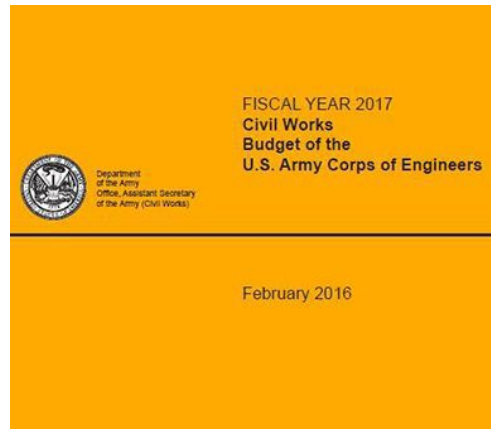


U.S. Army Corps of Engineers releases work plan for Fiscal Year 2016 Civil Works Appropriations

By Gene Pawlik and Doug Garmon, USACE Headquarters

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) recently delivered to Congress its Fiscal Year 2016 (FY 2016) work plan for the Army Civil Works program.

On December 18, 2015, President Obama signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, Public Law 114-113, of which Division D is the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (the Act) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. The Act provides \$5.989 billion in FY 2016 appropriations for the Army Civil Works program, of which \$5.465 billion is appropriated in four accounts: Investigations; Construction; Operation and Maintenance; and Mississippi River and Tributaries. The Act's accompanying Statement of Managers report designates nearly \$4.153 billion of the total for these four accounts for specified programs, projects and activities (PPA). USACE is responsible for allocating the remaining balance of nearly \$1.313 billion designated as additional funding in the four accounts to individual PPAs, consistent with the categories and criteria provided in the Statement of Managers.



“The Army Civil Works’ Fiscal Year 2016 work plan will significantly advance and complete studies and construction projects that support the Nation’s economy, environment and quality of life,” said The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

The Army Civil Works budget funds the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of water resources projects and focuses on the highest performing work within the three main Civil Works mission areas: commercial navigation, flood and storm damage reduction, and aquatic ecosystem restoration. It also funds programs that contribute to the protection of the nation’s waters and wetlands; the generation of low-cost renewable hydropower; the restoration of certain sites contaminated as a

result of the nation’s early atomic weapons development program; and emergency preparedness and training to respond to natural disasters.

The nearly \$1.313 billion in additional funding not allocated to specified projects in the four appropriations by the Statement of Managers is subdivided into numerous categories within these broad areas:

- Navigation: \$677 million
- Flood Risk Management: \$434 million
- Other Authorized Project Purposes: \$202 million

Work eligible for consideration for the additional funding generally included projects, programs and activities funded in the three previous fiscal years, and other ongoing

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Maj. Gen. Michael C. Wehr
Commander,
Mississippi Valley Division

President,
Mississippi River Commission

MVD’s Civil Works mission provides a key foundational component of the nation’s public infrastructure that facilitates economic growth, quality of life, environmental health and national security for the American people. This month, we released our work plan for FY16 Civil Works Appropriations. The MVD’s Civil Works Budget prioritizes projects that produce high economic and environmental returns to the nation or address a significant risk to public safety, and enables MVD to be a responsible steward of the nation’s water resources infrastructure.

FY 2016 Work Plan provides MVD an additional \$284 million across the major Regular appropriations, bringing total FY 2016 Regional Program to \$1.1 billion. FY 2017 President’s Budget recommends for MVD \$828 million across the major Regular Appropriations vs. \$822 million in the FY 2016 President’s Budget (increase in O&M). Constructing, maintaining and operating key infrastructure projects contribute to the nation’s economy and quality of life, now and in the future.

In addition, dredging remains a national priority balancing the Southwest Pass (SWP) with other priority requirements, including Hurricane Sandy flood risk management work in the North Atlantic Division and channel deepening in the South Atlantic Division. Kudos to Capt. Karl Florcke’s for his leadership aboard the Hopper Dredge McFarland (Philadelphia District), as they are work-

ing hard 24/7 in the SWP to keep the deep draft channel open. The Motor Vessel Wheeler also joined the dredging work in the SWP the week of Feb. 22nd.

Moreover, we remain focused on post-flood damage assessments and after action reviews (AARs). Public safety remains our number one priority. During the Winter Flood of 2015-2016, we put boots on the ground to both reduce risk for the public and to provide expert and professional services to the nation. The winter flood also demonstrated the value of early engagements with local, state and federal leaders—we cannot secure the world alone; stakeholders and partners are essential to a successful flood fighting mission. As we get closer to the spring, we must remain vigilant for the threat of seasonal flooding. Leaders from all six districts met with Jim Bodron and the Programs Directorate recently to prioritize flood damage estimates. A huge thank you to Rich Lockwood, on loan again from the Pittsburgh District, for his incredible leadership in assembling the list of impacts, estimated to be over \$822 million. Through the AAR process, we will revise the All Hazards and Flood Response plans, as well as review the Morganza operational plan. All will culminate in an interagency table top exercise in early March to be ready for the spring flood season.

The division also recently participated in the annual Mississippi Valley Association of General Contractors



Feb. 16 - The Hopper Dredge McFarland works to keep the deep draft channel open in the lower Mississippi River. *(Photo by the USACE, New Orleans District)*



Around the Bend *(continued from page 2)*

meeting at the end of February, congressional visits in early March and is preparing for the Mississippi River Commission's High Water Inspection trip in April.

We recently celebrated St. Paul District's 150th anniversary this year with more than 200 guests attending the District's Anniversary Ball. Col. Dan Koprowski, St. Paul District commander, did extremely well in bringing people together and generating excitement about and pride in the district.

I also had the honor of joining Col. Jeffery Anderson, Memphis District commander, along with newly promoted Lt. Col. Rhett Blackmon and his family for Rhett's promotion ceremony.

The Corps' highly skilled workforce provides significant value to the nation—the economy, security and quality of life. We have the brightest and most capable minds doing extraordinary work—the mission is not possible without our people.

Building Strong,
MG Mike Wehr



(Center) MVD Commander Maj. Gen. Michael Wehr presented (fifth from left) Rich Lockwood, Operations chief at Pittsburg District, with a two-star note Feb. 23, 2016, for his efforts in leading recovery operations after the 2015-2016 Mississippi River Winter Flood, and completing the recovery mission. Also pictured are Renee Turner, Programs Directorate deputy & chief, Civil Works Integration Division; Thomas Holden Jr., Regional Business Directorate director; G. Rogers Sloan, MVD Division counsel & MRC chief legal officer; DeAnna Prestwood, senior MR&T program manager; and Jim Bodron, Programs Directorate chief. *(Photo by Pamela Harrion)*



MVD Commander Maj. Gen. Michael Wehr was guest speaker at the 2016 Engineers Week Luncheon, held at the Vicksburg Convention Center Feb. 16. His topic of discussion was the "State of the Mississippi Valley."

The Corps celebrated Engineers Week Feb. 21-27, 2016.

(Photo by Alfred Dulaney)



Knowledge Management: MVD's FREEBOARD development

By Maik Flanagan, New Orleans District

In 2011, MVD performed a damage assessment of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project after the historic flood. The project manager at the time was under enormous pressure to get the assessment done as quickly as possible. The 2011 damage assessment team used a spreadsheet to manage their data. Unfortunately, the spreadsheet grew in number of columns as the team was trying to enter data and the team proliferated multiple versions of the spreadsheet to the point it was difficult to keep track of the master. To compound the problem, the GIS team members were tasked with the creation and maintenance of damage assessment site maps based on data from the spreadsheets. While MVD GIS created a central database for mapping, keeping up with changes to the data and, even worse, the data structure proved to be an intractable task.

In response to the 2011 difficulties, which led to a top-priority and quick-turnaround project taking approximately five months to complete, the FREEBOARD development team added a damage assessment component to address the problems revealed by this process. Managing the data in FREEBOARD would preserve the relationship between damage assessment sites and the inspection sites already managed in FREEBOARD, which serve as the source

for damage assessment data. The centralized management of the data would ensure that there would always be only one authoritative source of data at any given time. Finally, the development team created automated PDF report generation for individual site and system level reports to match the layout of the reports created in 2011. As FREEBOARD is a GIS database, the maps will always match the contents of the reports generated at the same time.

After the 2015/2016 high water event, the damage assessment team was faced with a similar situation as they faced in 2011: a top-priority and quick turnaround project. With FREEBOARD, we were able to get to the division ranking step in the damage assessment process in less than two weeks, meeting the deadline set by division.

Much gratitude goes out to the following individuals:

- Craig Hunter - GIS Application Development Lead on the damage assessment component. Performed a number of last minute preparatory fixes to FREEBOARD at the beginning of 2016 Damage Assessment.
- Michele Aurand - GIS Data Modeling for Damage Assessment.
- Jack Smith - GIS Division Lead. Convinced the Damage Assessment Team to use FREEBOARD. Provided training to end users and

front-line support to keep us free to work on emergency system changes.

- Mike Siadak, Cory Holloway and Brian Everitt - Provided support for their respective districts and reported problems / required changes to us.
- Shirley Rambeau, Julie Smith, Nick Sims, David Bradley and David Ulm - New Orleans Data Entry.

This was truly a team effort and an impressive display of the prowess and skill of our development team, as well as the power and cohesion of the MVD GIS community.

A huge credit goes to Jack Smith, who pushed for a regional solution to damage assessment. Jack also provided training and front-line support for end users, freeing our team up to handle set-up work.



FY 2016 Civil Works Appropriations...*(continued from page 1)*

projects, programs and activities that can attain a significant milestone or produce significant outputs in FY 2016.

The work plan identifies which projects, programs, and activities within the Civil Works program will receive the funding provided in FY 2016 to USACE, and how much each of them will receive, and includes in these amounts that the Army allocated earlier this fiscal year under a continuing resolution. With the total funding for this fiscal year, the work plan funds to completion nine feasibility studies, two projects in the Preconstruction Engineering and Design phase, and 24 construction projects or elements of projects.

Feasibility Studies Funded for Completion in FY 2016:

- Illinois River Basin River Restoration – Fox River, IL
- Illinois River Basin River Restoration – Ten Mile River, IL
- Passaic River Above Dundee Dam, NJ (Phase I)
- Sabine Pass to Galveston Bay, TX
- Saginaw River Deepening, Saginaw, MI
- St. John’s County, FL
- St. Lucie County Beaches, FL
- Sulphur River Basin Reallocation, TX
- Westchester County Streams (Byram River), NY

Preconstruction Engineering and Design Funded for Completion

in FY 2016:

- American River Watershed, Common Features Project, Natomas Basin, CA
- Boston Harbor Deep Draft, MA

Construction Projects Funded for Completion in FY 2016:

- Alamogordo, NM
- Bethel Bank Stabilization, AK
- Cape Girardeau (Flood-wall), MO
- Charleston Harbor, SC (Dredged Material Placement Facility)
- Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Dispersal Barrier, IL
- Coyote & Berryessa Creeks, CA
- Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, IA
- Grays Harbor (38-foot Deepening), WA
- GIWW, Chocolate Bayou, TX (Dredged Material Placement Facility)
- Greens Bayou, Houston, TX
- Indianapolis White River (North), IN
- Lower Colorado River Basin (Onion Creek), TX
- Lower Snake River Fish and Wildlife Compensation, WA, OR & ID
- Manatee Pass Gates, FL
- Marsh Lake, MN
- McCook Reservoir, IL (Stage I)
- Missouri River Levee System (Unit L385), IA, NE, KS & MO (Deficiency Correction)

- Oakland Harbor, CA
- Port Lions Harbor (Deepening and Breakwater), AK
- Pine Creek Lake, OK (Dam Safety)
- Rio Grande Floodway, NM
- Savannah Harbor Disposal Areas, GA & SC (Dredged Material Containment Area 13A)
- Tropicana and Flamingo Washes, NV (Deficiency Correction)
- Upper St. Johns, FL

Public Law 114-113 authorizes USACE to fund up to 10 previously unfunded studies and up to six previously unfunded construction projects. The Army selected 10 previously unfunded studies and six previously unfunded construction projects for funding based on performance and on considerations provided in the Statement of Managers.

The Statement of Managers stipulates that of the 10 new studies, three will be navigation studies, three will be flood risk management studies, three will be environmental restoration studies, and the tenth can be either a navigation or flood risk management study. The 10 selected studies are:

- Dutch Harbor, Unalaska Channels, AK
- GIWW, Brazos River Floodgates and Colorado River Locks, TX
- Grand River Basin, IA & MO
- Lowell Creek Flood Diversion, AK



FY 2016 Civil Works Appropriations...*(continued from page 5)*

- Matagorda Ship Channel (Widening and Deepening), TX
- Rio Grande Basin, Sandia Pueblo to Isleta Pueblo, NM
- Savannah River Below Augusta Ecosystem Restoration, GA
- Souris River, ND
- Sweetwater Creek, GA
- Water Resources Priorities Study

The Statement of Managers also stipulates that of the six Construction new starts, one will be navigation, one will be flood risk management, one will be environ-

mental restoration, and the remaining three can be either navigation or flood risk management. Construction new starts in FY 2016 are:

- American River Watershed, Common Features Project, Natomas Basin, CA
- Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Bridge Replacement at Deep Creek, Chesapeake, VA
- Coyote and Berryessa Creeks, CA (Berryessa Creek) (Funded to completion)
- Fargo, ND – Moorhead, MN Metropolitan Area
- Marsh Lake, MN (Funded to completion)

- Port Lions (Deepening and Breakwater), AK (Funded to completion)

The work plan listing the amounts provided to various programs, projects and activities for each of the four appropriations accounts can be found at <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/Budget.aspx>.

The Statement of Managers (Congressional Record, December 17, 2015, page H10056 et seq.) can be found at <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2015/12/17/house-section>.

MVD reviews cranes at Mississippi River Project Office



(Left to rt.) Gloria Young, MVD Internal Review (IR), Jennifer Leal, St. Paul District IR chief, and Mike Roarty, Rock Island District IR chief, recently conducted a review of class I cranes at the Mississippi River Project Office, Illinois River Waterway Project Office, Lock & Dam 14, Lock & Dam 13 and Lock & Dam 15. The three are pictured in the operator's cab on the Hercules Crane.



USACE launches new water safety campaign -- “Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns”

By MVD Public Affairs

Every year thousands of people in the United States mourn the loss of loved ones who could have survived if they had been wearing a life jacket while spending time on or near our nation’s waters. To heighten awareness for the use of life jackets, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) recently launched a new water safety campaign titled “Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns.” USACE, in cooperation with the Corps of Engineers Natural Resources and Education Foundation, a non-profit foundation established to support USACE natural resources and recreation programs, developed the campaign that targets adult males.

In the last 10 years, 88 percent of all USACE public water-related fatalities were men and 68 percent were between the ages of 20 and 60, according to data compiled by the USACE National Operations Center for Water Safety. The center also reports that 84 percent of all public water-related fatalities involved people not wearing life jackets and found that the greatest number of water-related fatalities involved people swimming in areas that are not designated for swimming. Also, 27 percent of boating fatalities involved people falling overboard.

The USACE National Operations Center for Water Safety offer these safety reminders when on or near the water:

- A person’s swimming ability generally decreases with age and regardless of how well you swim you could have to fight for your life due to conditions such as waves, current, or exhaustion. Swimming in a lake or river is not like swimming in a pool so wearing a properly-fitted life jacket is critical. Many people drown when they attempt to retrieve an inflatable toy or their boat that has drifted away because they cannot swim as far as they think they can. Also, most people do not have the strength or skill to get back into a small boat from the water without wearing a life jacket.
- Even if you think you are a strong swimmer you could drown if you fall into cold water because it causes an involuntary gasp (or torso)



reflex, so a life jacket is the only thing that can help save your life and give you time to be rescued. Some researchers believe cold water is anything less than “normal” body temperature (98.6°F).

- While boating a person can develop “boater’s hypnosis,” which is a condition where sun, wind, noise, vibration and motion causes fatigue and slows a person’s reaction time much like the effects of alcohol. Combining this condition with the use of alcohol or drugs reduces a person’s coordination, judgment and reaction time even more. Additionally, if a person swims or falls underwater while under the influence of alcohol or drugs they can suffer from an inner ear condition that causes them to become disoriented and unaware of which direction is up or down.

Misjudging your swimming ability, gasp reflex, boater’s hypnosis, alcohol and drug usage and thinking nothing will happen to you are just a few of the reasons why even if you think you are a strong swimmer you should always wear a life jacket. The best way to lower your risk of drowning is to wear a life jacket, so please wear it for those who love you. Visit PleaseWearIt.com for more information on water safety and to download free campaign materials.



What is the Year of Birding?

By MVD Public Affairs



The Year of Birding 2016 is a series of events hosted by partner organizations along the Mississippi River, including local businesses, non-profit groups and government agencies. These events will bring residents and visitors out to experience the sights and sounds of the river as it changes throughout the year.

The goal is to connect people with the Mississippi River through bird watching and bird conservation.

The objectives are to:

- Offer at least 100 birding activities and events for youth and families along the Mississippi River.
- Incorporate an educational component into each Year of Birding 2016 event.
- Promote citizen science and volunteerism in support of bird conservation along the Mississippi River.

Birding Events:

The Year of Birding 2016 follows a successful series of events coordinated by the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative, the Summer of Paddling 2012, Year of Cycling 2013 and Year of Fishing 2015. These events highlight outdoor recreation along the Mississippi River by teaching participants safe techniques to experience the outdoors. Thousands of people have participated in these recreation events to learn a new skill or create a lifelong hobby.

For more information, you may visit the Year of Birding website at <http://mr-cc.org/year-of-birding-2016/>.

Top 10 Ways to Enjoy Birds on Your Property

- 1 Put up a birdfeeder**
While it's fun to watch birds at a feeder year-round, they can easily find many natural foods in the spring, summer, and fall. Foods can be a bit tougher to find in the winter, especially with snow cover or very low temperatures.
- 2 Put up a birdhouse**
Depending on where you live, a birdhouse can make a cozy cavity for the nest of an Eastern Bluebird or House Wren. You can also build your own birdhouse with woodworking plans found at mdc.mo.gov/node/3499.
- 3 Keep feeders and birdhouses clean**
To prevent the spread of minor diseases at feeders, give them a wash now and then. Also clean out birdhouses after the nesting season is over to give them a fresh start in the spring!
- 4 Keep cats indoors**
Outdoor and feral cats kill billions of birds in the U.S. each year. Keep cats indoors when possible, especially if you know young birds are about to fledge and leave a nest, as they may end up on the ground for a few days before they can fly. Place bird feeders in open areas so birds can see approaching cats that live outdoors.
- 5 Landscape with native plants**
Plants native to Missouri provide seeds and attract many types of native insects—both make tasty treats for birds in your yard! Native plants provide different advantages for birds, like food, shelter from weather, and cover from predators.
- 6 Keep your yard a bit less tidy**
Shrubby areas provide great cover for birds, leaf litter houses insects for them to eat, and brush piles do both! Consider letting a portion of your yard go a bit "wild" if you can spare the room. Open spaces in your yard don't provide much food (unless you're a robin) or shelter for birds.
- 7 Window strikes? Put up silhouettes**
If you find that birds are flying into windows on your house, put up bird silhouettes or netting over windows so they can see that they cannot fly through the window. Audubon has a few suggestions for bird mishaps at tinyurl.com/h8l6pqu.
- 8 Let birds eat insects in your yard—reduce pesticide use**
Birds that live in your yard in spring and summer depend on caterpillars, moths, and other insects for food. Try to reduce the amount of pesticides used in your garden and on plantings in your landscaping—the birds will thank you!
- 9 Join your local Audubon Society chapter**
Local bird organizations, like Audubon Societies, host birding field trips, meetings, and other group activities that offer instruction on bird identification and conservation education. Reach out and meet a new group of people that share your love of birds!
- 10 Join a bird conservation organization**
Many national conservation organizations do a lot to help birds: the National Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and Ducks Unlimited are just a few.





March is Women's History Month

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



**WORKING TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION:
HONORING WOMEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE AND GOVERNMENT**



SCAN AND VIEW MOMENTS IN HISTORY

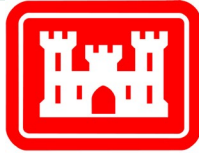


Designed by James Ladner for the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute



Around the Division

During the week of Feb. 21-27, the Corps celebrated National Engineers Week! Check out this [video](#) to hear Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, the 53rd U.S. Army Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Headquarters discuss the great work that Army engineers perform for the nation.



US Army Corps of Engineers®
Mississippi Valley Division

Welcome Aboard! *snapshot*



Eula Mae Ayankoya
Administrative Assistant
Upper DST and Real Estate

If you have a new employee in your office, or if you ARE a new employee to the Mississippi Valley Division, please contact the Public Affairs Office at cemvd-pa@usace.army.mil, so that we can introduce you to everyone in Open Channels.



Open Channels

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



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