



**WATERWAYS**  
COUNCIL, INC.



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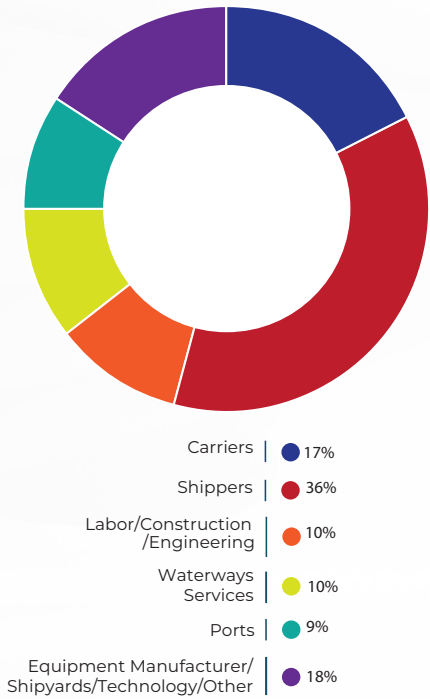
# MISSION

Waterways Council, Inc. (WCI) is the national unifying association of America's numerous inland waterways and port infrastructure interests, serving as the definitive spokesperson in Washington, DC and around the country for inland waterways infrastructure.

Specifically, WCI

- *works to ensure an optimal level of federal support and funding for the planning, construction and modernization, operation, and maintenance of ports and inland waterways navigation improvements,*
- *leads efforts to build an understanding among key policymakers, public opinion leaders and beneficiaries of the positive economic and environmental impacts to the nation from a modern and well-maintained system of ports and inland waterways infrastructure, and*
- *wins the confidence, support, and membership of regional stakeholders with an advocacy mission that strives to coordinate mutual efforts and ensure that waterways' interests speak with a unified voice.*

**WCI had a total of 178 members in 2023**



# WCI LEADERSHIP 2023

## WCI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Chris Blanchard | Treasurer**  
Executive Director, Cooper Consolidated, LLC.

**Andrew Brown**  
SVP and General Counsel, Ingram Barge Company

**Cherrie Felder | Chair**  
Vice President, Channel Shipyard Companies

**Austin Golding**  
President, Golding Barge Line, Inc.

**Martin T. Hettel | Secretary**  
Vice President - Government Affairs,  
American Commercial Barge Line

**Damon Judd | Vice Chair**  
President, Marquette Transportation Company, LLC

**Lee Nelson | Vice Chair**  
President & CEO, Upper River Services, LLC

**Scott Ramshaw**  
Government Relations, United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters 562

**Matt Ricketts | Immediate Past Chair**  
President & CEO, Crounse Corporation

**Peter H. Stephaich**  
Chairman, Campbell Transportation Company

**Jeff Webb | First Vice Chair**  
President, Cargill Marine & Terminal

**Rodney Weinzierl**  
Executive Director, Illinois Corn Growers Association

**Matt Woodruff | General Counsel**  
Vice President - Public & Government Affairs,  
Kirby Corporation

**Tracy Zea | President & CEO**  
Waterways Council, Inc.



# WCI LEADERSHIP 2023

## WCI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

.....

**Kristin M. Beck**  
President - Commercial Roofing Systems & Lining, Holcim US

**Delbert Biliter**  
Manager, LG&E and KU

**Chris Blanchard | Treasurer**  
Executive Director, Cooper Consolidated, LLC.

**Jake Brodbeck**  
Vice President, ARTCO

**Andrew Brown**  
Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Ingram Barge Company

**Mary Ann Bucci**  
Executive Director, Port of Pittsburgh Commission

**Robert Carlisle**  
President & Partner, Carlisle & Bray Enterprises

**Brandy Christian**  
President & CEO, Port of New Orleans

**Kerry Cole**  
Vice President, Arcosa, Inc.

**Randy DeSutter**  
Member - Corn Board, National Corn Growers Association

**Cherrie Felder | Chair**  
Vice President, Channel Shipyard Companies

**Austin Golding**  
President, Golding Barge Line, Inc.

**Kevin Hall**  
Vice President - Supply Chain & Continuous Improvement Agriculture, CHS, Inc.

**Martin T. Hettel | Secretary**  
Vice President - Government Affairs, American Commercial Barge Line

**Jordan Howard**  
Director - Federal and Heavy Construction Division, Associated General Contractors

**Troy Jones**  
Business Representative, Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council

**Damon Judd | Vice Chair**  
President, Marquette Transportation Company, LLC

**Jeff Keifer**  
Managing Director - Operations, AEP - River Transportation

**David Kowalik**  
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**Todd Link**  
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**Bruce McGinnis**  
President & CEO, McNational, Inc.

**Brian Mueller**  
Owner/CEO, The Heartland Companies

**Mario Munoz**  
President, Turn Services

**Spencer Murphy**  
General Counsel & Vice President, Risk Management, Canal Barge Company

**Lee Nelson | Vice Chair**  
President & CEO, Upper River Services, LLC

**Tim Parker III**  
President and CEO, Parker Towing Company, Inc.

**Scott E. Ramshaw**  
Business Development & Government Relations, Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 562

**Lance Rase**  
Vice President - Marine and Transportation, CGB Enterprises, Inc.

**Matt Ricketts | Immediate Past Chair**  
President & CEO, Crounse Corporation

**Todd Sandifer**  
Manager - Marine Transportation, Marathon Petroleum Company, LLC

**Lance Sannino**  
President, Enterprise Marine Services, LLC

**Mike Somales**  
President, American Consolidated Natural Resources, Inc.

**Peter H. Stephaich**  
Chairman, Campbell Transportation Company

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Logistics Director, Bunge

**Jeff Webb | First Vice Chair**  
President, Cargill Marine & Terminal

**Rodney Weinzierl**  
Executive Director, Illinois Corn Growers Association

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President, Wepfer Marine, Inc.

**Matt Woodruff | General Counsel**  
Vice President - Public & Government Affairs, Kirby Corporation

**Tracy Zea**  
President & CEO, Waterways Council, Inc.



# WCI 2023 KEY PRIORITIES

While WCI's work has delivered many successes since its founding 20 years ago, some 2023 priorities have been dependent on action within Congress and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that have not yet come to fruition.

Secure Fiscal Year FY24 E&WD appropriations for the full amount supportable by annual diesel fuel tax receipts deposited into the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF).



Obtain one new construction start as recommended by the Inland Waterways Users Board 2022 annual report.



Obtain an investigations new start for Bayou Sorrel Lock to begin the 3x3x3 study phase.



Oppose additional tolling, lockage fees, or other harmful charges for users of the inland waterways system.



Work with the Corps of Engineers to obtain a current and accurate balance available in the IWTF.



Secure, in WRDA legislation, a provision that all projects funded by IJA remain 100% federal.

WCI 2023

# LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES



## FY23 Corps Work Plan

On February 28, the Corps released its FY23 Work Plan for allocating funds provided in the FY23 Energy & Water Development (E&WD) appropriations bill. FY23 inland waterways construction funding was lower than previous years due to the infrastructure package providing fiscal year capability needs. The E&WD appropriations bill funds the Corps' Civil Works mission in addition to the Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Department of Energy programs.

Of note specifically for inland waterways:

### **Construction Account**

*Chickamauga Lock, TN:* (No construction funds were provided).

Funding for Chickamauga Lock was proposed in the FY23 President's Budget, the House report, and the Senate report, but was zeroed out in the final omnibus appropriations bill due to the Corps expressing to Congress that it no longer had capability to execute funding in FY23.

*McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation, 12-foot channel, OK & AR:*

Total: \$10,000,000 (\$3,500,000 from the IWTF) to deepen the navigation channel to 12 feet.

*Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP):*

Total: \$61,679,000

\$49,300,000 (\$17,255,000 from IWTF): Navigation dollars will be used for preconstruction engineering and design for the 1,200-foot chamber at LaGrange Lock.

WCI 2023

## LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

\$12,379,000: Ecosystem dollars will be used for the following:

--\$5,000,000 for ecosystem additional project development

--\$4,500,000 for project implementation

--\$2,879,000 to construct a fish passage

Total IWTF Funds Spent in FY23: \$20,755,000 out of \$125,446,203 available.

### **Investigations Account**

*Lower Missouri River Basin, KS, MO & IA:*

Total: \$400,000 to complete the feasibility study phase.

*Lower St. Anthony Falls, Mississippi River, MN:*

Total: \$550,000 to complete the disposition study.

*Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway and Black Warrior and Tombigbee Rivers Deepening Study, AL and MS:*

Total: \$2,600,000 to complete the ongoing feasibility study phase.

## President's FY24 Budget Request

On March 9, the President released the FY24 budget that requested \$7.413 billion for Corps' Civil Works program, an increase from the FY23 request of \$6.6 billion, representing the largest President's Budget request in history.

The President's Budget included a request of \$2.02 billion for the Construction Account. Which is a 58% increase from the FY23 request of \$1.28 billion. However, that request did not include funding for Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF) Projects.

Out of the estimated \$159 million available balance in the IWTF at the beginning of FY24, a very disappointing \$0 was provided for any inland waterways construction projects. According to the Corps, this was because construction capability was limited from the significant investments made by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

**Operations and Maintenance (O&M) account:** \$4.31 billion, including \$1.63 billion for projects funded by the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF); \$1.03 billion is for inland waterways operations and maintenance. While the budget request for the Corps' overall O&M account increased by \$15.19 million over FY23, O&M funding for inland waterways decreased by \$52 million in FY24.

Some inland ports included in the budget request that were hit hard during low water in 2022 included:

- Greenville Harbor: \$934,000
- Memphis Harbor: \$2,435,000
- Vicksburg Harbor: \$944,000
- Osceola Harbor: \$655,000

**Investigations account:** \$129.8 million, which is an increase of 22% from what was provided in the FY23 President's Budget request of \$106 million.

There were no additional fees on inland waterways commercial users, a success in itself, as WCI foundationally opposes additional tolling, lockage fees, or other harmful charges for users of the inland waterways system.





*Rep. Chuck Fleischmann, Chairman of House Appropriations  
Energy and Water Development Subcommittee*

## FY24 House Appropriations Committee Work

**With WCI's advocacy, the House Appropriations Committee supported the inland waterways construction program by providing \$455.97 million, with \$159.6 million from the IWTF, a significant increase from the FY24 President's budget request of \$0.**

WCI 2023

## LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

The House Appropriations Committee held a hearing on the FY24 budget request for the Corps and the Bureau of Reclamation FY24 Budget on March 29. Witness testimony was offered by Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille Touton, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Michael L. Connor, and Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the Corps of Engineers, Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon.

Rep. Chuck Fleischmann, Chairman of House Appropriations Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, opened the hearing with a statement about lock and dam construction, saying "And as a long-time representative of eastern Tennessee, I have a keen interest in construction and maintenance of our Nation's inland waterways system. These locks and dams make possible the movement of waterborne commerce throughout the interior of the country and are essential for America's agriculture, aggregates industry, and energy security."

The overall proposed House funding for the Corps' overall Civil Works program was \$9.57 billion, an increase of \$1.26 billion above FY23's enacted level and \$2.16 billion above the President's FY24 budget request.

WCI's work with the House Appropriations Committee started early, to ensure that the President's Budget would not send a negative signal to Congress. Through intense efforts to rally long-time supporters and educate new members of Congress, we were successful in pushing back on the Administration's proposal. As intended, WCI successfully lobbied to fully fund IWTF investments, resulting in \$455.97 million, with \$159.6 million from the IWTF being provided for in the FY 2024 House Energy and Water Development Bill (E&WD).

Our success was a direct result of the interest we generated on Capitol Hill. There were four House Community Project Funding (CPF) requests (formerly known as earmarks) included in the House bill for inland construction including \$236.8 million for Chickamauga Lock (requested by Rep. Fleischmann); \$41 million for

## LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Lower Monongahela (requested by Rep. Reschenthaler (PA-14); \$103.17 million for McClellan–Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) – Three Rivers (requested by Rep. Crawford; and \$75 million for the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) (requested by Rep. S. Graves (MO-06), LaHood (IL-16), Luetkemeyer (MO03), Sorensen (IL17), and Budzinski (IL-13). NESP was the most requested CPF for the second year in a row.

One investigation account CPF was included which was Bayou Sorrel Lock for \$800,000 (requested by Rep. Garret Graves (R-LA). This was a key achievement for WCI in 2023 due to the amount of coordination required to ensure that this funding would be available. The Bayou Sorrel Lock project had previously been tabled due to inaccurate data used to inform investment decisions. Being that a study had already been completed, the Corps would have to consider this request a “new start” project, can be very difficult for members of congress to receive. Through coordination with Rep. Garret Graves WCI was able to convince the Corps to waive the “new start” requirement for this project, allowing funds to be appropriated in the FY 2024 appropriations process.

The House Appropriations Committee approved its version of the E&WD appropriations bill by a vote of 210-199 on October 26.

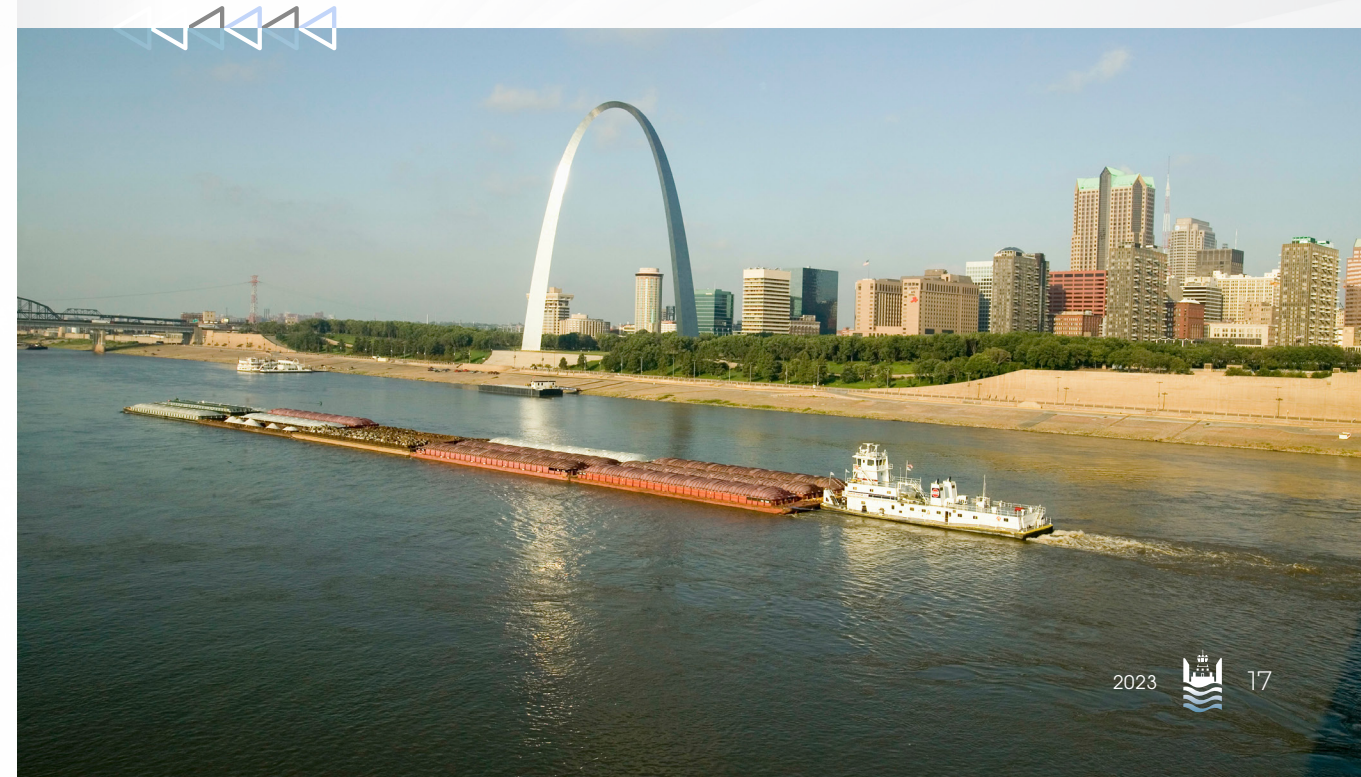
## FY24 Senate Appropriations Committee Work

The Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously passed its version of the E&WD bill on July 20. WCI’s work with the Senate resulted in overall proposed funding for the Corps’ Civil Works program at \$8.93 billion, an increase of \$625 million above FY23’s enacted level, and \$1.52 billion above the President’s FY24 budget request.

The Senate’s FY24 funding recommendation for construction projects on the inland waterways was \$116 million, with \$40.6 million from the IWTF. The IWTF construction projects included \$41 million for Locks and Dams 2, 3, & 4, Monongahela River (requested by Senators Casey (PA) and Capito (WV)); and \$75 million for the Upper Mississippi River- Illinois Waterways System/NESP (requested by Senators Baldwin (WI), Duckworth (IL), Durbin (IL), Klobuchar (MN), and Smith (MN)). \$45 million was included for ecosystem restoration projects for NESP making the total amount of CDS allocations \$120 million for NESP.

The Corps’ Investigations account funding was \$140.3 million, a reduction of \$32.2 million from the FY23 enacted level and \$10.5 million above the FY24 request.

Funding for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) was \$5.53 billion, an increase of \$453.4 million above FY23 and \$1.2 billion above the Administration request.



## FY24 Continuing Resolution(s)

While our efforts were successful throughout the FY 2024 appropriations process, Congress ended the year with a Continuing Resolution (CR). The first CR extended funding until November 17. The second CR extended funding for four of 12 appropriations bills (Agriculture, Energy and Water Development (which funds the Corps of Engineers’ Civil Works program), MilCon-VA, and Transportation) until January 19 while the remaining eight bills—including Defense—were extended funding until February 2.

After another unsuccessful round of negotiating full-year funding, the House and Senate passed a third CR that extended funding for Energy and Water to March 1st.

Short-term CRs do not provide funding to inland waterways construction projects, consistent with the FY24 President’s budget request. They have major negative impacts on the inland system because the Administration applies the “least of” rule during the CR so projects are only eligible to receive the lesser of what is included in the President’s budget, the House bill, or the Senate bill. Because the President’s budget was \$0 in FY24, inland waterways projects would not be eligible for funding during a short-term CR.

## FY24 Appropriations

WCI’s advocacy efforts on FY24 appropriations resulted in significant increases in funding above the President’s budget request.

### FY24 Appropriations Breakdown



ACCOUNT	PROJECT	President’s Budget	Final Bill Text
Construction	Chickamauga Lock	\$0	\$236,800,000
	MKARNS Three Rivers	\$0	\$103,170,000
	Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program	\$0	\$75,000,000*
	Locks and Dams 2, 3, 4, Monongahela River	\$0	\$41,000,000
	TOTAL	\$0	\$455,970,000
Investigations	PROJECT	President’s Budget	Final Bill Text
	Bayou Sorrel Lock	\$0	\$800,000
	TOTAL	\$0	\$800,000
Operations&Maintenance		\$4,313,304,000	\$5,496,622,000



## Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2024



*WCI Treasurer Chris Blanchard stands with Senate Environment & Public Works Committee Chairman Tom Carper before the WRDA kickoff hearing on July 20.*

WCI's efforts to educate Congress on the importance of passing the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2024 were highlighted on July 20, when WCI Treasurer Chris Blanchard, Executive Director of Cooper Consolidated, testified before the Senate EPW Committee's Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2024 kickoff hearing. Mr. Blanchard addressed the many benefits of the biennial WRDA process and the importance of the inland waterways system for shipping America's key commodities.

In addition to providing insight into the importance of WRDA bills, Mr. Blanchard also formally announced WCI's request to the EPW Committee to continue Congressional intent and complete the IJJA inland waterways construction projects with 100 percent federal funding.

WCI 2023

## LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

With the help of our members, WCI gained the support of at least 20 Senators submitting our WRDA 2024 request to Senate EPW to adjust the cost-share for the seven construction and major rehabilitation projects funded in IJJA at 100% federal funding to preserve Congressional intent.

The House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee opened its WRDA 2024 Member request portal in mid-December, and WCI began working on a bipartisan effort for individual House Member requests. Thanks to the grassroots efforts by our members and supporters, in early 2024, WCI's WRDA 2024 request is being supported by at least 46 individual submitters.



WCI 2023

# COMMUNICATIONS & GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES



## COMMUNICATIONS & GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES

WCI communicates regularly with its members and partners via *Breaking News* that highlights key developments within the inland waterways industry; the *ebrief* that captures information shared on WCI's Legislative Roundtable calls held the second and fourth Friday of each month; the *President's Recap* that is distributed to the WCI Board of Directors on the weeks the *ebrief* is not issued; and *Capitol Currents*, WCI's newsletter issued four times each year.

## BY THE NUMBERS

In 2023, WCI issued:

**22**  
*ebriefs*

**22**  
*President's Recap*  
to the Board of Directors

**9**  
*Breaking News*

**4**  
*Capitol Currents*

**2**  
*Press Releases*



## History 20 years in the making



In 2018, the Olmsted Lock & Dam ribbon cutting was held and the project is now operational.

History is often defined as the study of change over time, and as Waterways Council Inc. (WCI) commemorates its 20th anniversary this year, we celebrate the successful changes to the inland waterways transportation system over our two decades.

A bit of a WCI history lesson: the organization began in the early 2000s as a campaign called Waterways Work! that was created to help spend down a growing surplus in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTFF) to modernize the inland system, bring positive attention to the importance of the inland waterways and its infrastructure, and provide some support to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which was being criticized regularly in the news media.

After the success of that effort, Waterways Work! merged with DINAMO, the Association for the Development of Inland Navigation in America's Ohio Valley, to create Waterways Council, Inc., a national organization advocating for a modern, efficient, well-funded inland waterways and ports system. Soon after, WCI merged with MARC 2000 (the Midwest Area River Coalition).

Some of the successes that have occurred

over WCI's tenure include:

**2007:** First Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) in seven years required a veto override, and included program authorization for the Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP)

**2009:** \$430 million is provided for inland navigation construction projects from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

**2010:** First Capital Investment Strategy is completed

**2012:** WCI effectively urged expediting removal of rock pinnacles during low water on Mississippi River

**2014:** Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) enacted Olmsted cost-share change, and Congress approved the industry-supported 45% diesel fuel tax increase on commercial operators to inject additional investment toward the IWTFF

**2015-2018:** Annual Appropriations: Several additional construction cost-share changes were enacted, and overall funding for the Corps increased each year

**2016:** WRDA authorized the Upper Ohio Navigation Project

**2018:** Olmsted ribbon cutting held, project operational

**2020:** WRDA adjusted construction cost-share to 65%/35%

**2021:** Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) infrastructure package provided \$2.5 billion for inland waterways construction

Presently, WCI is focusing on securing fiscal year 2024 Energy & Water Development appropriations for the full amount supportable by annual diesel fuel tax receipts deposited into the IWTFF. At press time, this was still being debated in Congress.

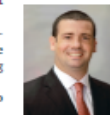
We also worked to overcome bureaucratic hurdles for the Bayou Sorrel Lock, to begin the Corps' 3x3x3 study (to complete within three years at a total cost of under \$3 million and involve all three levels of Corps review—district, division and headquarters) phase.

Foundationally, WCI will continue to oppose additional tolling, lockage fees, or other harmful charges for users of the inland waterways system, and in WRDA 2024 legislation we will work toward a provision that all projects funded by IIJA remain 100% federal, as per Congressional intent in IIJA.

In addition to our legislative successes, WCI has developed an extensive network of stakeholder members around the country who help advocate for our positions and policies. Our grassroots outreach has grown more sophisticated, complementing our in-person meetings on Capitol Hill and back home with digital advocacy outreach tools available 24/7. WCI has also become a key source of information to the news media and on social media about infrastructure, low water, and the industry overall.

WCI's history has shaped our present and our future and has significantly improved the inland waterways transportation system.

We are humbled by our beginnings, and we embrace the future with the vigor and passion and stick-to-it-ness we have always brought to bear. WCI thanks its members and supporters for joining us on the 20-year ride. Stay aboard—there is lots more to see and do ahead!



**TRACY R. ZEA**  
President/CEO,  
Waterways Council Inc.

Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com/Staffan

4 Marine Log // December 2023

In the trade media, six Marine Log columns by WCI President/CEO Tracy Zea appeared in 2023.

## 2023 Media Tour

In an effort to educate news media about the inland waterways, WCI holds an annual Media Tour. In 2023, the tour was led by WCI Directors of Government Relations Dustin Davidson and Jen Armstrong, and WCI Chair Cherrie Felder, and took place August 9-11 in Pittsburgh, PA. Media attendees included David Krapf, Editor, WorkBoat; Eric Haun, Editor, Marine News; Jeff Yoders, Associate Editor, Engineering News Record; Shelley Byrne, Reporter, Waterways Journal; Steve Bohnel, Pittsburgh Post Gazette; and Jamie Wiggan, News Editor, Michael Johnson, Staff Photographer, and Hannah Kinney-Kobre, Digital Editorial Coordinator, Pittsburgh City Paper. The tour was also attended by Angela Grett, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Ingram Barge Company.

The tour began on August 9 with a towboat ride aboard WCI member Campbell Transportation Company's vessel to see Emsworth Lock and Dam.

On August 10, the group received a Corps' briefing and tour of the Lower Mon Construction Project, followed by a Port of Pittsburgh Commission-hosted industry dinner at the Duquesne Club. The industry dinner allowed representatives to discuss Pittsburgh's criticality to the inland waterways system, aging locks and why their modernization is essential, how waterways bring business as an economic generator, and more.

On August 11, the group attended a groundbreaking for the Upper Ohio Navigation Project Montgomery Locks & Dam, attended by Senator Bob Casey and Senior Advisor to President Biden and White House Infrastructure Implementation Coordinator Mitch Landrieu, along with members of the Corps' Pittsburgh District.

*Peter Stephaich (center) speaks with reporters attending WCI's annual Media Tour held in Pittsburgh in August.*



## COMMUNICATIONS & GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES

### Social Media

In 2023, WCI continued its social media / public education campaign that addresses the importance of the inland waterways to the Nation by posting on key platforms.

**f** **3,840**  
**FOLLOWERS**

**in** **3,412**  
**FOLLOWERS**

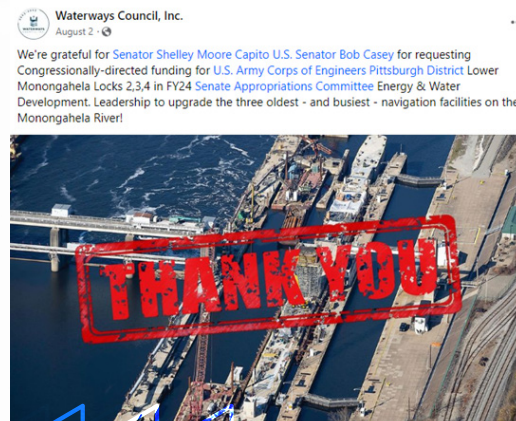
**X** **922**  
**FOLLOWERS**

**ig** **780**  
**FOLLOWERS**



WCI's Facebook page's top post of 2023 was "Advocating for America's SPOOKtacular inland rivers and waterways since 2003! Creepin' it real for 20 years" featuring a WCI carved pumpkin on Halloween, with over 5,000 accounts reached and over 1,100 engagements.

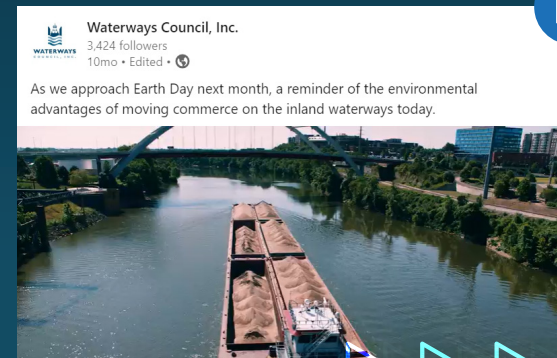
This post on Facebook, and across all of WCI's social media platforms, thanked Members of Congress for their support of earmarked funding for locks.



### TOP POSTS



WCI's Instagram reel's greatest reach in 2023 was "Rivers Connect U.S. to Careers" featuring photos from our 2023 Photo Contest with RiverWorks Discovery and The Waterways Journal, with over 300 views for this post and over 300 accounts reached.



WCI's top tweet of 2023 on X (formerly Twitter) promoted the major maintenance work conducted at Brandon Road Lock on the Illinois Waterway. The post reached 1,100 people, addressing the three-month closure at three lock and dam locations to address new miter gate installation, machinery and electrical upgrades, and other improvements, building on the 2020 full-river closure at other locations, including the major rehabilitation at LaGrange Lock and Dam. The #ILWW2023 opened on time and had minimal disruptions thanks to coordinated communication with the Corps' Rock Island District. WCI's Twitter community includes 925 followers and counting.

WCI's LinkedIn top post in 2023 garnered 1,949 total views. The WCI page ended 2023 with more than 3,400 followers.

# SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

## AMERICA'S INLAND WATERWAYS SYSTEM

A VITAL PART OF OUR TRANSPORTATION SUPPLY CHAIN



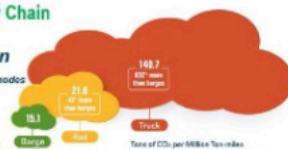
DOWNLOAD AMERICA'S INLAND WATERWAYS SYSTEM

## Greening the Supply Chain

Barge transportation has the **smallest carbon footprint** among surface modes

Truck generates **43% more** carbon dioxide than barges.

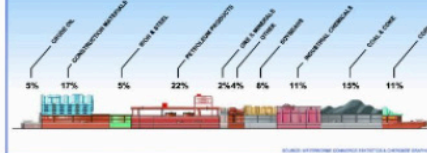
**832% more** CO2 emissions by trucks compared to barges.



DOWNLOAD LOWEST CARBON FOOTPRINT

## "What's In Those Barges?"

Commodities Moved on America's Inland Waterways



Want to reduce @USDOT greenhouse gas emissions? Move it by barge! Towboats move commodities we all rely on through @DOTMARAD inland waterways. Not just on #EarthDay but EVERY day, 24/7/365. Lowest carbon footprint, safest, lowest-cost, but our lock and dam infrastructure needs updating. More info? Text LOCKS to 17252230280

DOWNLOAD WHAT'S IN THOSE BARGES

WCI 2023

## COMMUNICATIONS & GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES



DOWNLOAD WORDCLOUD

## Fuel Efficient and Reliable

America's inland waterways already save over 28 million gallons of oil each year by moving goods by water instead of by truck, rail or air.

**Barges: Most Fuel Efficient**

**Barges Provide Superior Cargo Capacity**



DOWNLOAD FUEL EFFICIENT



In 2023, WCI also added content to its social media toolkit on its website, offering graphics and important facts and figures about the inland waterways.





# WCI ACTION ALERTS

WCI Action Alerts were sent to our opted-in 3,391 advocates to facilitate communication with Members of Congress and to advocate for the inland waterways. Evergreen action alerts also populate our website's Action Center year-round. Opt-in to receive Alerts by email here or by texting LOCKS from your smartphone to 725-223-0280

## CAPITOL CURRENTS

December 20, 2023

### 20 YEARS, BUT JUST BEGINNING

Tracy Zee, WCI President/CEO

Waterways Council, Inc. (WCI) celebrates its 20th year as an organization in 2023. "By Washington, DC, standards," this makes WCI a very young association. To put it in perspective, American Waterways Operators will celebrate its 100th anniversary next year, the National Association of Manufacturers has been around for more than 100 years, and the American Chemistry Council just celebrated its 50th.

Even though we are a young organization, WCI has accomplished a lot that the membership should be extremely proud of.

In 2003, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) renewed after a seven-year hiatus. The size of the bill required a Congressional veto override and included authorization of, among other things, the Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NEESP).

In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided a \$2 billion for inland navigation infrastructure, which jump-started lock construction projects such as Chickamauga, Kentucky, and Lower Mon.

In 2010, the first Capital Investment Strategy (CIS) was completed. This has been the guiding document that has allowed industry to approach Congress with solutions, and successfully lobby with one voice on Capitol Hill.

In 2012, historic low water conditions caught global media attention. Aside from being a voice for the industries affected, WCI was successful in urging the expedited removal of rock placemarks by the Corps of Engineers to allow navigation to continue resuming.

In 2014, the Water Resources Reform Development Act (WRDDA) authorized the \$540m cost-share change

to complete construction of the Olmsted lock. This accelerated the two-year projected completion date by four years. WCI also successfully urged passage of the diesel fuel tax increase by nine cents in 2014.

In 2018, WRDDA authorized the Upper Ohio Navigation Project (three of the 10 projects were authorized for construction).

In 2020, WCI celebrated the ribbon cutting, an Olmsted lock and dam became operational.

In 2021, WRDDA adjusted the construction cost share for all lock projects from 50/50 to 60/40. The Beas River Floodgates and Colorado Locks on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) were also authorized (two of the 10 projects that were authorized for construction).

In 2022, the Infrastructure Investment and

Continued on page 2

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1. Member spotlight: Colonel Products
- 2. Inland Waterways Users Roundtable
- 3. Conservation Column: Perley's Call to Action
- 4. WCI Celebrates the Big 20 in the Big Easy

WCI's newsletter Capitol Currents was issued four times this year on March 9, June 28, October 10 and December 20.

## WATERWAYS: LOCKED IN

DIGITAL ADVOCACY WEEK  
FEB 6-10, 2023

AN ONLINE EVENT TO TELL CONGRESS:

- RIVER TRANSPORTATION'S IMPORTANT
- FUND LOCK & DAM INFRASTRUCTURE
- MOVE IT ON INLAND WATERWAYS
- CREATE AMERICAN JOBS

SIGN UP  
text LOCKS  
to 313131

During WCI's 2023 Digital Advocacy Week February 6-10 that coincided with WCI's Capitol Hill Fly-In February 6-8, 723 emails, calls, & Tweets were sent to legislators about the importance of the inland waterways.

## 2023 PHOTO CONTEST

### RIVERS CONNECT U.S.

WATERWAYS COUNCIL, INC. RIVERWORKS DISCOVERY WATERWAYS JOURNAL

#### CAREERS

Many call rivers their workplace, rivers provide careers in transportation, shipping, recreation, and conservation, just to name a few. This category focuses on showcasing the people at work on and along the river.

1<sup>ST</sup> CAPTAIN KYLE BRUNER American Council of Single-Lane-MV American Waterways Association working on the shoreline with his son, his dog, and his family.

2<sup>ND</sup> Making a drain hole inside Marine Towing

3<sup>RD</sup> DAVID RIDER View from Margaret Transportation Company's MV Cindy Erickson

#### COMMERCE

Rivers connect U.S. to the materials we need: food on the table, gas in vehicles, and building materials, just to name a few. This category focuses on the vessels, machines, tools, materials, and pathways (such as locks & dams, ports, terminals) that help manage the goods and services communities can do better because of the connection rivers provide to us.

1<sup>ST</sup> ALLEIGH BAILEY Transiting upper lock on passenger vessel American Duchess

2<sup>ND</sup> CAPTAIN KYLE BRUNER American Council of Single-Lane-MV American Waterways Association on the KVM bridge in Illinois

3<sup>RD</sup> ROBERT DOBBS ARTCO's MV Cimarron Gem southbound at Memphis

#### CONSERVATION

Rivers connect ecosystems, as all rivers lead to an ocean, and the species that live in the river are an impact as water flows downstream. This category focuses on sharing the natural beauty (such as sunrises and sunsets), the animals, and conservation efforts along our rivers such as clean-ups.

1<sup>ST</sup> PEGGY CUMMINGS Upper Mississippi Game Refuge

2<sup>ND</sup> COOY TENTS American Wildlife Refuge looking out on the Mississippi River just north of Lock and Dam 11

3<sup>RD</sup> CAPTAIN SAMMY MORRIS Scenic view of the Cumberland River at the Big Bend National Park

#### CULTURE

Rivers connect U.S. to our culture, impacting our community and the recreation we enjoy along the river. This category focuses on sharing the recreational activities stemming from rivers, such as river history, recreational boating, canoeing, kayaking, shorebirds, music, and so much more that make rivers part of our lives.

1<sup>ST</sup> JESSICA HAGAN Fireworks over Louisville from the Regency Bar

2<sup>ND</sup> ALEX SCHUCHTER Early morning in Memphis from the American Queen

3<sup>RD</sup> WILL HOVER Panning paddle in the Mingo of Spain

Again, this year, WCI, along with Waterways Journal and Riverworks Discovery, sponsored the #WhoWorksTheRivers Photo Contest, which received more than 300 submissions within categories of Careers, Commerce, Conservation and Culture. And the winners are...



## COMMUNICATIONS & GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES

### Five on the Five



*WCI Vice President - Midwest Paul Rohde interviews Congressman Eric Sorensen from Illinois' 17th district for the 'Five on the Five.'*

This year, WCI's members-only 'Five on the Five' interview series of five questions distributed on the 5th of each month, profiled 10 legislators or other important policy players, as follows:

[Rep. Tracey Mann](#) (R-KS); [Rep. Mark Alford](#) (R-MO); [Rep. Marionette Miller-Meeks](#) (R-IA); [Sen. Shelley Moore Capito](#) (R-WV); [Rep. Nikki Budzinski](#) (D-IL); [Jen Armstrong](#) (WCI); [Edward Belk](#) (Corps of Engineers); [Thomas Heinold](#) (Corps of Engineers); [Cherrie Felder](#) (WCI Chair, Channel Shipyard Companies); [Rep. Eric Sorensen](#) (D-IL).

### Lock 14 Mooring Cell Groundbreaking

On April 12, the Corps hosted the first of several groundbreaking ceremonies related to the start of the Navigation Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP). Rock Island District Commander COL Jesse Curry led the ceremony recognizing the construction of a mooring cell at Lock 14.

He was joined by MG Diana Holland (Mississippi Valley Division Commander) and Iowa Department of Transportation Director Scott Marler. Rep. Eric Sorensen (D, IL-17) also spoke at the event. Representatives from other Congressional offices, Governor's offices, local mayors, and members of the media attended, along with several WCI members.



*The Lock 14 mooring cell groundbreaking in April was a celebration of NESP.*

### Lock 22 and Lock 25 Groundbreaking



*On May 18, 80 WCI members and guests commemorated the groundbreaking of Lock and Dam (L&D) 25 and the start of the Navigation-Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), shown here. A WCI reception that evening at Ameristar Casino Resort in St. Charles, MO, continued the celebration.*



*The Corps also held a groundbreaking ceremony on May 18 for a NESP ecosystem project, a fish passage at Lock 22 in Saverton, MO.*

# Montgomery Locks & Dam Groundbreaking



Left to right: Mitch Landrieu, Senior Advisor to the President and White House for Infrastructure, stands with Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, and Col. Nicholas Melin, US Army Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District Commander, at the Montgomery Locks and Dam groundbreaking ceremony on August 11.

WCI Directors of Government Relations Jen Armstrong and Dustin Davidson, who led the annual media tour in Pittsburgh, get to work at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Upper Ohio Navigation Project Montgomery Locks & Dam. The Upper Ohio Navigation Project will replace small auxiliary lock chambers at Emsworth, Dashields, and Montgomery locks and dams with larger, more modern locks.



WCI 2023

## COMMUNICATIONS & GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES

### 2023 Commodity Classic



Left to right: Dale Roth (retired WCI Board member), Garry Niemeyer (Niemeyer Farms), Tray Jones (Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council), Amber McClay (WCI) and Paul Rohde (WCI) represent the WCI booth at the 2023 Commodity Classic in Orlando.

WCI's public education efforts took WCI staff to Orlando in 2023 to exhibit at Commodity Classic, the annual conference presented by the American Soybean Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Sorghum Producers, and the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

More than 10,400 attendees participated in the conference sessions and visited the trade show floor. WCI's booth was one of 412 exhibit spaces, a record number since Commodity Classic's debut in 1996. This year also marked the largest square footage of trade show in the event's history.

WCI's exhibit featured educational videos, a model of a lock and dam, and opportunities to contact Congress by email, phone and video recordings with WCI's appropriations priorities for FY24. WCI also hosted a breakfast briefing for members to discuss the appropriations landscape.

WCI 2023

# MEMBERSHIP & MEMBER ACTIVITIES





**96% RETENTION RATE**

## WCI MEMBERS GAINED IN 2023

- Bacon Farmer Workman Engineers
- Barge Ops
- Big River Steel
- CIT
- Frost Brown Todd LLC
- Lake Providence Port Commission
- Lakes & Rivers Contracting
- Laborde Products
- Northern Grain Belt Ports
- Ullico
- Viserion Grain

## WCI MEMBERS DROPPED IN 2023

- Alan K. Goldstein
- Aon Risk Management
- Float Freight
- Interoceanic Corporation
- NAI Latter & Blum
- Oklahoma DOT
- Wood Resources



**WATERWAYS**  
COUNCIL, INC.



WCI 2023

## MEMBERSHIP & MEMBER ACTIVITIES

### WCI MEETINGS 2023

#### Washington, DC Meetings

WCI held its first in-person Capitol Hill Fly-In since 2020 on February 8, with a Board of Directors meeting held February 7. WCI hosted more than 100 very positive Hill visits led by WCI's members to urge the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate to support WCI's legislative priorities:

- Secure Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 E&WD appropriations for the full amount supportable by annual diesel fuel tax receipts deposited into the IWTF under the cost-share established in the Water Resources Development Act of 2022.
- Obtain one new construction start as recommended by the Inland Waterways Users Board.
- Obtain an increase in overall FY24 Corps of Engineers' Civil Works program Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding, and, within that amount, an increase in funding for inland navigation projects.
- Oppose additional tolling, lockage fees, or other harmful charges for users of the inland waterways system.

WCI also encouraged individual advocacy from its members to legislators back in their home states and districts to carry these key priority messages.



Left to right: WCI President/CEO Tracy Zea; WCI Vice Chairman Jeff Webb (Cargill); WCI Chair Cherrie Felder, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Michael Connor, and Inland Waterways Users Board Chairman Spencer Murphy (Canal Barge Company) gather in Washington, DC, at WCI's February 2023 meeting.



The WCI Missouri team, led by WCI's Paul Rohde (fifth from left), comprised of (left to right) Kellen Lynch (LaFarge Holcim), Darrick Steen (Missouri Corn Growers Association), Jessica Stephan (Bunge North America), Kerry Cole (Arcosa), Jeffrey Wilson (LaFarge Holcim), and Caitlin Wall (Audubon) met with Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO-03) (fourth from left) during the WCI Fly-in.



Left to right: Upper Midwest WCI members Chris Smith (Corn Belt Ports), Kirsten Wallace (Upper Mississippi River Basin Association), Jeff Webb (Cargill) and Kevin Hall (CHS, Inc.) meet with Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN) (center) during WCI fly-in.



Left to right: Scott Harshman (Port of Pittsburgh Commission), Robert McAllister (American Consolidated Natural Resources (ACNR), Inc.), WCI Board member Mary Ann Bucal (Port of Pittsburgh Commission), and David Podurgiel (ACNR River Towing) gather at WCI's Washington, DC reception.

## MEMBERSHIP & MEMBER ACTIVITIES

WCI 2023

### WCI Annual Meeting and Waterways Symposium, New Orleans

On November 13-15, WCI held its Annual Board of Directors meeting and Waterways Symposium in New Orleans at the Four Seasons Hotel. This meeting was a celebration of WCI's 20th anniversary and the successes it has delivered for its members over two decades. A historical timeline of WCI's major events was developed for the celebration.

During the Board meeting, WCI staff reviewed with its members legislative, stakeholder, and communications activities that occurred since its last meeting in February in Washington, DC.

They also walked down memory lane with remembrances from WCI's early beginnings in 2003. An opening reception was held at Vue Orleans, an interactive experience with unique exhibits that celebrate New Orleans' history, music, and culture.

WCI Chair Felder kicked off WCI's Annual Waterways Symposium, co-sponsored with Waterways Journal, by introducing Port of New Orleans President & CEO Brandy Christian, who welcomed attendees to the city at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

Peter Ricchiuti, Senior Professor of Practice with the Freeman School of Business at Tulane University, offered a national economic outlook, and Kenneth Simonson, Chief Economist for the Associated General Contractors of America, addressed the U.S. construction outlook.



WCI's First Chairman Berdon Lawrence delivered a moving video message of congratulations to attendees at the anniversary meetings in November in New Orleans.



WCI Chair Cherrie Felder led the Board of Directors meeting and opened the Annual Waterways Symposium.



WCI Executive Committee Member Andrew Brown prepares to introduce Waterways Symposium speaker Peter Ricchiuti.



14 Nov  
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Connor addresses WCI's 2023 Waterways Symposium attendees, outlining the critical importance of modern navigation infrastructure among the Corps' mission areas.



Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Michael Connor offered the keynote address, emphasizing the urgency to complete navigation construction projects.

Sean Duffy, Executive Director of the Big River Coalition, discussed the deepening of the Mississippi River to 50 feet that is underway, and the beneficial use of dredged material.

Col. Cullen Jones, Commander of the Corps' New Orleans District, discussed the low-water saltwater intrusion into New Orleans, the creation of 1,750 acres for new wildlife habitats from the dredged material from the Mississippi River deepening project, and the makeup of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and its locks that include the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Lock, a priority for his district and the Nation.

Michael Hecht, President/CEO, Greater New Orleans, Inc., highlighted the benefits of New Orleans' economic development, noting that one out of every five jobs in the city is related in some way to the river.

WCI's 20th anniversary dinner was held at Southern Yacht Club on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain.

As part of WCI's meetings, Steve Golding, Chairman, Golding Barge, was honored with The National Rivers Hall of Fame 2023 National Achievement Award for his significant contributions to America's waterways. Established in 1985, the National Rivers Hall of Fame collects, preserves, and shares the stories of the people who have had a significant impact on the rivers of America. The award was presented by Kurt Strand, President and CEO, National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, (left) and Errin Howard, former Executive Director of RiverWorks Discovery.



WCI's Wade Beasley (Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council); Rodney Weinzierl (Illinois Corn Growers Association), and Scott Ramshaw (Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 562) at WCI's 20th anniversary meetings.



Chair Felder stands with past Chairmen at WCI's 20th anniversary celebration. From left to right: Merritt Lane, Peter Stephaich, Cherrie Felder, Dan Mecklenborg, and Matt Woodruff.

# SPONSORS



Co-Sponsored by Waterways Journal, WCI’s Annual Waterways Symposium (#SYM23) and 20th anniversary events were well-supported by its sponsoring member companies, as follows:

## DC February Capitol Hill Fly-In Sponsors:

### Platinum (\$5,000)



### Gold (\$3,500)



### Silver \$2,000



# SPONSORS

## WCI November 20th Anniversary Meeting Sponsors:

### Diamond (\$7,500)



### Platinum (\$5,000)



### Gold (\$3,500)



### Silver \$2,000



# OTHER EVENTS OF THE YEAR

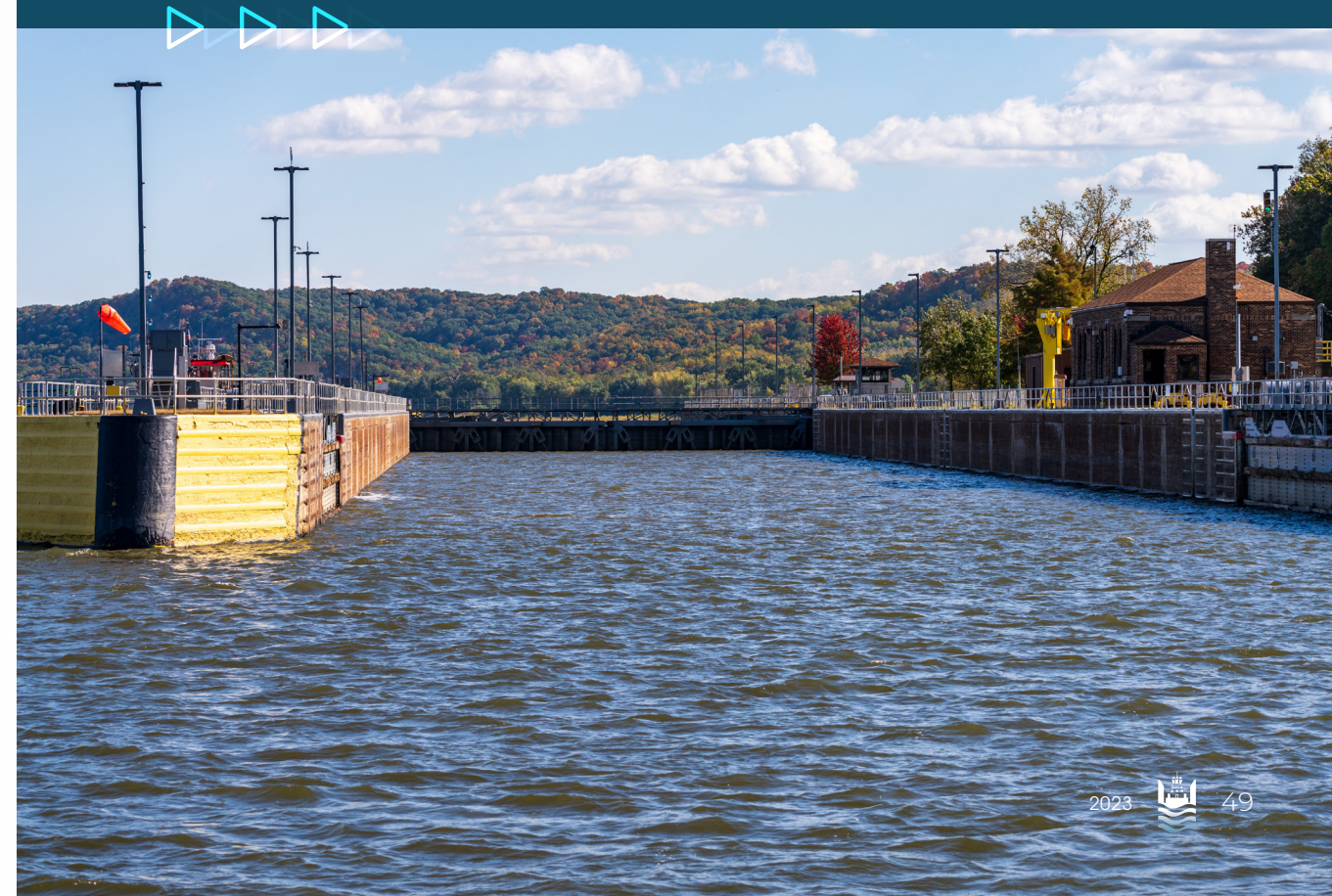
## Lock 12 Tour

*Rep. Ashley Hinson and WCI Midwest Vice President Paul Rohde stand at the bottom of Lock 12. Under-seepage from the lock's alluvium foundation kept some standing water during the major maintenance process.*



WCI Midwest Vice President Paul Rohde was invited by the Corps' Rock Island District to tour the bottom of Upper Mississippi River Lock 12 in Bellevue, Iowa, on February 14. The lock, which opened in 1938 after four years of construction, was dewatered for major maintenance work, including installation of the lower bulkhead sill beam, weep hole cleaning/unclogging to allow for better drainage of water, miter gate anchorage upgrades, sill and seal repairs, ladder and guardrail repairs, and bubbler system/pipe and diffuser replacements, among others.

Elected officials and staff representatives from district offices included House Appropriations Committee member Rep. Ashley Hinson (R, IA-02), Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R, IA-01), Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA), and Dubuque Mayor Brad Cavanaugh and Bellevue Mayor Roger Michels.



### Inland Waterways Users Board

The Inland Waterways Users Board (IWUB) met three times in 2023, beginning with its 99th meeting April 12-13 in Pittsburgh, with a tour of the Lower Mon and Upper Ohio projects. At the meeting, it was revealed that Charleroi Lock is expected to be operational by the end of the year/early next year. The meeting additionally focused on the IWTF balance and the need to receive accurate accounting quarterly from the Corps.

The 100th meeting of the IWUB was held in Paducah on July 20, with a tour of Kentucky Lock the day before. At the meeting, a motion to continue IJA-funded projects 100% from the General Treasury was passed unanimously and supports WCI's top priority request for the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2024. Ensuring the cost of these projects remains 100% federally funded will allow the Nation to realize economic return more quickly, reduce the supply chain's environmental footprint, and address uncertainty in global agriculture and energy markets.

The 101st meeting of the IWUB meeting was held on October 19 in Springfield, VA. There was no tour associated with this meeting. The Board unanimously passed a motion in support of the Corps pursuing continuing contract authority for Lock and Dam 25 and Montgomery Lock. Continuing contract authority allows the Corps to award multi-year contracts without having received appropriations to cover the full contract. Incorporating this into a project's construction contract is critical to finishing projects on time and within budget.



*The day after the IWUB meeting in Pittsburgh in April, Campbell Transportation Company arranged a vessel ride and lockage aboard the M/V Connie K for Major General William (Butch) H. Graham, ASA Secretary Connor and others.*



*The IWUB met in Paducah, KY in July, with a tour of the Kentucky Lock addition project.*

## Illinois Waterway Consolidated Closures



*At Dresden Island Lock, interim re-watering took place on September 10. In preparation for the re-watering, the contractor completed upstream and downstream pre-cast valve installation, and set miter gate anchorages and pintles to prepare for the reopening.*

On October 1, traffic began passing at Marseilles, Dresden Island, and Brandon Road Locks on the Illinois Waterway (ILWW). This successfully concluded a 120-day closure of the ILWW for major maintenance on the system. WCI offered its thanks to the Corps' Rock Island District for regular communication to stakeholders that resulted in an on-time reopening.

## OTHER EVENTS OF THE YEAR

### WCI Hosts National Defense University Eisenhower School



*National Defense University's Eisenhower School spent two days touring the inland waterways, with the start of the trip in Nashville aboard a Hines Furlong vessel that departed from Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel's facility.*

On March 28-29, WCI was asked by the prestigious National Defense University's Eisenhower School to arrange a tour of the inland waterways system for 16 students as part of their transportation logistics curriculum. A two-day tour in Nashville and Paducah began with a boat ride from Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel's Nashville yard aboard a Hines Furlong vessel, a lunch briefing by Arcosa Marine's Neal Langdon, an afternoon lecture at Fort Campbell (Kentucky) by Dr. Craig Philip and colleagues from Vanderbilt University and soldiers who utilize the inland waterways for materiel command movements. Day two began with a stop at Seamen's Church Institute in Paducah to utilize the state-of-the-art training simulator, followed by a visit to Ingram Barge Company's training facility in Paducah, and concluded with a briefing and tour of Kentucky Lock by the Corps of Engineers.



# SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, WCI continued to appreciate its partnership with other associations and organizations, including the American Waterways Operators, that results in shared success for the inland waterways.



*Among WCI's partnering organizations is the National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA). Shown here, Mike Seyfert, NGFA President and CEO, stands with WCI Chair Cherrie Felder, at NGFA's 127th Annual Convention, held March 21-23 in La Quinta, CA.*



# WCI STAFF



**Tracy Zea**  
*President/CEO*



**Debra Calhoun**  
*Senior Vice President*



**Paul Rohde**  
*Vice President - Midwest*



**Dustin Davidson**  
*Director - Government Relations*



**Jen Armstrong**  
*Director of Government Relations*



**Amber McClay**  
*Office Manager/Events Coordinator*



*(Left to right) WCI's staff of Amber McClay, Office Manager/Events Coordinator; Paul Rohde, Vice President-Midwest Region; Tracy Zea, President & CEO; Deb Calhoun, Senior Vice President; Jennifer Armstrong and Dustin Davidson, Directors of Government Relations, gathered in New Orleans for their annual holiday photo.*



**We have only just begun.**

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[waterwayscouncil.org](http://waterwayscouncil.org)