

March 3, 2020

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman Energy and Water
Senate Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Alexander & Kaptur and Ranking Members Feinstein & Simpson:

Since 1926, the **American Shore & Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA)**, a 501(c)3 non-profit, has been dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing our coasts by merging science and public policy. Our members are industry, local government officials, academics and residents of coastal districts; we are advocates for healthy coastlines. Since 1970, the **Coastal States Organization (CSO)**, a 501(c)4 non-profit, has represented the interests of the nation's coastal states and territories on matters related to coastal, ocean and Great Lakes policy.

ASBPA and CSO applaud the Energy & Water Appropriations Subcommittees for including critical increases to US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) programs in FY2020 that provide coastal resilience and support coastal research around the nation.

As you deliberate on FY21 Energy & Water Appropriations, we encourage you to work together to pass a bill on regular order and avoid another continuing resolution (CR). By passing a bill on regular order, you save the government and the American people millions of dollars in planning for CRs, and agencies can be far more efficient in spending their annual budget knowing what their full budget will be.

Finally, while many discuss our nation's infrastructure, the Energy & Water Appropriations bill actually *funds* water and coastal infrastructure. Maintaining and improving our nation's a) coastal flood risk reduction, b) sediment management, and c) coastal data and research are sound investments. These combine to provide the coastal defenses our nation needs as coastal communities face erosion, rising seas, and increasing storm intensity. We can invest millions in resilience now or pay billions in recovery later.

As you prepare the FY2021 E&W appropriations package, we ask you to include:

1) **\$75 million in USACE-CW construction account for shore protection.**

Coastal shoreline counties contribute \$6.9 trillion to our GDP¹. Coastal habitats including beaches, wetlands, mangroves and estuarine systems are some of the most ecologically productive and economically important on earth². But perhaps most importantly to communities located along a coast, **a healthy coastline provides protection of life and property from the hazards of living by the water** – storm surge, waves, and sea level rise.

Funding for shore protection in recent years has largely come from disaster supplement appropriations, and while this funding is both critical and provided at politically expedient times, funding shore protection as part of regular appropriations allows communities to better maintain their beaches and coastline *before* the storm hits. As such, ASBPA and CSO would like to see a greater portion of that funding come via regular order. **Please provide \$75 million in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Civil Works (USACE-CW) construction account for shore protection.**

- 2) ***Fund the Regional Sediment Management and the Beneficial Use of Dredged Material (BUDM):***
- a. ***Provide \$16 million for BUDM pilot projects (Sec. 1122 of the WRDA 2016/WIIN Act; Sec. 1130 of WRDA 2018);***
 - b. ***Provide \$9 million for Regional Sediment Management (RSM);***
 - c. ***Provide \$16 million for CAP 204 (BUDM).***

USACE has been reluctant to outline how much the pilot projects would cost in total *and* USACE has refused to announce the additional ten BUDM projects authorized in WRDA 2018 (Sec. 1130) until the first ten are funded. ASBPA and CSO believe that the full cost of the first ten projects would be in the ball-park of \$40 million (meaning an additional ~\$32 million beyond what was already appropriated). **We therefore request that you provide at least \$16 million (50% of what's still needed to construct the first ten pilot projects) in FY2021.**

Coastal sand and sediment are increasingly in short supply. Sediment that once reached the coast to be used for land building and natural replenishment for eroding coastlines, is now trapped behind dams, prevented from entering rivers through hardened riverbanks, and removed from the watershed and littoral system by dredging and dumping offshore or in containment facilities. RSM and CAP 204 are USACE programs that shift the understanding of dredge material from spoil to valuable resource – RSM through planning and management; CAP 204 through construction using dredged material. These programs are essential to the Corps's successful management of the coast. **We therefore request that you provide a slight increase for both programs, to \$9 million for Regional Sediment Management (RSM) and Provide \$16 million for CAP 204 (BUDM) in FY2021.**

3) ***Fund coastal research and data collection, specifically, O&M item, “Coastal Inlet Research Program” at \$11 million.***

FY2020 E&W appropriations provided an increase (to \$10.975 million) to Coastal Inlet Research program “*to identify engineering frameworks to address coastal resilience needs, to develop adaptive pathways that lead to coastal resilience, measure the coastal forces that lead to infrastructure damage and erosion during extreme*

¹ NOAA, State of the Coast, 2012. <http://stateofthecoast.noaa.gov/>

² Barbier, Et al, “The value of estuarine and coastal ecosystem services”, Ecological Monographs, 2011. <http://www.esajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1890/10-1510.1>

storm events, and to improve coupling of terrestrial and coastal models.” ASBPA and CSO believe this investment in science and research to better understand how coastal infrastructure is impacted by coastal forces and how coastal infrastructure can be more resilient is one of the most sensible and prudent investments made by Congress. While the return on investment may be years out, we are confident the advances in coastal resilience generated by this funding will reduce coastal communities’ and the federal government’s budgets in the coming years as sea level rise and coastal storms become increasingly destructive. **Please increase this to \$11 million for the “Coastal Inlet Research Program.”**

4) Please maintain FY20 funding levels or increase funding for:

- a. National Coastal Mapping Program
- b. Coastal Ocean Data System
- c. Coastal Field Data Collection
- d. CAP 103 (Shore Protection)
- e. CAP 206 (Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration)

The National Coastal Mapping Program, Coastal Ocean Data System and Coastal Field Data Collection combined came to under \$18 million in FY20, but are major investments in coastal data collection and analysis, which is relied on by communities and industry.

The Continuing Authorities Programs, CAP 204 (BUDM), CAP 103 (Shore Protection), and CAP 206 (Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration) are similarly low-budget, and the individual projects they fund are small compared to the federally authorized projects with their own budget line-item. Nevertheless, coastal communities rely on these projects to support their flood risk management and ecological restoration efforts, making them incredibly valuable at the community level.

ASBPA and CSO are grateful to your Subcommittees and Congress for making sure the critical missions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in particular that of coastal flood risk reduction, shore protection, and coastal research, are funded, even when the administration does not see fit to support them. Of course, these are only a few small pieces of a much larger investment needed in preparing our coastal communities for increasingly intense and frequent coastal storms and hazards on top of increasing rates of sea level rise. Improving the resilience of coastal communities will take coordination across multiple federal agencies working together with state and local authorities. It will also take a large-scale dedicated investment in coastal infrastructure. However, a good first step in protecting coastal communities is ensuring shore protection, regional sediment management, and coastal data acquisition are appropriately funded.

Sincerely,



Derek Brockbank
Executive Director
American Shore & Beach Preservation Association



Bradley Watson
Executive Director
Coastal States Organization

CC: Sens. Richard Shelby, Patrick Leahy; Reps. Nita Lowey, Kay Granger *Chairs & Ranking Members, Appropriations Committees*