”

– Adam Telle, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works

POC – James Lalino (Army Civil Works comms) – James.A.Lalino.civ@army.mil – Cell 703-839-3144