



NEWS RELEASE

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WCI REACTS TO PRESIDENT'S FY '17 BUDGET REQUEST; CORPS RELEASES FY '16 WORK PLAN

Washington, DC – Waterways Council, Inc. (WCI) reacted to the FY 2017 budget request made by President Obama earlier today, as detailed below.

The budget

- proposes \$4.620 billion for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Civil Works program, a 22.9% cut from the \$5.989 billion FY' 16 appropriation for the program;
- proposes \$1.090 billion for the Construction account, a 41.5% reduction from FY16's \$1.862 billion;
- proposes \$2.705 billion for the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) account, \$5 million less than the Administration requested last year for the account, but a \$432 million cut (13.8%) from what Congress appropriated for the current fiscal year;
- requests \$85 million for General Investigations, but provides no funds for Preliminary Engineering and Design (PED) for the Navigation Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), authorized in WRDA 2007;
- suggests a \$1.289 billion inland waterways user fee. Similar proposals in the past have been soundly rejected by Congress;
- requests \$986 million be appropriated from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF), down from \$1.25 billion in FY 2016.

Also, today, the Corps released its work plan for FY 2016 funding allocations made available by Congress as follows:

- Olmsted Lock and Dam Project will receive \$268 million (a \$55.3 million increase above the \$212.7 million it got in the final FY15 work plan and \$88 million more than the Administration requested;
- Lower Mon 2, 3, 4 will get \$58.9 million (a \$3 million increase);

- Kentucky Lock will receive \$45.4 million (\$30.7 million higher than the FY15 work plan's \$14.7 million and \$45.4 million more than the Administration requested in FY'16;
- Chickamauga Lock will get \$29.9 million (\$26.9 million higher than the FY15 work plan's \$3 million) and \$29 million more than was included in the Administration budget request;
- Lockport Lock and Dam (Major Rehab) received \$1.4 million to award contract modifications to finish the project;
- There is no funding for NESP. Lockport Lock and Dam (Major Rehab) was awarded \$1.4 million for contract modifications to close out the project.
- There is no funding for NESP.

“The Administration’s FY ’17 budget request for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Civil Works mission proposes a 30% cut and is the most disappointing budget to date. Our nation’s waterways, and lock and dam modernization, are critical to the transportation supply chain and to competition for shippers on the world stage, yet we continue to see slashed funding,” said Michael J. Toohey, President/CEO, WCI. “With Congressional FY 16 appropriations funding finally at efficient levels, we simply cannot go backwards when the outlook for freight ahead is so robust. Congress has consistently demonstrated its understanding of the importance of infrastructure investment. WCI will work vigorously to reverse the Administration’s recommendations in the halls of Congress,” he continued.

Save the Date: WCI will hold its annual press briefing to discuss the FY ’17 budget, WRDA 2016, WRRDA 2014 implementation, and what lies ahead for inland waterways transportation at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, on Wednesday, March 9, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. (First Amendment Room).

Waterways Council, Inc. is the national public policy organization advocating for a modern and well-maintained national system of ports and inland waterways. The group is supported by waterways carriers, shippers, port authorities, agriculture, labor and conservation organizations, shipping associations and waterways advocacy groups from all regions of the country. Visit www.waterwayscouncil.org.