



Infrastructure Week, May 16-23, 2016

During Infrastructure Week, we celebrate our Nation's inland waterways system, critically important to transporting bulk cargoes that are the building blocks of our economy--604 million tons valued at \$232 billion moved on the inland system in 2014.

Waterways move grain and fertilizer for farmers; steel, cement, asphalt and aggregates for manufacturing, construction and road-building industries; coal and fuel oil for power plants, along with limestone for air scrubbers; petroleum, chemicals and petrochemicals for manufacturers and end-users, and things that are just too big or heavy to move by other modes, like rocket boosters for NASA.

12,000 miles of waterways across 38 states serve the heartland of America via the Mississippi River and its major tributaries (Ohio, Tennessee and Illinois Rivers). The Gulf Intracoastal Waterway serves the coast from Florida's panhandle to the southern tip of Texas. The Columbia Snake system serves ports in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. 192 lock sites connect these pieces together.

The bad news is that 60% of those locks have outlived their 50-year economic design period. The good news is that infrastructure investment for our aging locks and dams offers a great return: Every \$1 invested in our inland waterway system returns \$10 to our Nation's economy. And proper investment means sustaining 541,000 jobs and more than \$1 billion in new job income annually.

The waterways are the safest, most environmentally sound transportation mode for bulk cargoes. Waterways have the best fuel efficiency record, relieve highway traffic congestion, and have the most capacity for freight that can facilitate increased productivity.

Assured investment for our waterways is a sure bet for America!