

Capitol Currents



NESP IS NEEDED NOW

By Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL)



Congressman Rodney Davis

I REPRESENT THE 13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS which includes the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. This location is key to the biggest economic driver of our region – agriculture – meaning the locks and dams on our inland waterways play an essential role in moving agricultural commodities and other goods produced in my district. In fact, \$81 billion of manufactured goods, \$37 billion of agriculture and food products, and \$18 billion of basic chemicals are all shipped to and from Illinois via our waterways. The waterways in Illinois support nearly 50,000 Illinois jobs and directly contribute \$6.4 billion to our state’s economy.

Our nation leads the world in agricultural exports, and Illinois ranks as the sixth largest state for agricultural exports in the United States. In 2015, these U.S. exports totaled \$133 billion. Importantly, 60 percent of these exports move by barge along our inland waterways. Unfortunately, many of the locks used by barges, including LaGrange in Versailles and the Peoria Lock and Dam, are well beyond their design life, which has increased delays and maintenance costs.

All it takes is a single lock closure to shut down the entire system. The National Waterways Foundation recently did a study on lock closures, which looked at the effects of a LaGrange Lock and Dam closure of one year. The results indicated that a closure there would immediately affect 18 states and increase transportation costs by \$1.7 billion annually.

Congress has designated the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway system a nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant commercial navigation system. Authorized in WRDA 2007, the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) would expand seven locks along the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Waterway from 600 to 1,200 feet and fund ecosystem restoration projects.

Preconstruction engineering and design (PED) is the first step toward getting these projects to the construction phase. Unfortunately, NESP has not received the funding for PED in more than eight years because funding was not requested by the previous administration and the Appropriations Committees would therefore not allow us to request the money. Subsequently, the previous administration took the position that NESP needed to be re-studied before it could receive further funding, something I see as an unnecessary use of time and taxpayer dollars.

I have taken on NESP as one of my top priorities. Not only it is vital to my congressional district, but it is vital for America to stay competitive in the global marketplace. During my time in Congress, I have taken every opportunity I have been given to ask the Army Corps of Engineers questions on NESP and encouraged them to advance this program.

Most recently, at a Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing, I took the opportunity to inform Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works R.D. James that I believe it is unacceptable that the previous

(Continued on page 2)



Senator Shelby Shows Strong Support for Waterways

Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL) is the new Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee after former Chairman, Mississippi Republican Senator Thad Cochran, left office on April 1 citing his health issues. He also serves on the Committee on Senate Environment and Public Works, and at during a recent Senate Energy & Water Development Subcommittee hearing, Senator Shelby said, “In my home state of Alabama, a priority is the deepening

and widening of the Port of Mobile.” He is also a supporter of improving coastal and inland navigation, and increasing investment in infrastructure. When inquiring about why Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and other dollars has not been efficiently spent, he said, “We all have needs, from Oregon to Louisiana, from New Hampshire to Alaska, and we’ve got money for [those needs], unborrowed money just sitting there. We need to figure it out.” ♦

NESP IS NEEDED NOW

(Continued from page 1)

administration recommended that NESP be studied again. I followed it up by asking Sec. James if he was willing to work with me to have PED move forward on this project, which he committed to working with me to do.

Unfortunately, we are still in a holding position on NESP, but I will continue to advocate for the importance of advancing this critical program to the Corps, the appropriators, and this administration. ♦



Senator Shelby was joined by R.D. James, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, for an official tour of the Alabama State Port Authority's Port of Mobile on April 30.



Senator Lamar Alexander.

Markup of the FY2019 House Energy & Water Development Appropriations bill that funds the Corps of Engineers is scheduled in Subcommittee for May 7. Stay tuned for Capitol Currents coverage ahead of the FY2019 appropriations process and developments on WRDA 2018.

START MAKING SENSE

An April 18 hearing in the Senate Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, chaired by Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), was held to review the FY2019 budget request for the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation. At the hearing, Senator Alexander said, “The user fees that are paid into the Inland Waterways Trust Fund by waterway users are matched with federal dollars, which allow the Corps of Engineers to make significant progress to address the backlog of work on our inland waterways.

But despite knowing the Inland Waterways Trust Fund would have \$104 million available for fiscal year 2019, the Administration’s budget is only proposing to spend \$5 million – the lowest level of proposed spending from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund in at least the last 20 years – and leaving 97% of these funds sitting unspent in a Treasury account.

That means, in effect, we would be collecting taxes from commercial barges to go through the locks in order to improve the locks, and then we would be keeping the money, putting it in the bank, and not spending it for the intended purpose.

And despite not spending the entire \$104 million in user fees from commercial barges, the administration’s budget also includes a new user fee for inland waterways that would raise another \$1.7 billion over a 10-year window.

I do not think this is a responsible approach. We need to spend the money that is already being collected before we ask the waterways industry to pay more. It makes no sense to ask barge owners to pay more in fees when the administration is not even proposing to spend all the fees we are collecting today. ...What sense does that make?,” Senator Alexander asked. ♦

J RUSSELL FLOWERS INC.



The company's newer tank barges have 6psi tank tops, heavy hull scantlings, and stainless steel external fittings.

WCI Member Spotlight: J. Russell Flowers, Inc.

Founded in 1991, J. Russell Flowers, Inc., has grown to become one of the nation's largest independent leasing companies of inland marine barges and towboats. It offers open and covered hopper barges, chemical and petroleum tank barges, deck barges, and towboats for long term charter. The company also provides specialized technical advice, as well as detailed construction contract and project management support.

With well over 1,000 vessels in its fleet, J. Russell Flowers, Inc. offers creative solutions to a wide range of barging requirements. The company's long-standing relationships with shipyards on the Ohio River, Mississippi River and Gulf Coast allow it to consistently build quality equipment, specifically tailored to its customers' needs. The management team is directly involved in all phases of the plan-

ning, design, and construction of each vessel. It works closely with naval architects and shipyards to develop advanced designs and quality construction practices. The company strives to provide outstanding baseline control, accurate records, and detailed follow-up involvement with its customers.

J. Russell Flowers, Founder and Chairman, passed away in 2017. His clear vision and steady hand at the helm guided the company for many successful years. Mr. Flowers was determined to build high quality, heavily constructed barges and towboats that would withstand many years of rigorous service. Equally important, he saw the need to build strong relations with customers and vendors, and to treat all industry partners with respect and consideration.

Mr. Flowers entered the barging industry in 1962 and went on to build the highly successful barge line, Flowers Transportation Inc. He sold the company to Chromalloy American Corporation in 1981 but remained as chairman and CEO. From 1984 to 1994, Mr. Flowers was also in the

banking business. He was the largest shareholder in First National Bank of Greenville, Mississippi, which was later merged with Regions Bank. He served as chairman of that enterprise for two years, until it was sold in 1994. In 1991, serving as chairman and CEO, he founded J. Russell Flowers, Inc., one of the nation's largest independent leasing companies of inland marine equipment.

Russell Flowers was a 2013 Award Winner and lifetime inductee in the Horatio Alger Association, known globally for its commitment to education and philanthropy. He believed in a very simple but powerful tenet, "I try to do the right thing every single day."

Jill P. Flowers assumed control of the company when her husband passed away in 2017. She continues to manage the company with President, R. Barker Price. Today, J. Russell Flowers, Inc. continues to build superior marine equipment and long-term relationships with its customers. "Russell Flowers was the guiding spirit for a company that prides itself on quality marine construction, genuine customer commitment, and extraordinary technical support for all of its leasing partners," Price said.

The company is eager to assist its customers with detailed construction and leasing programs. Its newer tank barges are built with 6psi tank tops, heavy hull scantlings, and generous appointment of stainless steel external fittings. Hopper and deck barges are built quite heavily, many with 5/8" innerbottom and 3/4" deck plating, robust bilge knuckles and ice-reinforced rakes. Additionally, the company's towboats are carefully designed and constructed with durable propulsion components, including high DAR propellers and advanced mechanical shaft seals. These vessels also have stainless steel weathertight exterior doors, segregated fuel oil tanks, and other industry-leading refinements.

J. Russell Flowers, Inc. greatly values its many customer/partners. It is determined to advance a rich legacy of fairness, respect, and active industry engagement. "Membership in Waterways Council, Inc. affords us the opportunity to contribute constructively to many important inland waterways conversations and initiatives," Mrs. Flowers commented. ♦

What to Expect in the Illinois Waterway Closures Ahead



Tom Heinold

By Tom Heinold, Chief, Operations Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District

An unprecedented closure of the Illinois Waterway is planned for 2020. This closure, which is being coordinated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Rock Island District, will address critical aging infrastructure needs.

The Illinois Waterway, which provides a nine-foot channel connecting Lake Michigan with the Mississippi River, includes eight Lock and Dam sites which are overdue for significant repairs.

In planning for the 2020 closures of the Illinois Waterway, the Corps is coordinating with the Navigation Industry and other partners to include barge lines, shippers, business owners along the waterway, and the U.S. Coast Guard. To mitigate impacts to commercial navigation, the plan is to close six locks simultaneously. Since there is only one lock chamber at each site, if the lock is closed then no traffic can transit past that spot in the river. With traffic interrupted at one lock already, it makes sense to close multiple locks at the same time so the negative impacts aren't prolonged over the course of several years. A timeframe of July through October was chosen to enable efficient construction to take place after the highest probability of flooding, and before the harvest season gets into full swing.

The planned closures in 2020 include:

- LaGrange Lock & Dam, Versailles. Work will include dewatering the lock chamber to perform Major Rehabilitation and Major Maintenance. The antiquated and severely worn lock gate machinery will be replaced, and significant repairs will be made to the crumbling concrete and steel structures of the lock chamber. This work is anticipated to take up to 120 days to complete.
- Peoria Lock & Dam, Creve Coeur. This lock will be dewatered for approximately 60 days for inspections and maintenance of areas usually submerged.

- Starved Rock & Dam, Ottawa, and Marseilles Lock & Dam, Marseilles. Work will include dewatering for the reconstruction of miter gate sills and anchorages so that new vertically framed Miter gates can be installed. The existing gates are original, and they do not meet current design and safety standards. This work is expected to take 90 to 120 days.
- Dresden Island Lock & Dam, Morris, and Brandon Road Lock & Dam, Joliet. Preparatory work will be done at these two sites, installing bulkhead slots in the existing emergency gate recesses so that the chambers can be dewatered to perform future work. There will be width restrictions for a couple of months while the slots themselves are under construction. Additionally, a shorter two-week closure will occur at each of these sites to construct the bulkhead sills across the bottoms of the lock chambers.

In 2023, additional closures will be required at Dresden Island and Brandon Road to perform dewaterings for anchorage and sill modifications and install new gates, much like the 2020 closures at Starved Rock and Marseilles. The three-year delay is planned so that the Navigation Industry can recover sufficiently after the major 2020 closures.

Although there is not any work currently scheduled at the two upstream-most locks closest to Lake Michigan (Lockport Lock and T.J. O'Brien Lock), if there are unforeseen failures, maintenance requirements, or construction required through other authorities and funding streams, that work will be coordinated to the extent possible so it is concurrent with the 2020 or 2023 closures.

Contracts for the large miter gate fabrications at Starved Rock and Marseilles have already been awarded, and the Corps expects to award a contract for the LaGrange Major Rehabilitation project in 2018 so that longer lead-time items like gate machinery can be fabricated in time for the 2020 closures. The closures will be a cooperative effort between several Corps of Engineers Districts, including as many as four

(Continued on page 5)

What to Expect in the Illinois Waterway Closures Ahead

(Continued from page 4)

heavy-lift floating cranes and contractors at each site.

The existing locks and dams we built in the 1930s had a 50-year design life. Although many of them were rehabilitated in the 1980s and 1990s to add another 25 years of reliable service, much of the machinery, concrete and gates are original, and have decayed through decades of freeze-thaw and routine cyclic use. LaGrange Lock is the number one priority nationwide for Major Rehabilitation, and these repairs are needed to prevent additional unscheduled and prolonged outages due to mechanical and structural failures.

The nation's economy depends upon our inland waterways. The nation's "breadbasket," in the heart of the Midwest where the Ohio River system, the Illinois Waterway and the Upper Mississippi River System lie, provides food and other materials for our country and for the world. With the completion of the new Panama Canal locks, the demand for Illinois' soybeans

and corn has never been higher, further increasing the need for a reliable Illinois Water transportation system. Keeping this system in good working order saves the transportation industry billions of dollars each year compared to shipping by road or rail, and that savings comes right back to our citizens in the form of decreased costs for goods that are shipped along the River. For every 15-barge tow that transits the system, it would otherwise put about a thousand trucks on our already overcrowded highways, not to mention the labor and fuel consumption that would accompany that method of transport.

The Rock Island District, and certainly our Operations Division which oversees our navigation mission, is dedicated to ensuring the health and reliability of the Illinois Waterway. The 2020 and 2023 closures will be a challenge for many who depend on this river system, but the necessity of the closures coupled with the long-term benefits will make this challenge worthwhile for all of us. ♦



Eight lock and dams sites on the Illinois Waterway need repair.

Conservation Column: The Water Institute of the Gulf



**THE WATER INSTITUTE
OF THE GULF®**

This issue of *Capitol Currents* profiles an organization working to provide science for application in helping communities in Louisiana, and around the world, in adapting to the changing environmental future we all share.

Officially founded in late 2011, the vision for what would become The Water Institute of the Gulf (Institute) started years before, in the destructive aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Delegations of Louisiana policy makers, elected officials, foundations, and community leaders made multiple trips to the world-renowned water management institute in the Netherlands – Deltares. It wasn't long before these delegation members decided they wanted a dedicated applied-science institute of their own.



The Institute is working to engineer holes in levees to allow sediment and freshwater to flow into marshes in Louisiana to build and sustain land.

The Institute is a non-profit, independent applied research organization with a mission of providing the science needed to inform difficult decisions facing coastal communities around the world. Made up of a small but diverse staff, the Institute approaches these coastal challenges in a holistic way bringing together ecologists, geologists, engineers, numerical modelers, anthropologists, and geographers to work across disciplines.

The Institute's applied research falls into the five broad categories of integrated watershed management; resilient communities; dynamics of rivers, deltas and coasts; ecosystem-based

management; and human and natural systems modeling. Central to much of the work is the interaction of the Mississippi River with the delta and coast since the lower Mississippi River is vital to coastal restoration and protection efforts due to the sediment and freshwater the river carries.

Draining about 40 percent of the continental United States, the lower Mississippi River can never be studied without consideration of what is going on in the rest of the basin. The work the Institute is doing on the lower river has direct connections with the prospect of better ecological health of the upper Mississippi River through programs like the authorized, but not-yet-funded Navigation-Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP).

For example, the hypoxic (low-oxygen) area that forms in the northern Gulf of Mexico every summer is a direct result of the nutrients that flow into the river upstream. Focusing just on the this so-called "Dead Zone" does nothing to solve the problem, but instead requires looking at the watershed more holistically.

One example of how the interdisciplinary team at the Institute has helped provide foundational and actionable science for the Louisiana restoration and protection activities is in the work the Institute did on informing sediment diversion planning. The state plans to build and operate a number of engineered holes in the levee to allow more of the sediment and freshwater into the marshes to build and sustain land that has been cut off from the river for decades.

By setting up monitoring stations and conducting boat-based measurements, updated information was collected and used to calibrate a numerical model at the Institute. This model, using a foundation of Deltares' open source Delft3D model and combined with the Louisiana Vegetation Model developed by the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, allowed researchers to show how different water flows regimes through the planned Mississippi River sediment diversions could change the make-up of coastal land and plants.

(Continued on page 7)

Conservation Column: The Water Institute of the Gulf

(Continued from page 6)

The outputs from this model helped the state answer questions such as the best locations for where a sediment diversion could build or sustain the most land. At the same time, the Institute's human dimension group gathered community input on where their most valuable and most vulnerable lands were located to help better inform just what these communities wanted most to protect.

In a coast as complex as Louisiana, working in this interdisciplinary way becomes the only way to achieve the best outcomes and truly evaluate the tradeoffs necessary for any solid ecological solution.

Although the Institute is based in Louisiana and heavily involved in the state's coastal protection and restoration efforts as well as urban watershed management, the needs and the science go beyond the state's borders. The Institute has done work in the Mekong Delta, the coastal communities of Fiji and along fishing communities in Chile.

Louisiana may be facing issues of land loss, sea level rise, subsidence, and communities becoming more vulnerable through environmental change now, but coastal communities all over the world are beginning to struggle with the same challenges. The Institute is committed to developing the information communities need to develop their best futures. ♦



WCI Receives Ducks Unlimited Life Sponsor Award

Waterways Council was honored with the Life Sponsor Award by Ducks Unlimited (DU) at its Capitol Hill dinner on April 17. Recognized "with deep appreciation and recognition of outstanding contributions to waterfowl conservation," WCI has been a valuable partner with DU in support of the Navigation-Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP).

"We thank the Waterways Council for being a true partner for healthy waters," said David Brakhage, director of operations for Ducks Unlimited's Great Lakes/Atlantic Region. "By supporting Ducks Unlimited, the Waterways Council champions the conservation of wetland habitats vital to industry, people and wildlife who coexist among our inland waterways."

More than 70 members of Congress joined the 700 in attendance at the April dinner. Speakers included House Speaker Paul Ryan and USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue.

Ducks Unlimited Inc. is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 14 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. For more information on DU's work, visit www.ducks.org. ♦



WCI President & CEO Mike Toohey proudly holds the DU Life Sponsor Award that recognizes outstanding work toward conservation of waterfowl.

In Memoriam



Adam Toohey

ADAM CHRISTOPHER TOOHEY, 30, went home to meet his Savior on April 15, 2018.

The son of Mike James Toohey and Jean Drisler Reimers, Adam was born on October 10, 1987 in Fairfax, Virginia. Adam was a graduate of East Carolina University where he graduated with his Bachelors of Kinesiology. He was a huge East Carolina and Washington Redskins Fan. Adam also received his Master's in Leadership Administration from the University of Oklahoma. While at OU, he worked as a graduate assistant as a strength and conditioning coach. He was proud to have worked with the OU baseball team when they won the Big 12 Championship. After graduation, Adam owned and operated Toohey Athletic Performance, where he trained kids from elementary to college age.

He enjoyed playing and watching golf, baseball, and football. He was an outdoorsman and also an Eagle Scout. Adam enjoyed goose hunting with his dad and brothers and deer hunting with Brian and Nathan. He also enjoyed trout fishing and going to the lake, especially Table Rock.

Adam was very involved at Life Church in Moore where he volunteered in the church office or wherever he was needed. Adam was an amazing awesome man. He never complained during his courageous 2½ year battle with colorectal cancer. The family would like to especially thank Encompass Home Health and Hospice for their great care and support they gave to Adam and the family. In lieu of flowers, you may make donations to Ronald McDonald House at OU Children's Hospital 1301 NE 14th St, OKC, OK 73117, or <http://rmhc-okc.org/get-involved/donate>. ♦



Harry Merritt Lane Jr.

HARRY MERRITT LANE JR., 82, passed away peacefully at home on April 28th, 2018 surrounded by loved ones after a brave and noble fight with lymphoma.

Merritt, known by many as "Heavy," was born in 1936 at Vanderbilt Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee. He was a graduate of Montgomery Bell Academy and Vanderbilt University where he was a member of the Naval ROTC and Phi Delta Theta fraternity. He received a commission as an officer in the U.S. Navy and served as a First Lieutenant and gunnery officer aboard the USS Liddle (ADP-60) stationed at Algiers, LA. After military service he joined a management training program at General Shoe Company (Genesco) based in Nashville, TN.

In 1961 he moved to New Orleans joining Canal Barge Company, Inc. and served as Vice President, Treasurer, and member of the Board of Directors until 1985. He subsequently became a licensed health and life insurance agent with John Hancock and a licensed real estate agent with Latter and Blum. Teaming up with his wife, Nickie, he became a top agent and a life member of the Top O' the Latter Club. He also served on the Board of Directors of Pontchartain Materials Inc. and Crossgates, Inc.

He was a former officer and board member of Trinity Episcopal School, where he co-

chaired the campaign that resulted in building the school's gymnasium; and a member of the Vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church. He was a two-term President of the New Orleans Vanderbilt Club and State Chairman of the Vanderbilt Centennial Fund. He served on the boards of WYES and the International House and was a past President and Life Member of the Stratford Club, which became his home away from home. Heavy loved sports, including attending all of his children's and grandchildren's games, and was an original season ticket holder of the New Orleans Saints. He was a founding member of Pintail Inc. hunting and fishing lodge in Hopedale, Louisiana.

Merritt was predeceased by his parents, Martha and Harry Lane and is survived by his beloved wife of 28 years, Florence "Nickie" Bush Lane and his children Harry Merritt Lane, III (Elly), David Merrick Lane (Mary Lucy), Susan Lane Stall (Andrew), all of New Orleans, and Elizabeth Lane Peus (Brent) of Montecito, California; his stepchildren Mary Hollis Wrighton Nieset (John), and Bush McGehee Wrighton (Shameen), both of New Orleans and Randolph Symonds Wrighton, Jr. (Meredith), of Dallas, Texas; and 19 beautiful grandchildren all of whom adored him. - Excerpted from *The Times-Picayune*, May 2, 2018. ♦

Ukrainian Waterways Delegation Tours U.S.



Representatives from the Ukraine Parliament, Ministry of Infrastructure Ukraine, Ukraine Sea Ports Authority, Ukrvodshliah (the state enterprise responsible for the Dnipro River), and the Ukraine private sector stand with U.S. waterways study tour organizers at the Port of New Orleans in April.

WCI, along with the U.S. Treasury Department, the World Bank, the Committee on Marine Transportation Systems (CMTS), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Coast Guard, participated in the development of a waterways study tour in the United States for a delegation from the Ukraine.

The trip was organized by Steve Stockton, former Corps' Director of Civil Works, under the sponsorship of the World Bank and U.S. Treasury.

The delegation first visited Washington, DC, then headed to St. Louis (April 3-4) to tour Melvin Price Lock and Dam 26, visit the Muligan Carpenters Union Training Center for a series of briefings. The group's last stop was in New Orleans (April 4-6) to hear briefings from the Port of New Orleans, Blessey Marine, Cooper T. Smith, Channel Shipyard, Southern

Recycling, Bar Pilots, and WCI. The group toured the Port of New Orleans via the port's harbor boat and then visited Cargill's Westwego grain elevator. The trip wrapped up with a tour of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal and the Lake Borgne Surge Barrier. ♦

Industry Calendar

May 16: The Rail Supply Chain Summit (Chicago) MPitz@MEPitzAssociates.com

May 21-23: Warrior-Tombigbee Waterway Association 2018 Annual Meeting (Orange Beach, AL) www.warrior-tombigbee.com

May 21-24: *Waterways Journal* 5th Annual Inland Marine Expo (St. Louis) www.inlandmarineexpo.com

July 25-26: 2018 Ag Transportation Summit (Arlington) www.ngfa.org/upcoming-events/transportation-summit/ ♦



Capitol Currents is published by



WATERWAYS
COUNCIL, INC.

Deb Calhoun
Editor

Michael J. Toohey
Publisher

499 S. Capitol Street, SW
Suite 401
Washington, DC 20003
202.765.2166

www.waterwayscouncil.org

Vol. 14, No. 2



The Ukrainian waterways delegation stands with Col. Mike Clancy, New Orleans District Engineer, USACE, at Inner Harbor Lock in New Orleans during its U.S. visit.