



July 30, 2026

Lt. Col. Donald K. Lew
Commander
Detroit District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
477 Michigan Ave.
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Assistant Secretary Adam R. Telle
U.S. Army, Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Re: Brandon Road Interbasin Project Stop Work Order

Dear Commander Lew:

This letter seeks to document recent communication between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the State of Illinois, a non-federal sponsor the Brandon Road Interbasin Project (BRIP) in Illinois. This communication follows the USACE work stoppage notice issued on July 24, 2026, to J.F. Brennan Co. Inc. of La Crosse, Wisconsin, a BRIP construction contractor.

The State of Illinois first learned of a potential work stoppage through associates of the construction contractor the evening of Friday, July 24, 2026. IDNR leaders made numerous attempts by phone, text, and email to contact the USACE Detroit District Office beginning the morning of Monday, July 27, 2026.

More than 24 hours later, I received a phone call from you at 1:38 p.m. Tuesday, July 28, 2026, confirming that a work stoppage order had been issued and further noting that the BRIP has been placed under administrative review. Despite my numerous follow-up questions seeking clarification, you declined to provide any additional details.

As a non-federal sponsor of the BRIP, this level of communication failed to meet expectations for notice as set forth in the executed Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) and the Project Management Plan (PMP). Under provisions outlined in Article II. C. and Article XII of the PPA, the State of Illinois expected verbal notification of such a significant contractual change prior to implementation of such, immediately followed by written notification.

Additionally, the PMP clearly outlines the process by which changes in cost, schedule, milestone, or scope for the project are agreed upon, communicated and documented, including formal review and approval through the multi-level governance teams. A change of this magnitude should have elicited prescribed action according to the PMP, yet there has been no such outreach from the USACE to assemble or engage any of the three BRIP governance teams.

As a partner deeply committed to protecting the critical natural resources and economy of the Great Lakes, as ensured by continued implementation of the BRIP, the State of Illinois respectfully requests the immediate scheduling of a meeting of the BRIP Senior Executive Board to substantiate the cause of this work stoppage and to remedy project cost, schedule, and partnership impacts.

Respectfully,

Renee Snow
Interim Director
Illinois Department of Natural Resources