

# Major Steps in Developing a Civil Works Project

## Step 1 - Problem Perception

Local community (i.e., people, businesses) and/or local government perceive or experience water and related land resource problems (i.e., Flooding, shore erosion, navigation restrictions, etc.). Problems are beyond local community's/government's capabilities (e.g., jurisdictional boundaries, financial resources, technical expertise, etc.) to alleviate or solve.

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## Step 2 - Request for Federal Assistance

Local officials talk to Corps about available Federal programs. Technical assistance and some small projects can be accomplished without congressional authorization ([see Continuing Authorities Program](#)).

Local officials contact congressional delegation if study authorization required.

Member of Congress requests study authorization through Public Works Committees.

Committee resolution adopted if report was previously prepared on water problems in area. Legislation, which may be proposed by the President, is normally required if no Corps report exists.

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## Step 3 - Study Problem and Report Preparation

The study is assigned to a [Corps district office](#).

Funds to initiate a 12-18 month reconnaissance study are included in President's budget ([see Two-Phase Study Process](#)).

Appropriations for reconnaissance study provided in annual Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act.

District conducts reconnaissance study, leading to reconnaissance report.

Because most Corps projects involve cost sharing and environmental issues, local proponents should seek an early consensus for or against a Corps project among the public and private sectors and among diverse groups.

If a study continues beyond reconnaissance phase, local sponsor must agree to share cost of feasibility phase. Valuable information to help sponsors is provided in the Corps' [Partnership Handbook](#).

A Project Manager (PM) is appointed at the beginning of the reconnaissance study to coordinate the project through study, design and eventual construction. The PM serves as the point of contact with the project sponsor and other concerned parties, tracks all commitments made during the process, and develops a Project Management Plan.

Public involvement is an integral part of the planning process, including review of draft report and draft environment impact statement (EIS).

Study is conducted under the U.S. Water Resources Council's Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines ([see Principles and Guidelines](#)) for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies, dated March 10, 1983.

Funds are included annually in President's budget; annual appropriations and non-Federal monies are needed to continue study.

Study results in Feasibility Report and EIS which are submitted to Corps Headquarters in Washington, D. C.

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#### **Step 4 - Report Review and Approval**

Final EIS is filed with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and made available to public.

Proposed report of Chief of Engineers and final EIS are sent to heads of Federal agencies and governors of affected states for comment.

Comments from public are fully considered.

The Chief of Engineers report is transmitted to Congress through the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and the President's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), who comments on the report as it relates to the President's programs.

In most cases, the Corps continues preconstruction engineering and design after the feasibility report is submitted. Funds are included in President's budget and Congress acts on each item in appropriations bill.

Chief of Engineers prepares a report which is referred to Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in the House and Committee on Environment and Public Works in the Senate.

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## **Step 5 - Congressional Authorization**

Civil Works projects are normally authorized by Water Resources Development Act (Omnibus Bill) following committee hearings.

Occasionally, Corps proposals are authorized by separate legislation or as part of another bill.

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## **Step 6 - Project Implementation**

New projects are included in President's budget based on national priorities and anticipated completion of design and plans and specifications so that construction contract can be awarded.

Budget recommendations are based on evidence of support by state and ability and willingness of non-Federal sponsors to provide their share of project construction cost.

Congress appropriates Federal share of funds for new starts; normally, this occurs in annual Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act.

Secretary of the Army and appropriate non-Federal sponsors sign formal PCA Cooperation Agreement (PCA) once Congress has appropriated funds for project implementation to begin.

The PCA obligates non-Federal sponsors and the Corps to participate in implementing, operating and maintaining project according to requirements established by Congress and administration. The PCA embodies the specific cost sharing responsibilities for the Corps and the project sponsor ([See table on construction cost sharing](#)).

District completes enough engineering and design for developing plans and specifications for initial project implementation.

Funds are included in the President's annual budget for the Federal share of the

project; appropriations are required to continue design and implementation.

Construction is managed by Corps, but done by private contractors.

Most projects are operated and maintained by non-Federal sponsors as part of agreement signed prior to implementation. However, funds are requested in President's annual budget for the Federal share where there is a need for continuing Federal financing of project operation and maintenance; congressional appropriations are required for such funds.

Corps periodically inspects projects, including those for which non-Federal sponsors have assumed an operation and maintenance responsibility.