

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-19-99](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

Through its civil works program, the Corps plans, designs, constructs, operates, and maintains a range of water resources projects for purposes such as aquatic ecosystem restoration, flood risk management, and navigation. To support these projects, the Corps requests funding through the annual budget and appropriation process. For fiscal year 2017, the President's budget requested \$4.6 billion for Corps' water resources projects, of which about \$1 billion was for construction projects.

GAO was asked to review budget requests for construction projects under the Corps' civil works program, including the geographic distribution of those projects. This report examines for fiscal years 2008 through 2017 (1) the geographic distribution of the construction projects included in the President's budget requests for the Corps, and (2) how the Corps prioritized such projects for inclusion in the President's budget requests. GAO summarized available budget data for fiscal years 2008 through 2017; reviewed the Corps' budget guidance and documents; mapped locations for construction projects in budget requests for years when sufficient information was available; and interviewed Corps headquarters and division officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making recommendations in this report. The Department of Defense stated that they had no comments on the draft report.

View [GAO-19-99](#). For more information, contact Anne-Marie Fennell at (202) 512-3841 or fennella@gao.gov.

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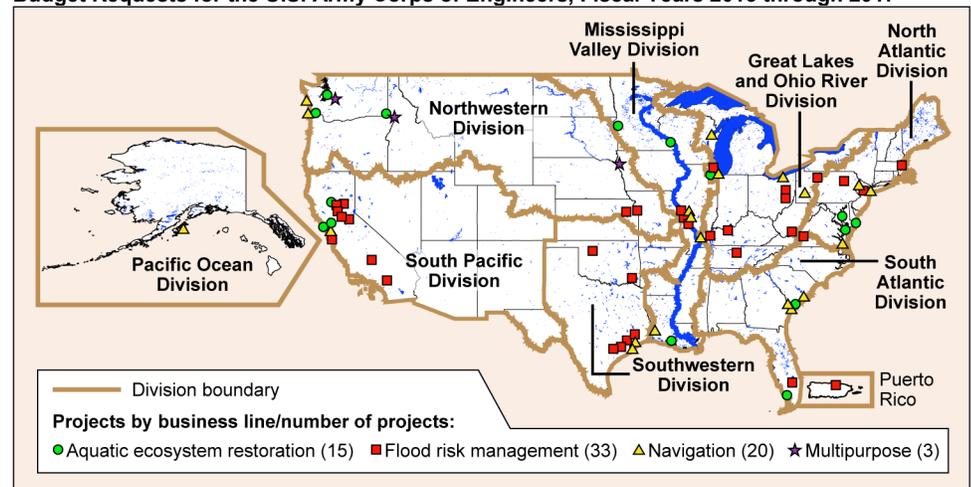
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Budget Requests Included Construction Projects Located in Over 30 States, Selected Using a Multi-level Process

What GAO Found

For fiscal years 2008 through 2017, construction projects included in the President's budget requests to Congress for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) were geographically distributed in 31 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. During this 10-year period, the President requested over \$12.9 billion for 164 construction projects included in the Corps' three main missions—aquatic ecosystem restoration, flood risk management, and navigation. The Corps provided GAO with detailed information on the location of construction projects included in the budget requests for the 3 most recent fiscal years at the time of its review—2015 through 2017. These projects, shown in the figure below, spanned 26 states and Puerto Rico. They were typically located near sources of water or Corps-constructed water infrastructure.

Figure: Locations of Construction Projects for Main Missions Included in the President's Budget Requests for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fiscal Years 2015 through 2017



Sources: GAO analysis of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers geospatial data; MapInfo (map). | GAO-19-99

To prioritize construction projects to include in the President's budget requests for fiscal years 2008 through 2017, the Corps used a process involving each of its three organizational levels—districts, divisions, and headquarters. Districts divided projects into work packages and assigned 1 of 6 priority levels to indicate the order in which work packages from the same project should be completed. Districts grouped these work packages by business line or appropriations account based on the Corps' budget guidance for the fiscal year and then ranked them. Then Corps divisions and headquarters ranked the work packages. To assign rankings, Corps officials applied criteria specific to the business line of each project. These criteria often varied by fiscal year to address changes to policy guidance. Across the organization, Corps officials ranked more than 25,000 packages for fiscal year 2017. After assigning rankings, headquarters developed final budget recommendations to submit to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, who in turn provided the recommendations to the Office of Management and Budget for review and potential inclusion in the President's budget requests.