

CAPITOL CURRENTS



October 14, 2021

THE WAITING IS THE HARDEST PART

By Tracy Zea, WCI President/CEO

Traditionally, the end of September on Capitol Hill is routine, with a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the government into December, devoid of drama and political drag-downs. But this September was the opposite of routine and more like a perfect storm of must-act deadlines with a politically charged, self-imposed deadline for legislation that had been anticipated for months. In a flurry of activity, Congress faced extending the surface transportation reauthorization before its September 30 expiration, a self-imposed September 27 deadline by the House of Representatives to vote on a bipartisan infrastructure package that cleared the Senate, and a mid-October debt ceiling deadline for the nation.

And if you guessed that Congress kicked the can down the road, you are right. Congress passed a clean CR and debt ceiling extension through December 3, a short-term extension of the surface transportation reauthorization until the end of October. And despite last minute assurances by House Speaker Nancy



Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) have become integral in the negotiations on a reconciliation bill that holds the infrastructure bill in the balance. Photo source: Business Insider

Pelosi that the infrastructure bill would hit the House floor by September 27, that infrastructure deadline has come and gone. So, what's next?

Around Washington D.C., optimism still exists that an infrastructure package will be signed into law by the end of this calendar year. The timing of that, however, remains elusive. And like the song says, The Waiting is the Hardest Part. There is an assumption that because Congress's extension of the surface transportation reauthorization goes only to the end

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THE WAITING IS THE HARDEST PART

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of October, it resets the proverbial shot clock for the infrastructure package. This is partially true; yes, Congress will need to act on the surface transportation bill by the end of October. If they don't, thousands of workers within states' departments of transportation will be furloughed, further blackening the eye on an already unpopular Congress, which has a 28% approval rating by one source.

Recent history shows a trend of short-term fixes. Over the past three multi-year Highway Trust Fund reauthorization bills, each had several extensions before being enacted into law. There were 12 short extensions of TEA21 before SAFETEA-LU was signed into law in 2005, 10 short extensions

of SAFETEA-LU before MAP-21 was signed in 2012, five short extensions of MAP-21 before the FAST ACT was signed in 2015, and currently, we are already on two short term extensions of the FAST ACT.

As Progressive Democrats leveraged their strength to stall the infrastructure vote, reconciliation seems to be the driving factor for an infrastructure bill to be enacted. In fact, at the end of September, the White House doubled down and reiterated that the two bills are indeed linked, after some hedging about the connection earlier in the month. During the House infrastructure floor debate, Republicans continually stated that a vote for the infrastructure package would be a vote for the

reconciliation bill, which ultimately proved true after President Biden came to Capitol Hill to meet with the Democratic caucus for the first time in his Presidency. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, "The infrastructure bill 'ain't going to happen until we reach an agreement on the next piece of legislation,' Mr. Biden told House Democrats."

The reconciliation process is at least a couple of weeks away from being ready for prime time, which poises infrastructure to be pushed into November, or potentially December.

So as the song says, "Every day you see one more card, you take it on faith, you take it to the heart, the waiting is the hardest part." ❖



Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) briefed WCI's Board of Directors on August 9 about the Senate-passed infrastructure package. Senator Cassidy served as one of the five lead Republican negotiators and a member of the bipartisan Group of 22 Senators for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. He was also Chair of the Ports and Waterways Group for the bipartisan infrastructure package and played an integral role in the inland waterways receiving \$2.5 billion in funding. Senator Cassidy secured the inclusion of \$9.55 billion for Ports and Waterways within the state of Louisiana.

OUTLOOK FOR FY22 APPROPRIATIONS

By Dustin Davidson, WCI Director of Government Relations

On July 31, the House of Representatives approved a package of bills that included funding for the Corps of Engineers for Fiscal Year 2022, with overall funding for the Corps’ Civil Works Mission at \$8.66 billion. This was an increase of \$863 million above Fiscal Year 2021’s (FY21) appropriated level, and \$1.9 billion above the President’s Fiscal Year 2022 budget request. Further, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterways’ Brazos River Floodgates and Colorado River Locks received \$6.93 million in Pre-Construction Engineering & Design (PED) funds for Fiscal Year 2022 from this account. On August 4, by a vote of 25-5, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed the Fiscal Year 2022 Energy & Water Development (E&WD) Appropriations (S. 2605) bill that funds the Corps’ Civil Works Program. Overall funding was \$8.96 billion, an

increase of \$1.165 billion above the FY21 enacted level and \$2.168 billion above the Administration’s budget request.

Full use of estimated annual revenues from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF) was approved by the Senate, a Waterways Council priority, which will support more than \$350 million in construction funding of IWTF-supported projects. While this is great news for the Inland Waterways Marine Transportation System and its users, there is still work to be done on Capitol Hill.

On October 12, the House of Representatives passed a temporary extension of the public debt limit on a party line vote. By extending the debt limit, lawmakers have set the stage to take up this debate again in December while simultaneously working to pass all of the FY22 appropriations bills. Senators Shelby and McConnell



Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) led the effort to restore the practice of Congressionally Directed Spending, formerly known as earmarks, that benefitted FY22 inland waterways projects, including NESP.

introduced a continuing resolution that mirrors the request of President Biden. That continuing resolution was agreed to in both the House and Senate. ❖

FISCAL YEAR 2022 APPROPRIATIONS (IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)

Account	House	Senate
Inland Waterways Trust Fund	\$257.10	\$345.30
Investigations	\$155.00	\$153.00
Operations and Maintenance	\$4.82	\$4.68
Overall Funding	\$8,660	\$8,960
Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program	\$22.50	\$44.50
Upper Ohio Navigation Study	\$0	\$20.10
Three Rivers, AR	\$149.00	\$149 (28% IWTF)

WRDA 2022 KICKS OFF WITH WCI TESTIMONY



WCI Board Member Robert McCoy (Amherst Madison) testifies before the Senate EPW Committee about the national significance of inland waterways investment.

The official kick-off of a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) for 2022 began on July 28, with a hearing in the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) titled “Examining the Benefits of Investing in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Infrastructure Projects.” WCI’s Board of Directors member Robert McCoy, President/CEO, Amherst Madison, testified at the hearing on behalf of Waterways Council, Inc.

Mr. McCoy highlighted improvements made in WRDA 2020 and discussed why a comprehensive infrastructure bill that includes significant funding for lock and dam modernization “would provide and sustain more jobs, increase efficiency, be safer, and make our inland waterways system more resilient.”

His testimony began with a history of his company, which offers marine transportation, construction, and repair business services and is located on the Kanawha River in Charleston, West Virginia. Amherst Madison has been in

business since 1893 and is a 100% employee-owned company with many second and third generation employees.

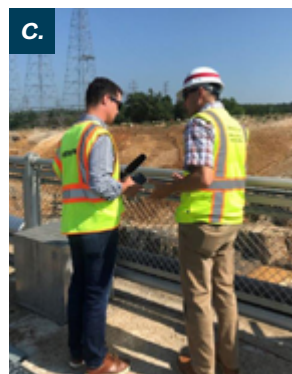
He then discussed the WRDA 2020-established statutory cost-share formula for the construction and major rehabilitation of any inland waterways system navigation project receiving an appropriation during FY21 through FY31. “This provision, when fully appropriated, will deliver roughly an additional \$100 million annually in construction funding for navigation improvements on the inland system. I cannot thank this committee enough for your support in modifying the cost-share. This Committee continues to take meaningful steps to advance our nation’s inland waterways transportation system,” he said.

Since 2014, WRDA bills have remained on a biennial schedule, with the exception of a seven-year gap between bills in 2007-2014. WCI’s request for WRDA 2022 is to oppose additional tolling, lockage fees or other charges for the users of the inland waterways system. ❖

NEWS MEDIA JOIN WCI ON ANNUAL TOUR OF INLAND WATERWAYS



WCI's annual media tour that brings reporters from Washington, DC and around the country to visit lock sites, ride on a towboat, and better understand the inland waterways system and its infrastructure was held August 23-24. The tour was not held in 2020 due to COVID-19. This year's tour began in Nashville aboard a boat provided by Ingram Barge Company, and concluded at Kentucky Lock in Paducah, KY the next day. Two Washington-DC-based reporters from *Agri-Pulse* and *WorkBoat*, and four local Paducah-based reporters from the *Paducah Sun*, *Waterways Journal*, and two local TV stations participated in this year's trip. WCI also hosted an industry dinner for the media on August 23 with participants from Crouse, Marquette, McNational, James Marine, Ingram, and the Paducah Chamber of Commerce. Several stories and TV segments about the importance of inland waterways infrastructure have appeared as a result of the WCI trip. ❖



A. WCI's media tour 2021 participants stand with Kentucky Lock Navigation Manager Caleb Skinner (in hardhat, third from right).

B. Participants in WCI's Annual Media tour were briefed by the Corps of Engineers at Kentucky Lock to learn more from the about progress on the construction of the new lock, which is 46% complete according to the Corps.

C. *Agri-Pulse* Editor Ben Nuelle (left) interviews Nashville Engineer District Resident Engineer Jeremiah Manning at Kentucky Lock.

D. During the media tour, WCI's Director of Government Relations Dustin Davidson is interviewed by TV station WPSD-6 about the importance of inland waterways infrastructure.

WCI PRODUCES NEW TV COMMERCIAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

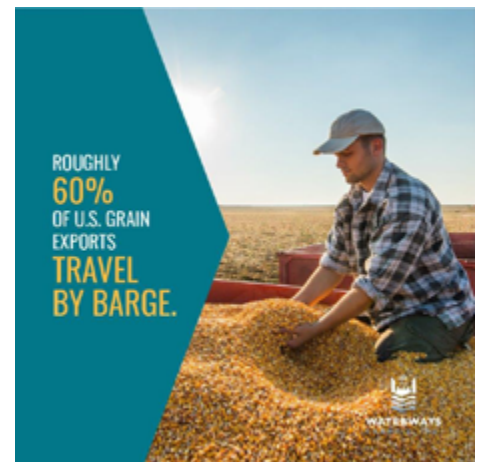
Thanks to generous support from WCI members Illinois Corn Marketing Board, Illinois Soybean Association, as well as many others, WCI has been presented a great opportunity to develop a campaign to help educate audiences about the importance of the inland waterways and efficient infrastructure. Washington, DC-based Finsbury Glover Herring (FGH) was contracted to develop a plan for a number of educational materials including a new 30-second TV commercial – “America’s Waterways” – being aired inside the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

WCI has also released several 15-second videos on various aspects of the inland waterways to include environmental, economic, and quality of life themes. Several stand-alone infographics are also being shared on social media platforms to amplify these important messages.

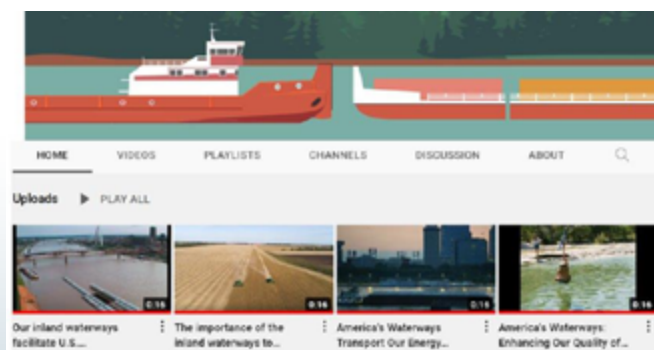
WCI members are asked to share these educational assets on your social media platforms today. ❖



“America’s Waterways” is the theme of WCI’s new TV spot being aired inside the Beltway that has garnered more than four million impressions since its initial airing.



WCI’s educational campaign highlights the importance of the inland waterways for capacity, and to agriculture, shippers, jobs and quality of life.



WCI has released a number of new 15-second videos on social media and on its YouTube Channel. See all of WCI’s educational videos and the new TV commercial [here](#).

MEET US IN SAINT LOUISE: GOOD THINGS AHEAD FOR WCI NOVEMBER MEETINGS, WATERWAYS SYMPOSIUM



2021 Waterways Symposium

WCI will hold its Annual Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting and Annual Waterways Symposium in person next month, November 2-4, at the Loews Live! Hotel next to Busch Stadium in St. Louis.

The Symposium agenda will feature a discussion of the geopolitical importance of the nation's waterways by Rodger Baker, Senior Vice President of Strategic Analysis with RANE Network; a look at the Inland Waterways Resilience Case Study with Vanderbilt University's Dr. Craig Philip and Dr. Janey Camp; an address by Michael Seyfert, new President of WCI partner organization National Grain and Feed Association; a Keynote Speech by Nathan Gonzales, Editor & Publisher of *Inside Elections*, which offers nonpartisan analysis of campaigns for Senate, House, Governor and President, and an Elections Analyst for *CQ Roll Call*; remarks by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Colonel Kevin R. Golinghorst, Commander

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Over-arching discussions expected November 2-4 at WCI's Annual Meeting and Waterways Symposium.



Gonzales



Baker

The WCI Waterways Symposium will feature keynote speaker Nathan Gonzales, Editor & Publisher of the nonpartisan Inside Elections, and an address on the "Geopolitical Change and the Continued Significance of the Inland Waterways" by Rodger Baker, Senior Vice President of Strategic Analysis with RANE Network.

MEET US IN SAINT LOUIE: GOOD THINGS AHEAD FOR WCI NOVEMBER MEETINGS, WATERWAYS SYMPOSIUM

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of the St. Louis District, and Edward E. Belk, Jr., Programs Manager, Mississippi Valley Division; and the ever-popular “What’s Moving on the Waterways?” commodities panel moderated by industry economist Ken Eriksen, IHS Markit.

We will enjoy an opening night reception on Tuesday, November 2 at the Loews Live! Hotel, and a special dinner event on Wednesday, November 3 at Busch Stadium’s Champions Club adjacent to the hotel. ❖

To register for WCI’s meetings, visit <https://cvent.me/7yozR4>

WCI will follow all [CDC recommended guidelines](#) for safe in-person gatherings.

Questions? Please contact Medina Moran, 202-765-2166 or moran@waterwayscouncil.org

See the current schedule of events (subject to change) below:

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TUES., NOV. 2, 2021

7:30 a.m.- 8:30 a.m.

Buffet Breakfast

8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

National Waterways Foundation Meeting (Trustees and Invited Guests Only)

11:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Symposium Registration Open

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

WCI Annual Meeting & Board of Directors Meeting (open to WCI Members only)

National Rivers Hall of Fame National Achievement Awards presentation

5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Opening Reception (Loew’s Live! Hotel)

WED., NOV. 3, 2021

7:30 a.m.- 8:30 a.m.

Buffet Breakfast

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

Symposium Registration Open

8:30 a.m.

Opening Remarks by WCI Chairman Matt Ricketts

8:35 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.

“Geopolitical Change and the Continued Significance of the Inland Waterways” by Rodger Baker, Senior Vice President of Strategic Analysis, RANE Network

9:45 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Inland Waterways Resilience Case Study, Dr. Craig Phillip, and Dr. Janey Camp, Vanderbilt University

10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Networking Break

10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Address by Michael Seyfert, President, National Grain and Feed Association

11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Remarks by Col. Kevin R. Golinghorst, Commander, St. Louis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Lunch and Keynote Address by Nathan Gonzales, Editor & Publisher of *Inside Elections*, which offers nonpartisan analysis of campaigns for Senate, House, Governor and President, and an Elections Analyst for *CQ Roll Call*

1:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Updates on the Navigation-Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), Mississippi River Dredging, and Infrastructure by Edward E. Belk, Jr., Programs Manager, Mississippi Valley Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

2:15 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

Networking Break

2:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

“What’s Moving on the Waterways?” commodities panel with Jake Brodbeck, ADM, and Kristin Beck, LafargeHolcim, moderated by Ken Eriksen, IHS Markit

3:45 p.m.

Closing remarks by Tracy Zea, WCI President/CEO, Adjourn

6:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.

Reception/dinner, Champions Club, Busch Stadium

THURS., NOV. 4, 2021

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

Buffet Breakfast, Departure

HURRICANE IDA WREAKS HAVOC ON GULF COAST, INLAND WATERWAYS

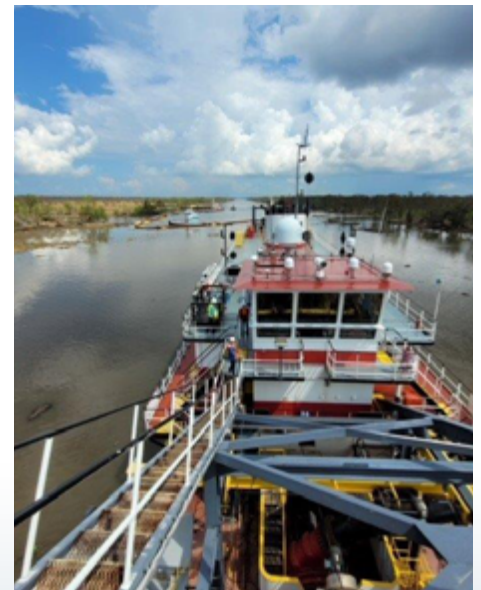
By Paul Dittman, President, Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association (GICA)

In late August, Hurricane IDA made landfall in south central Louisiana as a Category Four hurricane bringing tremendous devastation to many parts of the state including near epic level shoaling along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The area most heavily impacted is located approximately 15 to 20 miles west of the Algiers Canal between Houma and New Orleans, LA in the vicinity of the intersection of Bayou Perot, Lake Salvador and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, an area known for routine shoaling. Post storm, a two mile stretch of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway was surveyed and the available draft had been reduced to as low as only two feet post storm with an additional 10 miles reduced to only seven feet. The severe shoaling required the closure of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to facilitate the initiation of emergency dredge contracts by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to clear not only tons of silt deposited in the channel but also massive amounts of vegetative debris which had also been deposited in the main navigation channel. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers very quickly deployed a large contract cutter head dredge and a large drag line crane which works ahead of the cutter head dredge to clear solid debris which may impact the dredge's ability to address the shoaling. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District estimates it will take approximately four more weeks before the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway can be reopened to routine maritime traffic.



Hurricane Ida, with its more than 150 mph winds that resulted in scattered debris as shown, made it the second most damaging storm to the state of Louisiana behind Hurricane Katrina. Here, a drag line crane removes vegetative and other debris ahead of the cutterhead dredge.

As result of this closure, all inland tows transiting to and from the Mississippi River along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway must rely almost exclusively on the Port Allen-Morgan City Alternate Route as the primary access point to and from the Mississippi River. The increased traffic has created significant delays due to increased congestion and corresponding increased "lock turn" waiting periods at the Port Allen Lock located on the Mississippi River in Baton Rouge. This congestion creates traffic management and navigation challenges which are closely monitored by the Gulf Intracoastal



A cutter head dredge in operation clearing silt from the channel post-storm.

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HURRICANE IDA WREAKS HAVOC ON GULF COAST, INLAND WATERWAYS

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Canal Association and coordinated with both the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Coast Guard as well as the inland towing industry.

The inland towing industry will continue to experience significant challenges over the next four weeks until the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway is fully reopened. However, Hurricane IDA has further demonstrated the importance of the strong relationships and solid lines of communication our industry relied on with our federal and state partners in preparation

for Hurricane IDA's landfall and post-storm to address the severe waterway impacts wrought by the storm. The Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association has worked hand in hand with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the United States Coast Guard and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to foster timely and effective communication with the maritime industry to enhance safety and minimize economic impacts and will continue to do so until the channel is reopened for routine navigation. ❖

WCI SPOTLIGHT ON TWIN DISC

For more than a century, WCI member Twin Disc has been inventing, engineering and manufacturing products and technologies to make power more productive in machines, boats and off-highway vehicles. The family tree of the company's products and critical markets is extensive and robust, with customers in rugged applications all over the world. Twin Disc's power transmission products meet real world needs, exceed operating requirements, improve productivity and offer a service life that enhances equipment value.

With a century of industry experience and the addition of Veth Propulsion to its product portfolio, Twin Disc has a range of hybrid propulsion systems that lower emissions and provide greater efficiency. A great example of Twin Disc's power option was with Wisconsin's Washington Island Ferry Line that decided to add a second ice breaker vessel with the company's MG-540 transmission. More than 700 year-round Wisconsin residents, as well as thousands of summertime



The Washington Island Ferry Line in Wisconsin added an ice-breaking ferry vessel equipped with Twin Disc transmission to cut through ice so thick it reached the bottom of 30 feet of water, according to ferry line president Hoyt Purinton.

visitors, depend on the Washington Island ferry line for transport, mail and package freight. The line makes about 5,000 trips a year across Death's Door Passage—a half-hour one way in the summer, and 45 minutes or longer in harsh winter months. Twin Disc clearly delivered.

“Twin Disc's products can be found on a variety of vessels throughout our inland waterways. We appreciate Waterways Council's advocacy to ensure critical infrastructure is modern and well-maintained,” said Greg Mueller, Twin Disc's Director of Strategic Marketing. ❖

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

WCI welcomes its most recent members, the Port of Vicksburg, the Port of Memphis and Shimmick Construction. We look forward to working with you ahead!



On July 20, WCI visited member company Olin Chemical and toured work at Chickamauga Lock with Lockmaster Cory Richardson and Adam Walker, P.E., PMP, Project Manager, Chickamauga Lock Replacement, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Shown here is an aerial shot of the project, which is expected to be complete by between November 2025 and August 2027, according to risk-based schedule estimates.



Chickamauga Lockmaster Cory Richardson

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2021 INDUSTRY CALENDAR (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

October 20-22: American Waterways Operators Fall Convention & Board of Directors' Meeting (Pittsburgh, PA, The Fairmont)

October 21: Seamen's Church Institute Silver Bell Award Dinner (New York, Pier 60)

November 2-4: WCI Annual Meeting and 18th Annual Waterways Symposium (St. Louis, MO, Loews Live! Hotel by Busch Stadium)

December 1-3: International WorkBoat Show (New Orleans, Morial Convention Center)

December 9: Seamen's Church Institute 22nd Annual River Bell Award Luncheon (Paducah, KY, Paducah McCracken County Convention Center)