



WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2022

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS' POSITION

Our nation's water resources infrastructure—which includes dams, levees, inland waterways, and ports—helps ensure public safety, a strong economy, and the protection of our environmental resources.

ASCE urges Members of the House and Senate to work in a bipartisan fashion to ensure that the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is a priority in 2022 and continues to be passed on a two-year cycle.

While the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) did provide additional funding for the nation's ports, inland waterways and dams, Congress must still pass a WRDA bill to reauthorize critical programs like the National Dam Safety Program and the National Levee Safety Program, as well as authorize the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Civil Works activities.

Key Points

WRDA has historically provided Congress with an opportunity to demonstrate common goals and a commitment to bipartisan agreement. Recent legislation, like WRDA 2020, unlocked the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, a long-time ASCE priority, as well as addressed the cost-share for the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. The wins in WRDA 2020, combined with the \$17 billion included in the IIJA for the nation's ports and inland waterways, will go a long way to raise the grades across the nation's water resources infrastructure.

As Congress develops WRDA 2022, ASCE urges them to build on the successes in WRDA 2020 and the IIJA to further improve the nation's ports, inland waterways, dams, and levees.

Therefore, ASCE makes the following recommendations for WRDA 2022:

- Continue to build on the successes in the IIJA by supporting projects to improve wastewater, stormwater, and drinking water infrastructure, dam and levee safety, and ports and inland waterways.
- Include the Twenty-First Century Dams Act (S. 2356/H.R. 4375), which reauthorizes the National Dam Safety Program (NDSP) through Fiscal Year 2027 and ensures critical dam safety programs like the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation (HHPDR) Grant Program can provide states and communities with the resources they need to ensure the safety of the nation's more than 90,000 dams.
- Reauthorize the National Levee Safety Program, which expires at the end of Fiscal Year 2023. The National Levee Safety Program is critical to promote consistent safety standards, create levee safety guidelines, and provide funding assistance to states and regional districts for establishing participating levee safety programs.
- Promote greater and more efficient access to project financing programs such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Corps Water Infrastructure Financing Program (CWIFP).

Background

Our nation's water resources infrastructure systems are critical to the country's economy, public safety, and the preservation and enhancement of our environmental resources. Our levees, dams, inland waterways, and ports protect hundreds of communities, support millions of American jobs, and generate trillions of dollars of economic activity.

Many of these infrastructure assets have reached the end of their design life, and coupled with generations-long underinvestment, a large and growing investment gap has emerged; this gap must be closed if we hope to both repair and modernize our water resources infrastructure systems to be competitive in the 21st century.

ASCE 2021 Infrastructure Report Card Grades for Water Infrastructure



Status

Water Resources Development Act of 2022: While the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure have not yet released legislation, both committees have begun the process of developing this year's WRDA. Both the Senate and House have held hearings with representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to discuss the administration's priorities for the coming legislation, and both chambers have called upon their Members to submit priorities. ASCE anticipates WRDA bills to be considered by Congress in the late Spring or early Summer.

Twenty-First Century Dams Act: IIJA provided \$800 million for dam safety, as well as \$148 million in state assistance grants, \$585 million to support the High Hazard Rehabilitation Grant Program, and \$67 million for FEMA to support dam safety assistance to states. ASCE supports building on these wins by including a revised version of this legislation which re-authorizes the NDSP through FY 2027 and increases the authorized funding level for the HHPDR Grant Program to \$100 million per year through FY 2026.



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