



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Environmental Operating Principles

One Corps serving The Army and the Nation

As an integral part of our mission, the Army Corps of Engineers will be a national leader in environmental and natural resource stewardship for present and future generations.

Today, the US Army Corps of Engineers performs multi-faceted military and civil missions in service to the Nation. These missions have both direct and indirect impacts on our natural environment. As society's needs and values have changed, the Corps responded with programs for wetlands and shore protection, environmental cleanup, and natural resources restoration.

Our goal is to adhere to Environmental Operating Principles that are broad enough to apply to this range of activities, and yet concrete enough to meaningfully guide the environmental responsibilities of the Corps in the future. The Corps, as part of the Army, continues to embrace the "four pillars" of the Army's environmental strategy.

When the National Environmental Policy Act was passed in 1969 and signed into law on January 1, 1970, the United States established a national policy to "encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; enrich the understanding of ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation."

It is striking how contemporary this statement is and how well it and the Army's "four pillars" serve as a springboard for the Corps Environmental Operating Principles:

- Strive to achieve Environmental Sustainability. An environment maintained in a healthy, diverse, and sustainable condition is necessary to support life.

- Recognize the interdependence of life and the physical environment. Proactively consider environmental consequences of Corps programs and act accordingly in all appropriate circumstances.
- Seek balance and synergy among human development activities and natural systems by designing economic and environmental solutions that support and reinforce one another.
- Continue to accept corporate responsibility and accountability under the law for activities and decisions under our control that impact human health and welfare and the continued viability of natural systems.
- Seek ways and means to assess and mitigate cumulative impacts to the environment; bring systems approaches to the full life cycle of our processes and work
- Build and share an integrated scientific, economic, and social knowledge base that supports a greater understanding of the environment and impacts of our work.
- Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities, listen to them actively, and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the Nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment.

These principles will be integrated into the Program Management Business Process and other Corps decision-making at the earliest stage possible.

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