

# CAPITOL CURRENTS

WATERWAYS  
COUNCIL, INC.

June 28, 2023



## FROM \$0 TO \$455.97 MILLION

By Tracy Zea, President/CEO, WCI



Rep. Chuck Fleischmann

2023 has started with a series of speed bumps for Congress and the Administration. First, there was the five-day, 15-ballot floor fight to elect Speaker McCarthy, which was the first time since 1923 that a Speaker was not elected on the first ballot; next came the debt ceiling, which pretty much paused all advancement of legislation until a deal was reached, and lastly we are seeing the effects from the debt-ceiling fight in Congress with the first rule vote failing in the House of Representatives since 2002.

All this has spilled over into the appropriations process but has not stopped its advancement. The appropriations process began very similarly to other years, with many personal offices asking for requests to be submitted before the President's Budget was even released. The President's Budget was issued on March 9th, roughly one month late but one week before the previous year. The President's Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) budget was a rather disappointing proposal as it pertained to the inland waterways. The President proposed \$0 be used from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF) toward construction or major rehabilitation of navigation projects. If this budget were enacted or if Congress passes a full-year Continuing Resolution, it would mean that no ongoing inland waterways construction or major rehabilitation projects would receive any funding this year, which would ultimately drive up the project's overall cost and push the construction timeline to the right.

Luckily, the House Appropriations Committee acted swiftly by marking up its bill a week before they did the previous year, resulting in robust funding for the Corps of Engineers

– Civil Works and specifically for inland waterways. With many of the subcommittee appropriations allocations being reduced due to the debt ceiling negotiation by as much as 30%, the Corps of Engineers received an increase. Overall proposed funding for Corps' Civil Works is \$9.57 billion, an increase of \$910 million above FY23's appropriated level and \$2.16 billion above the President's FY24 budget request.

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. The inland waterways continue to get strong support from Members of Congress when submitting Community Project Funding (CPF) in the House and Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) in the Senate. There were four CPF requests provided in this bill. Those are Chickamauga Lock for \$236.8 million requested by Cong. Fleischmann (TN-03), Lower Monongahela for \$41 million requested by Cong. Reschenthaler (PA-14), McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) – Three Rivers for \$103.17 million requested by Cong. Crawford (AR-01), and the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) for \$75 million requested by Cong. S. Graves (MO-06), LaHood (IL-16), Luetkemeyer (MO-03), Sorensen (IL-17), and Budzinski (IL-13). NESP was the most requested CPF for the second year in a row.

More good news came in the bill as Bayou Sorrel Lock

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# FROM \$0 TO \$455.97 MILLION

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Replacement Study will receive \$800,000 to begin that study to modernize that lock facility, requested by Cong. Garret Graves (LA-06).

The Operations and Maintenance account that maintains our locks and dredges channels received a \$418.12 million increase above the FY23 enacted \$5.5 billion.

The Senate is rumored to be marking up its version of the E&WD bill in the middle of July, and WCI is hopeful that it will provide solid numbers for the inland waterways just as the House did.

The bill included Corps of Engineers Civil Works mission funding in the E&WD section of the omnibus bill at \$8.66

billion, an increase of \$62 million from FY22 appropriated funding, and \$2.06 billion above the President's FY23 budget request.

According to Senate summaries, the annual net economic benefit generated by the Corps' Civil Works mission is estimated to be \$89 billion -- a return of about \$12 for every dollar expended -- with the total amount provided to improve the nation's water infrastructure at \$10.24 billion. In a time of economic uncertainty, this return on investment is a true win for the entire country.

WCI's legislative advocacy continues 24-7 with our digital outreach to Congress. Text LOCKS to 313131 to have your voice heard on these important issues from wherever you are.❖

## LEGISLATOR PROFILE: REP. ERIC SORENSEN (D-IL)

In this issue of Capitol Currents, we profile another elected official who has championed the inland waterways:  
Rep. Eric Sorensen (D-IL)



Congressman Eric Sorensen

### BIOGRAPHICAL FACTS

**Name**

Congressman Eric Sorensen

**Born**

Rockford, Illinois

**Occupation**

Local TV Meteorologist

**Education**

Northern Illinois University

**Public Office**

U.S. Representative, Illinois 17th Congressional District



Rep. Sorensen (far left) represents farmers in the state of Illinois in his role on the House Agriculture Committee, and well understands the importance of the inland waterways system.

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## LEGISLATOR PROFILE:

### REP. ERIC SORENSEN (D-IL)

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Congressman Eric Sorensen was born and raised in Rockford, Illinois. He served communities across Central and Northwestern Illinois as a local TV meteorologist for over two decades, communicating live-saving information that impacted Illinoisans' jobs, schools, farms, and safety. To Eric, being a meteorologist was about building trust and protecting his community. In Congress, Sorensen still values being a trusted neighbor to the residents of Illinois' 17th Congressional District. He is focused on lowering costs for working families, creating sustainable jobs in Central and Northwestern Illinois, and supporting the family farms and rural communities that keep our economy moving forward. Sorensen proudly represents Illinois farmers on the House Agriculture Committee and uses his background in science to contribute to his role on the Science, Space, & Technology Committee. On the Science, Space and Technology Committee, Sorensen serves as Ranking Member on the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee. He currently resides in Moline with his partner Shawn and his dogs Petey and Oliver.

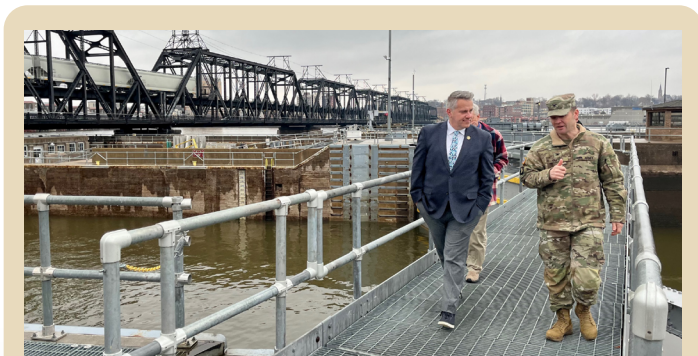
**Q: In your previous life, you spent much time in front of a camera talking to what must feel like an invisible audience. How did your experience as a meteorologist prepare you to become a Member of Congress?**

A: When I worked as a meteorologist, my main job was to explain to people the world around them and why certain weather events were happening in their communities. I remember a time after I had left television, a woman came up to me in the grocery store, and she said, "Eric, we miss you so much on TV helping us understand the weather. Now we need you to go to Washington, D.C. and help us understand how Congress works." And that is exactly how I view my job as a member of Congress. It is my responsibility to help the people I represent understand how government can work for them and address their needs. Our office receives hundreds of calls each week, and many of them are constituents that need help navigating the federal government, whether it's helping them get access to their benefits, getting their passports, receiving their tax refund or so much more. All of this is the bread and butter of what a congressional office does. And one of my greatest joys is helping them navigate that process because it helps them understand how government operates and it helps me understand how government can work better. Working in television for over 20 years helped me hone the skills I needed to be an effective communicator in Congress and for Central and Northwestern Illinois.

**Q: Like many other Midwest states, Illinois has a diverse economy; your district is no exception. But, as a Democrat representing a very moderate district, how do you balance the needs of your rural and urban constituencies against the politics of Washington, D.C?**

A: For me, public service is simply about being a good neighbor. People want someone representing them who understands their needs, the issues they are facing, and is always willing to listen to them, even if we disagree. When I worked in Rockford at WREX and in the Quad Cities at WQAD, both of which are in the same congressional district, I got to know these communities well. I got to talk to farmers that were dealing with the impact of extreme weather and flooding. And I would go out into the communities during storms to talk to people, instead of just sitting behind a desk in the weather center. What I am continuing to learn about the district that I represent is that regardless of party affiliation, people want good-paying, sustainable jobs, an economy that is strong, and the ability to leave their children a better life than they had. They want a trusted neighbor in Congress that will fight for these values. These goals that I am working toward every day transcend party affiliation.

**Q: Your predecessor, Congresswoman Cheri Bustos, strongly supported the inland waterways system. While we were sad to see her go, we are thrilled to have you here and enjoy working with you and your staff. For FY 2024 Energy and Water Appropriations, you submitted a Community Project Funding (CPF) request for the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP). How important is the CPF process to large-scale infrastructure projects? As a freshman Member of**



*Congressman Sorensen walks with Colonel Jesse T. Curry, Commander and District Engineer with the Corps' Rock Island District, while visiting Lock 15.*

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## LEGISLATOR PROFILE: REP. ERIC SORENSEN (D-IL)

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### Congress, what benefits do you see the somewhat new process providing to the nation?

A: I was very excited to submit NESP for consideration by the Energy and Water Subcommittee. NESP is one of the largest projects that will receive CPF funding, however I see value in both large requests like NESP, and the smaller projects in my district. Sometimes the most challenging part of obtaining federal or state grants is the application process itself. Many small communities are at risk of losing out on traditional opportunities to larger cities because they lack the resources to put together a competitive application. The CPF process allows smaller communities to go through a less rigorous process to access federal funds while still protecting federal dollars through the diligence of my office by vetting the projects that were submitted to us. Communities know their needs best, and it's our job to do what we can to direct federal dollars where they need it most.

**Q: WCI staff recently learned that you are a fan of cartography. Did your love for maps play a role in your decision to become a meteorologist, or were the two mutually exclusive?**

A: At the age of seven, I'd take a bunch of crayons and would use them to draw and design maps. What I love about maps is that they show where things are, how places relate to each other, and they give a sense of direction (no pun intended) for me personally. In my office, there are maps hanging all around the walls, of different places and cities and towns in Central and Northwestern Illinois. As a meteorologist, I used maps all the time to explain to people what is going on around them and how different terrain or land impacted weather patterns. My love for maps played a significant role in my decision to become a meteorologist.

**Q: If you could go back 20 years and speak with a younger Eric Sorensen, what advice would you give him and why?**

A: Fight for what you believe, even if you don't know the answers yet. There were many times throughout my career, whether it was in television or in Congress, where I wasn't sure of the outcome, but I knew in my gut, that what I was doing was the right decision. We must be willing to advocate for the values that we believe in, even if the road ahead isn't clear.❖

## WCI CONSERVATION COLUMN: MISSISSIPPI RIVER MAYORS UNITED ON PURSUING SOLUTIONS TO PLASTIC POLLUTION

**By Colin Wellenkamp, Executive Director of the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative (MRCTI)**

In 2018, MRCTI mayors, along with state legislators and businesses, made a commitment to reduce plastic waste along the Mississippi River Corridor. Because our river is a drainage system for 31 states – 40% of the continental U.S. – plastic litter easily makes its way through storm drains and tributaries to the river, then the Gulf of Mexico, and ultimately the ocean.

The Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative (MRCTI) is an association 103 U.S. cities along the entire 10-state length of the Mississippi River. MRCTI consists of a diverse group of bipartisan mayors from large and small, urban and rural communities. MRCTI was formed to provide a common voice for Mississippi River Cities.

*Innovative Approach and Partnerships*

Through collaboration with the United Nations



Environment Programme and the University of Georgia, over 100 organizations partnered on the Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative and collected data throughout

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# MISSISSIPPI RIVER MAYORS UNITE ON PURSUING SOLUTIONS TO PLASTIC POLLUTION

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the cities of St. Paul, MN, Davenport and Bettendorf, IA, Rock Island, Moline and East Moline, IL, St. Louis MO, Rosedale and Greenville, MS, and Baton Rouge LA. Over 136,000 pieces of litter were collected through community science using the Marine Debris Tracker app; the top items found were cigarette butts, food wrappers, and beverage bottles, followed by Styrofoam, aluminum cans, plastic fragments, and plastic bags.

From this collaborative data gathering and information sharing, MRCTI is working on Environmental Protection Agency Gulf of Mexico Trash Free Waters grants in St. Louis and Baton Rouge. The same grant was awarded in Memphis, making it a triple win for the lower Mississippi River. The grants prioritize working in underserved communities to reduce and prevent plastic pollution at the source.

MRCTI is also working with the University of Georgia through funding from the Walmart Foundation to conduct Circularity Assessment Protocols (CAP) in Minneapolis, Cape Girardeau (Missouri), Blytheville (Arkansas) and Vicksburg. The CAP is a hub and spoke model that provides a snapshot of a city's circularity that can provide data for local, regional, or national decision-making to reduce leakage of waste (e.g., single-use plastic) into the environment and increase circular materials management.

## *Deploying Plastic Pollution Hardware on the Ground*

Through the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), a tri-national collaborative is underway in the Quad Cities, and with communities in Canada and Mexico, sharing best practices with recycling, implementing trash traps, and working with constituents. MRCTI is working directly with quad cities community members, which is itself a collaboration working across state borders, to bring awareness of the source to sea journey of plastic waste, and to create a local action plan for reducing and preventing plastic waste.

In addition, MRCTI is working with corporate partners, non-profit organizations, and local, state, and Federal governments to advance a pollution-free future. Understanding the successes locally, as well as the



stakeholders involved, is important to replicating these endeavors on a larger scale and leveraging lessons learned. As we work to end pollution, our local communities must be empowered to implement needed reforms and provide direct feedback on progress and impact. Additionally, our state and federal stakeholders must be able to learn from successful efforts.

## *Taking the Effort to the National and Global Stages*

In May, MRCTI Co-Chair Mayor Errick Simmons of Greenville, MS represented the Mississippi River Corridor at the first negotiations of the new plastic pollution treaty. Mayor Simmons was the only U.S. mayor present for this important intervention to discuss the most harmful of plastic products to communities. Mayor Simmons also emphasized that communities need help turning their economies toward new and cleaner manufacturing options. This is also why MRCTI supports the passage of a national bottle bill and comprehensive legislation to assist cities with their recycling and waste management infrastructure.❖

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: BACON FARMER WORKMAN WORKMAN ENGINEERS

**B**acon Farmer Workman (BFW) Engineering & Testing, Inc. has been a full-service engineering firm for over 25 years. The firm started in a garage apartment with their two owners, Chris Farmer, PE and Mark Workman. Today they have over 150 professionals spread among eleven office locations throughout Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, and Indiana. Headquartered in the heart of our nation's inland waterways transportation system in Paducah, KY. BFW provides engineering services to many public and private riverports, water transportation companies, and other agencies including the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

In addition to all things engineering, BFW/Marcum has longstanding experience working with inland waterways clients from inception to completion on projects, often serving in strategic planning roles. They offer a variety of services, including grant application writing, master plan development, engineering, and construction administration of projects. BFW/Marcum is unique in the fact that they are the technical arm of the riverports they serve, creating a vision for growth and maintaining a plan for existing infrastructure so that the ports can provide exceptional services to industry.

Most notably, BFW led the U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration's Port Infrastructure Development Program grant request for the Paducah – McCracken County Riverport Authority and the Eddyville Riverport and Industrial Development Authority, resulting in nearly \$10 million allocated for infrastructure improvements to West Kentucky inland waterways system. Grant writing and development is a recent addition to BFW services portfolio, originating based on the need of their clients to better fund community projects.

BFW has performed Master Plans for waterways clients, developing implementable strategies to attract economic development to the waterways system. Many projects have been completed with all forms of civil engineering, including structural, site plan development, water resources, environmental, utility, and transportation design. Projects range from new road design, build ready site development, dock repairs, sheet pile wall installations, wetland delineation and mitigation, cultural resource studies, environmental assessments, dredging plans, and more.



**BACON | FARMER | WORKMAN**  
ENGINEERING & TESTING, INC.

BFW plays a role in many USACE projects, including the Kentucky Lock Addition, which is located less than 25 miles from their headquarters. BFW has been an active contracting partner over the course of several contracts for the mega-project and currently performs services including LiDAR data collection, survey, geotechnical engineering, testing and inspections, hydraulic and hydrologic analysis, and environmental testing for the construction of the Downstream Lock Monoliths.

BFW has a long history of delivering quality projects for diversified clients in waterways, educational, transportation, commercial, industrial, and municipality markets. The secret sauce—their people centered approach. BFW was founded on the principles of relationships, where quality engineering designs are delivered, tailored around each and every client they serve.❖



**Eddyville Kentucky Riverport**

# JEN ARMSTRONG JOINS WCI AS DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



**Jen Armstrong**

**W**CI welcomes Jen Armstrong as Director, Government Relations. Ms. Armstrong is serving in this role alongside Dustin Davidson.

Ms. Armstrong was most recently Director of Navigation Policy and Legislation for the American Association of Port of Authorities.

Prior to that, she was Republican Staff Director/Clerk for the Senate Energy and Water (E&W) Appropriations Subcommittee, where she directed the development of the annual \$52 billion E&W Appropriations bill which funds the Corps of Engineers' Civil Works mission, the Bureau

of Reclamation, and the Department of Energy.

Before that, she was a Professional Staff Member for the Senate E&W Appropriations Subcommittee. While on Capitol Hill, Jen served as a subject matter expert and advisor to Committee Chairs, Ranking Members, members of Congress, and their staff on federal investments related to their districts.

Ms. Armstrong worked with the Corps of Engineers from 2004-2016 in a variety of positions including Government Affairs Liaison/Program Manager at Corps' Headquarters; Civil Works Project Manager and Military Project Manager at the Norfolk District; and Civil Works Interdisciplinary Project/Construction Manager for the New Orleans Hurricane Protection Office.

She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Old Dominion University.

Please help us welcome Jen to WCI. She can be reached at [jarmstrong@waterwayscouncil.org](mailto:jarmstrong@waterwayscouncil.org).❖

## #IMX2023 SMASHES ATTENDANCE RECORD IN NASHVILLE



**Photo A:** WCI Chair Cherrie Felder kicks off IMX2023 in Nashville on June 1 as part of a panel discussion of "The State of the Maritime Industry and What's to Come."



**Photo B:** WCI President/CEO Tracy Zea (right far) was among leaders and past recipients of the IMX "40 Under 40 Award" on a panel titled "From Leaders to Legends: Words of Wisdom from Young Leaders." Other panelists included (left to right) Tim Parker III, President and CEO, Parker Towing Company Inc.; Kent Furlong, President, Hines Furlong Line, Inc.; James C. Fowler, Managing Director, Cooper Marine and Executive Vice President, Blakeley Boatworks; and Kasey Eckstein, President, Eckstein Trade & Transport and Eckstein Fleeting Service. The panel was moderated by Mike Breslin, Director of Safety & Sustainability, AWO, and introduced by Frank McCormack, Waterways Journal Gulf Coast Correspondent (shown at podium).

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## #IMX2023 SMASHES ATTENDANCE RECORD IN NASHVILLE

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**Mike Rushing**

than 2,000 maritime and logistics professionals who were

Sponsored by *Waterways Journal* with sponsor support from Waterways Council, Inc., the 2023 Inland Marine Expo was held in Nashville at Music City Center May 31-June 2. The annual event and exposition celebrate the important work being done along U.S. inland rivers, lakes, and intracoastal waterways. It was attended by more

there to collaborate on making marine transportation even more cost-effective, safe, and environmentally friendly, to show their products and services, and to hear from other marine experts on the state of the industry and other topics. 232 companies exhibited this year at IMX.

The 2023 IMX Achievement Award was presented posthumously to Captain Mike Rushing, who passed away March 5 and was described by many as a humble servant. Mike's son, Todd Rushing, accepted the award, and the Rushing family attended the moving remarks.

The event also recognized "40 Under 40" winners -- the up-and-coming leaders that will shape the maritime future -- that began with a keynote address by Rev. Mark Nestlehutt, President and Executive Director, The Seamen's Church Institute.

IMX 2024 will be held in Nashville May 29-31.❖

## THOUGHTS ON FOOD

On June 8, WCI and its members assisted renowned Dutch photographer Kadir van Lohuizen for a photo essay that will be published Thanksgiving Day as a 16-page supplement in the *Washington Post* called "Food for Thought," a look at how food is produced, transported, and gets to tables in seven countries of the world. Van Lohuizen is creating a photographic portrait of the food supply chain - specifically soybeans and grains - that travels down the lower Mississippi River. His photo essay will highlight the global connections related to food and the innovations happening on the ground as farmers rise to the challenges of weather, and other demands to produce food for the world. "Food for Thought" initially appeared in the *Washington Post* in 2022 and highlighted food shipments out of the Port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. ❖



**Aaron Khouri, Manager of Ingram Barge Company's Fleet Dispatch (left) speaks with Dutch photojournalist Kadir van Lohuizen aboard an Ingram boat in the gulf. Ryan Zulli, Fleet Supervisor, Cargo Carriers Repair Yard, also participated (right).**



# WCI VISITS MEMBERS, PROSPECTS IN DC, HOUSTON, MEMPHIS AND ARKANSAS

In between the FY24 appropriations process in Congress, which was delayed due to debt ceiling negotiations, WCI took the opportunity to get out and visit its members and prospective members in the months of April and June. On April 5-6, WCI President/CEO Tracy Zea and Senior Vice President Deb Calhoun met with members CITGO, joined later by WCI Chair Cherri Felder to visit America's Styrenics, former WCI member Exxon/SeaRiver Maritime and P66.

Mr. Zea and Ms. Calhoun met with Ricardo Martinez, Senior Advisor, Marine Regulatory Affairs and Advocacy for Chevron in the WCI Washington, DC office on June 5. On June 6, they headed to Memphis for meetings with members Wepfer Marine, the Port Memphis, Watco, and Southern Towing, where they celebrated Kevin Conway, Vice President at Southern Devall, and his upcoming retirement after more than 40 years in the inland industry and three decades at Southern. ❖



**WCI Chair Cherri Felder (left) chats with Americas Styrenics Procurement Manager Linda Turner at a meeting in Houston April 5.**



**Waterways Council, Inc. President/CEO Tracy Zea (left) visits George Leavell, President of Wepfer Marine, Inc. at Wepfer's boat yard and offices in Memphis.**



**Kevin Conway and WCI Senior Vice President Deb Calhoun got together on June 6 in Memphis to celebrate Kevin's retirement.**

# LOCKS 22 AND 25 GROUNDBREAKINGS HELD

The Corps of Engineers hosted two groundbreaking ceremonies to celebrate the beginning of NESP projects on May 18 at Lock and Dam 25 in Winfield, MO, and at Lock and Dam 22 in Saverton, MO.

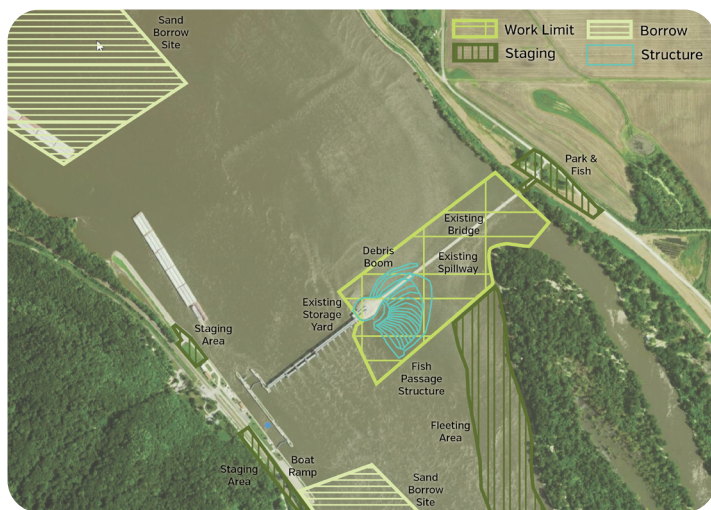
Lock and Dam 25, located at Mile 241.4 on the Upper Mississippi River above the mouth of the Ohio River, will see construction of a new 1200-foot lock located in the auxiliary miter gate bay. The existing 600-foot lock will remain in place and become an auxiliary lock chamber. The project also includes associated channel work, relocations and site-specific environmental mitigation.

The Lock 22 ecosystem project will create a Fish Passage to restore a migration pathway for fish. A "fishway" on the spillway, this project would increase access to upstream habitats and improve native migratory fish populations. This project is the first of its kind on the Upper Mississippi River. The event drew attendees Senior Advisor to the President and Infrastructure Coordinator, Mitch Landrieu; Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Michael Connor; USACE Mississippi Valley Division Commander MG Diana Holland; USACE MVR Commander COL Jesse Curry; and Executive Director of the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association Kirsten Wallace. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey were also on-hand during the event.

WCI held a reception on the same day after the events at Ameristar Casino's Event Lawn Rooftop in St. Charles, MO.❖



**Dignitaries that included WCI Vice Chairman Jeff Webb (third from right) grab their shovels for the Groundbreaking for Lock 25 on May 18.**



**Rendering of the Corps' Lock 22 fish passage.**

# ILLINOIS WATERWAY LOCKS CLOSED UNTIL SEPTEMBER



**Even before the full ILWW Closure, construction had begun at Dresden Island Lock, with control stand and valve work underway.**

After years of planning, closures on the Illinois Waterway (ILWW) at Marseilles, Dresden Island, and Brandon Road Locks have begun, as crews are moving floating plants, removing gates, setting bulkheads, and preparing to dewater the lock chambers. The closure is expected to last up to four months, through September 30.

Navigation stakeholders have received numerous communications and notices on the closure from the Corps' Rock Island District, and fleets from the St. Paul District and Rock Island District's Mississippi River Project are onsite to ramp up for the busy maintenance season ahead.

Stay alert to the status of the project [here](#). See the project in action [here](#).❖

# WCI ATTENDS NATIONAL GRAIN & FEED ASSOCIATION 127TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

On March 21-23, WCI Chair Cherrie Felder and WCI SVP Deb Calhoun attended partner organization National Grain & Feed Association's (NGFA) 127th Annual Convention in La Quinta CA. Founded in 1896, NGFA is a broad-based, non-profit trade association that represents and provides services for grain, feed and related commercial businesses.

Its activities focus on enhancing the growth and economic performance of U.S. agriculture. Many of NGFA's members are WCI's members, and Ms. Felder and Ms. Calhoun spoke at NGFA's Waterborne Commerce Committee meeting, chaired by WCI Board member Jessica Stephan (Bunge).❖

**WCI Chair Cherrie Felder talks with Tom Heinold, P.E., Chief, Operations Division Rock Island District, Corps of Engineers, just before he addressed NGFA Convention attendees.**



**Ms. Felder stands with WCI Vice Chairman Jeff Webb (Cargill), after the NGFA Waterborne Commerce Committee meeting.**

# IWUB MEETS IN PITTSBURGH IN APRIL, CORPS AND ASA LOCK THROUGH

The Inland Waterways Users Board (IWUB) met in April in Pittsburgh, with a tour of the Lower Mon and Upper Ohio projects on April 12, and the IWUB meeting held April 13.



**Left to right: IWUB Vice Chairman Damon Judd (Marquette Transportation Co., LLC) listens to Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Michael Connor, as Major General William (Butch) H. Graham, Deputy Chief of Engineers and Deputy Commanding General, takes notes.**

At the meeting, good news was revealed, as Charleroi Lock is expected to be operational by the end of the year/early next year. The balance of the meeting focused on the IWTF balance, the need for the Board to receive accurate accounting quarterly from the Corps, and project cost increases.

On April 14, the morning after the

IWUB meeting, WCI member Campbell Transportation Co. (CTC) arranged a vessel ride aboard the M/V Connie K for



**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 after the IWUB meeting.**

Major General Graham and ASA Secretary Connor that included a full 15-barge tow locking through a 1200-foot chamber to highlight the efficiencies, economic value and reduced carbon footprint made possible by larger chambers

and more modern infrastructure on the inland waterways.

CTC's 3200-HP vessel was recently refurbished, and its engines upgraded to be more efficient and environmentally superior.

The IWUB will meet July 20 in Paducah.❖

# CELEBRATE WCI'S 20TH WITH US IN NOVEMBER IN NEW ORLEANS



Please join WCI for its upcoming 20th Anniversary Meeting November 13-15 in New Orleans at the Four Seasons Hotel. We will have our Annual Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting, and Waterways Symposium, with lots of special events, looks back at our history, fun giveaways, and much more.

After the start of WCI in 2003 (born from an earlier campaign called Waterways Work!), what else happened that year?

*The Human Genome Project was completed during April 2003. Global scientists successfully finished sequencing about 99% of the human genome, identifying over 20,000 individual genes and base pairs that create the basic DNA composition of humans.*

*The Space Shuttle Columbia disaster took place on February 1, with seven crew members aboard intending to conduct scientific experiments for 16 days. The Columbia disintegrated upon re-entry, tragically killing all on board. Following the catastrophe, NASA's space shuttle program was suspended for two years while they*

*investigated the disaster and tried to improve the program.*

*The Department of Homeland Security was created. Both the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. Secret Service were moved into the newly formed department.*

*In 2003, a brand-new Ford Ranger cost \$8,995.*

*Arnold Schwarzenegger was inaugurated as Governor of California.*

*The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King was released in theaters worldwide.*

*Apple launched iTunes and sold one million songs during the first week.*

*The U.S. planned an invasion of Iraq and the U.S. and the United Kingdom began their "shock and awe" campaign with air strikes on military targets in Baghdad before the invasion of Iraq by Land Forces.*

*Inflation was at a 37-year low of 1.3%, unemployment was 6.0%, and the retail price for a gallon of gas averaged \$1.59.*

*Bacon topped the list of favorite food trends for the year.❖*



## WELCOME, NEW WCI MEMBERS!

WCI welcomes its newest valued members who have joined us since March:



**Lake Providence Port Commission**

# WEINZIERL WINS LEADERSHIP AWARD



*Rodney Weinzierl, Executive Director, Illinois Corn Growers Association (ICGA) (center), was honored with the Diolkos Award at the 2023 Rail & Maritime Summit held in Chicago June 13. The Diolkos Award recognizes an individual whose outstanding leadership and vision have highlighted the importance of rail's impact on our economy. The award is named Diolkos because of the Diolkos wagonway that dates back to 600 B.C. and is considered to be the ancestor of the railway. Also pictured is Jim Tarmann, Managing Director (ICGA), and WCI President/CEO Tracy Zea (right).*

## INDUSTRY CALENDAR

### SAVE THE DATE:

**July 17-20:** National Corn Growers Association Corn Congress (Washington, DC).

**July 20:** 100th Inland Waterways Users Board meeting, Paducah, KY (Paducah-McCracken County Convention and Expo Center). Questions? Please contact Mark R. Pointon, (703) 428-6438, or Steven Riley at (703) 659-3097.

**July 26-28:** Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association 118th Annual GICA Seminar, New Orleans (Westin Hotel)

**August 9-11:** Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterways Conference, Point Clear, AL (Grand Hotel)

**October 10-11:** American Waterways Operators Board of Directors Meeting and Fall Convention, Philadelphia (Bellevue Hotel)



*New Orleans is the site of WCI's upcoming Annual Meeting, November*

*13-15. More details ahead but be sure to join in the fun! Laissez les bons temps rouler...*

**November 13-15:** WCI Annual Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting, Waterways Symposium, 20th anniversary celebration, New Orleans (Four Seasons Hotel)

**November 29-December 1:** International Workboat Show, New Orleans (Morial Convention Center)

**December 7:** Seamen's Church Institute 23rd Annual River Bell Awards Luncheon, Paducah (Paducah-McCracken County Convention & Expo Center)

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