Why GAO Did This Study
Under Section 219 of the 1992 Water Resources Development Act, as amended, Congress authorized the Corps to provide assistance for the design and construction of environmental infrastructure projects, known as Section 219 projects. Such projects include the development of water transmission lines. Congress typically provides a lump sum appropriation for the Corps’ construction account, out of which Section 219 and other environmental infrastructure projects are funded.

GAO was asked to review projects carried out under the Section 219 program. This report examines (1) the number and type of Section 219 projects and expenditures from fiscal years 2013 through 2017, and (2) how the Corps prioritizes funding for Section 219 projects. GAO reviewed relevant federal laws and agency guidance; analyzed agency data for fiscal years 2013 through 2017, the most recent time period for which data were available; and interviewed agency officials at headquarters, three divisions, and three districts—selected based on geographic distribution and the amount of Section 219 project expenditures.

What GAO Recommends
GAO recommends that the Corps develop written criteria for ranking Section 219 projects for funding, taking into account a clear set of priorities, such as those identified by recent congressional direction. The agency concurred with the recommendation.

View GAO-19-487. For more information, contact Anne-Marie Fennell at (202) 512-3841 or fennella@gao.gov.