

## **Process and Phases of Project Development How to Propose a Corps Project**

### **1. Identify the Problem**

A local community and/or local government, or a non-profit organization, experiences water and related land resource problems, such as flooding, shore erosion, ecosystem restoration, navigation restrictions, etc. These problems are beyond the local community's/government's or organization's capabilities to alleviate or solve due to jurisdictional boundaries, financial resources, technical expertise, or other issues.

### **2. Request Federal Assistance**

Local officials engage the Corps to discuss Federal programs available for their particular problem.

- Technical assistance and some small projects can be accomplished without Congressional authorization through the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP).
- If the project is larger it may require authorization from Congress for the Corps to study the problem in a Two-Phase study process.

If additional authorization is required, local officials would contact their Congressional Representative to request study authorization through the Congressional Public Works Committees. If a report, based on a standing authority, was previously prepared by the Corps, a committee study resolution may be sufficient and adopted in lieu of a new study authorization. Once sufficient study authorization is established, study funding (referred to as Appropriations) can be sought, both through the Administration and through Congress.

### **3. Typical Process and Phases of Project Development for Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Projects**

Most Corps projects involve the local community and/or local government or non-profit organization sharing costs with the Federal government, and adhering to all Federal environmental compliance requirements. Therefore, project proponents, referred to as non-Federal project sponsors, should seek early public and private consensus on their interest and financial ability to go forward with a project.

Under several different laws, Congress delegated its authority to approve certain projects, up to specified dollar amounts (subject to availability of funds) to the Chief of Engineers.

**Table 1 - Types of projects covered, and current cost limitations, for CAP Projects**

<b>Types of Projects</b>	<b>Short Name</b>	<b>Statutory Federal Cost Limitation Per Project</b>
Flood Damage Reduction	Section 205	\$7,000,000
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration	Section 206	\$5,000,000
Snagging and Clearing for Flood Control	Section 208	\$500,000
Project Modifications for Improvement of the Environment	Section 1135	\$5,000,000
Navigation	Section 107	\$7,000,000
Mitigation of Shoreline Damage	Section 111	\$5,000,000 (or specific authorization)
Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction	Section 103	\$3,000,000
Emergency Steam Bank and Shoreline Protection	Section 14	\$1,500,000

Corps District offices may undertake a CAP Feasibility Study upon written request of state or local government officials, and Corps approval. CAP feasibility reports and projects are usually approved at the Corps Division level. Studies are initiated subject to the availability of funds and staff.

For section 103, 107, 111, and 205 studies, the first \$100,000 of study costs are a Federal expense. The remainder of the study phase is cost-shared 50-50 with the non-Federal sponsor. After approval of the completed study, the non-Federal sponsor and the Federal government sign a Project Partnership Agreement with implementation cost-sharing typically 65% Federal and 35% non-Federal (see Table 2).

Planning and Design Analysis (PDA) for Section 14 and Section 208 projects are accomplished in a single phase. PDA costs are initially Federally financed; costs in excess of \$40,000 are cost-shared during construction. PDA costs less than \$40,000 are Federal costs.

**Table 2 - Typical Process and Phases of Project Development  
CAP Project**

<b>Feasibility Phase 2-3 years duration</b>		<b>Design and Implementation (Construction) Phase</b>	<b>Operation and Maintenance Monitoring Phase</b>
100% Federally Funded Portion of Feas Phase at \$100K	Cost Shared Portion of Feas Phase 50% Fed 50% Non-Fed (may be provided via in-kind services)	2-5 years duration Cost Share: 65% Fed 35% Fed	As long as project remains authorized  100% local funding

#### **4. Typical Process and Phases of Project Development for Two-Phase Study Process for Individually Authorized Studies and Projects**

##### **4.1 Project Phases of Work**

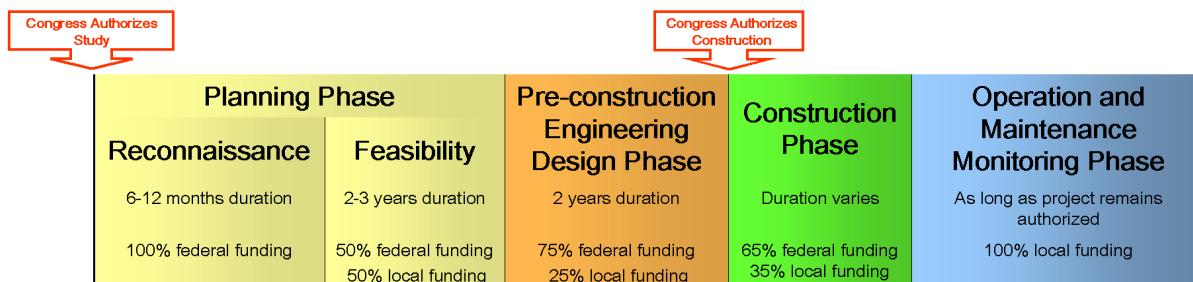
Once Appropriations are received through the annual Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, the first phase of work is a Reconnaissance Study, which determines if preliminary project benefits will exceed projected project costs.

A Project Manager is appointed at the beginning of the Reconnaissance phase to coordinate the project through planning, design and eventual construction. The Project Manager serves as the point of contact with the local sponsor and other concerned parties.

If the Reconnaissance Study finds that project benefits will not exceed the cost of completing the project, work will cease and further study would not be recommended.

If the Reconnaissance Study finds that project benefits will outweigh project costs, the study will advance to the Feasibility phase (see Two-Phase Study Process Table 3).

**Table 3 - Two-Phase Study Process**  
**Typical Processes, Phases and Cost Sharing for Project Development**  
**Individually Authorized Studies and Projects**



During the Feasibility Phase of a project, the local sponsor must agree to share 50% of the total cost of the Study. Local contributions can be in the form of in-kind services. Federal funds are again sought through the annual Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act.

The Feasibility Report develops prospective project alternatives, and carries out a detailed analysis of all the relevant physical, biological and social economic impacts attributable to these project alternatives. During this phase, any project-associated environmental impacts must be assessed and, depending on their significance, preparation of an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement may be required. The majority of projects require an Environmental Impact Statement.

The Feasibility Phase produces the Decision Document that becomes the basis for seeking a Federal project authorization.

#### ***4. 2 Report Review/Approval and Project Authorization***

The draft Feasibility Study and associated draft Environmental document are submitted for public review. All comments from the public will be addressed in the Final Feasibility Study.

After Public review, and any changes made due to that review, including addressing all public comments, the Final Project Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement are submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Washington, D. C.

If an Environmental Impact Statement is required, it is filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and made available to the public.

The Feasibility Report is endorsed in a summary document, referred to as the proposed Report of the Chief of Engineers, or Chief's Report. The Chief's Report, along with any Final Environmental Impact Statement, are distributed to relevant Federal agencies as well as to the Governors of all states affected by the proposed project, for their comments.

After all comments have been addressed, the Chief's Report is transmitted to Congress through the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). These offices comment on the project report as it relates to the President's programs.

In order for the proposed project to be authorized for construction, Congress typically includes it in the next Water Resources Development Act. The Chief's Report serves as the document referenced by Congress to achieve authorization.

Final design (cost-shared 75% Federal; 25% non-Federal) may proceed while awaiting authorization and, following authorization, construction may then proceed (typically cost-shared 65% Federal and 35% non-Federal). See Table 3.