



Program Fact Sheet

RECONNAISSANCE AND FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Congressionally Authorized

Water Resources Studies and Projects: Over the years, the Congress has authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assist state and local governments with a number of water resources problems and opportunities. Typically water resources studies and projects are authorized for the following: flood control, navigation (commercial and recreational), shoreline and streambank erosion, water quality and supply, environmental restoration, hydroelectric power, recreation, and aquatic plant control.

Studies: Section 905(a) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 authorizes the Corps of Engineers to enter into agreements with non-Federal sponsors to conduct feasibility studies for water resources projects if such a study is authorized by Congress. Cost-sharing for feasibility studies is 50% Federal and 50% non-Federal. Feasibility studies are authorized after the Corps of Engineers has been authorized and funded to conduct a Reconnaissance Study at 100% Federal cost. Such studies are called Expedited Reconnaissance Studies and are limited to \$100,000 in total cost. In accordance with current guidelines Expedited Reconnaissance Studies, also known as 905(b) studies must be completed in one-year and must accomplish the following.

a. Determine that the water resource problem(s) warrant Federal participation in Feasibility studies. Comprehensive review of other problems and opportunities are deferred to the feasibility study stage.

b. Define the Federal interest based on a preliminary appraisal consistent with Army policies, costs, benefits, and environmental impacts of identified project alternatives.

c. Preparation of a Project Study Plan (PSP) which defines in detail the work efforts to be done in the Feasibility Stage. Preparation of a Feasibility Cost-Sharing Agreement (FCSA) which defines the financial responsibilities of both parties during the Feasibility Study.

d. Assess the level of interest and support from non-Federal entities in the identified potential solutions and cost-sharing of feasibility stage and construction. A letter of intent from the non-Federal sponsor stating the willingness to pursue the feasibility study described in the PSP and to share in costs of construction is required.

Congressional Authorization: Studies, both reconnaissance and feasibility are often authorized by Water Resources Development Acts (WRDA). WRDA's are usually passed by Congress on an every other year basis, the last in 2007. Funding for studies usually comes in the annual appropriation bill for the Corps of Engineers called an Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill. Frequently, study authorization is provided by Congressional resolutions and funding is provided in the appropriations bill. Since the Federal Fiscal Year starts on October 1st of every calendar year, study funding is usually received at the District level in October or November.

How to Request Assistance: Initial requests for assistance should be made to a local District Office of the Corps of Engineers. Many prospective studies and projects, particularly those that are smaller in scale and cost, might fall under the Continuing Authorities Programs of the Corps of Engineers and therefore would not require any specific Congressional authorization and/or funding.

Cash Contribution: Non-Federal cash contributions for project construction depend upon the type of project. Non-Federal sponsors are responsible for obtaining all lands, easements, rights of way, relocations, and disposal areas (LERRD) for the project. The value of LERRD is credited toward the non-Federal share of project construction.

- Flood control projects are 65% Federal and 35% non-Federal.
- Deep draft commercial navigation is usually 80% Federal and 20% non-Federal.
- Recreational navigation is 50% Federal and 50% non-Federal.

Local Cooperation: Formal assurance of local cooperation must be furnished by a local sponsoring agency. The local sponsor must be a municipality or public agency, fully authorized under state laws to give such assurances and must be financially capable of fulfilling all measures of local cooperation.

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