

CAPITOL CURRENTS

WATERWAYS
COUNCIL, INC.

September 11, 2025



AMERICA'S INLAND WATERWAYS REMAIN A CONGRESSIONAL FAVORITE

By Tracy Zea, President/CEO, Waterways Council, Inc.



Tracy Zea

On July 17, 2025, the House Appropriations Committee passed the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Energy & Water Development (E&WD) and Related Agencies appropriations bill, critical legislation that impacts a broad spectrum of policy areas, including one of the

most pivotal sections to secure funding for our Nation's inland waterways.

FY26 House E&WD appropriations recommended approximately \$9.88 billion for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Civil Works mission, an increase of \$3.22 billion from the President's budget request of \$6.66 billion and about \$1 billion above current funding levels.

With this passage, overall recommended funding for the Corps has risen 64% over the last 10 fiscal years (FY17 \$6.04 billion to \$9.88 billion in FY26). WCI takes pride in the increased funding for the Corps' work to modernize the system.

Inland waterways construction projects received \$396.8 million in funding, even after the President's FY26 budget recommended no funding (\$0) for ongoing and new inland

construction and major rehabilitation projects. Inland waterways construction received 68% of the \$583.8 million in Community Project Funding (earmarks) recommended in the Construction account, a testament to the strong support the waterways still receive from Congress. By investing in the infrastructure, Congress signals its commitment to economic growth on this part of the transportation network.

According to *Roll Call*, in FY26, House Republicans added more funding for home-district projects than they did last year, though with slightly fewer funds allocated to earmarks overall, at just shy of \$8 billion.

"A *CQ Roll Call* analysis noted that across the seven House spending bills with "community project funding,"

Republicans claimed about 62 percent of the total funding, or \$4.9 billion. That's despite Democrats securing 62 percent of the more than 5,000 individual projects; far more Democrats request earmarks, though

Continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 3 **Legislator Profile: Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL)**
- 5 **Member Spotlight: SCH Services**
- 7 **Alabama Fish Passage Being Studied**
- 9 **WCI Holds Media Tour at Montgomery**
- 10 **Save the Dates: See You in Nashville in December**
- 11 **WCI Supports Ingram's "Waterways 101" Day**

AMERICA'S INLAND WATERWAYS REMAIN A CONGRESSIONAL FAVORITE

Continued from page 1

they are increasing in popularity with Republicans. Just 49 House Republicans this year refrained from asking for projects, down from 67 a year earlier.”

Specifically recommended for funding in FY26 were:

- Upper Ohio (Montgomery Lock) - \$183,829,000, requested by Congressman Reschenthaler (R, PA-14) and Congressman Deluzio (D, PA-17)
- Chickamauga Lock - \$213,000,000, requested by Congressman Fleischmann (R, TN-3). This amount will take Chickamauga to its authorized cost limit (902 limit). The Corps is currently developing a report for Congress' approval that will increase this limit. Bids to complete Chickamauga closed in July, a clearer picture of funding needs will be known when the contract is awarded and made public.
- Upper Mississippi River—Illinois WW System, IL, IA, MN, MO & WI (Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) - \$2,000,000 (ecosystem portion only), requested by Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski (D, IL-13) and Congressman Eric Sorensen (D, IL-17).

Unfortunately, NESP received a low level of funding at just \$2 million for ecosystem projects.

Next year, Lock & Dam 25 will need at least \$250 million, which could significantly increase the overall amount NESP receives.

GIWW Report Language - *GIWW—Brazos River Floodgates & Colorado River Lock, TX* - “To the extent provided in applicable laws and regulations, the Corps is strongly urged to expedite the acceptance of advanced funds proposed to be provided by the State of Texas for work related to the Brazos River Floodgates.” This was one of WCI's key priorities for FY26.

Report Language - “The Committee is disappointed that, after including robust support in the fiscal year 2025 work plan, the Corps did not include any funds for inland waterways construction projects in its budget request for a third consecutive year. For fiscal year 2026, the Committee

According to Roll Call, at the top of the list of legislators who offered (FY26) earmark requests is House Energy & Water Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN).



provides robust funding above the budget request from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund for inland waterways projects. The Committee recommends funding above the budget request for additional operation and maintenance activities on the inland waterways.”

The Investigations account which covers environmental and engineering feasibility studies, assessments and audits, site investigations, hydrology and water resources investigations, data collection and analysis, among other areas, recommended \$200 million, up \$70 million from the FY26 President's budget request of \$130 million.

Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) recommended \$490 million, which represents a \$234 million increase from the President's FY26 budget request of \$256 million. The MR&T program is a comprehensive flood risk management system that covers the Lower Mississippi River Valley, including parts of Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

The House bill recommends \$6.14 billion for the overall Operations and Maintenance (O&M) account, of which \$3.38 billion will be derived from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. This is a very welcome plus-up of \$2.16 billion to the O&M account above the President's FY26 request of approximately \$3.98 billion. And the funds will be put to good use. The Corps' Mississippi Valley Division, which encompasses parts of 13 states and includes six subordinate districts located in St. Paul, Minnesota; Rock Island, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee; Vicksburg, Mississippi; and New Orleans, Louisiana, currently has a total navigation backlog/life cycle for maintenance of more than \$14 billion.

Continued on page 3

AMERICA’S INLAND WATERWAYS REMAIN A CONGRESSIONAL FAVORITE

Continued from page 2

While the House passage of the FY26 E&WD bill represents a step forward for funding the Corps’ important work to modernize the Nation’s inland waterways, challenges of maintenance, rising construction costs, workforce shortages, and extended completion timelines remain vexing.

At press time, the Senate has not yet passed its E&WD appropriations bill, and time is running short to pass all 12 appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year on September 30. The federal government is operating under a full-year continuing resolution for FY25 which expires

at the end of fiscal year on September 30. Funding by CR is problematic because CRs typically only fund programs at the levels set in the previous year’s budget. While new initiatives or programs can move forward, federal agencies cannot engage in long-term planning, budgeting, or procurement. This can impede their ability to manage projects effectively.

WCI continues to seek efficient funding levels for the Corps and increased accountability for project delivery. With our WCI members’ continued support, our work goes on. ❖

LEGISLATOR PROFILE: SENATOR DICK DURBIN (D-IL)



Senator Dick Durbin

In this issue of Capitol Currents, we profile another elected official who has championed the inland waterways, Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL)

Senator Durbin is the senior United States senator from the state of Illinois, a seat he has held since 1997, and the longest serving Senate Democratic Whip (the second-highest position in the Democratic leadership in the Senate). He is also the dean of the Illinois Congressional delegation. In April, he announced he would not seek reelection in 2026.

BIOGRAPHICAL FACTS

Name

Senator Dick Durbin

Born

November 21, 1944

Education

School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, J.D.
from Georgetown University Law Center

Occupation

U.S. Senator (1997-Present), U.S Representative for IL-20 (1983-1997)

Continued on page 4

LEGISLATOR PROFILE: SENATOR DICK DURBIN (D-IL)

Continued from page 3

Q: You announced that you will not seek re-election for a sixth term next year and will leave office in 2027. What has been your most gratifying achievement(s) while serving in Congress?

A: I've been working for decades to support the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), and I'm proud to say that I've helped secure \$829 million in federal funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) for the program, in addition to \$120 million I fought to include in the Fiscal Year 2024 omnibus appropriations bill. Because of this funding, LaGrange Lock and Dam and Lock 25 are getting much-needed upgrades and more than \$97 million will go into an environmental restoration project to create a fish passage at Lock 22. These upgrades will have a resounding, long-term impact on Illinois' economy, streamlining our state's shipping industry while preserving and restoring our waterways' natural beauty.

Q: You have long fought for Illinois farmers and workers in a variety of areas, including rural internet connectivity, economic development and innovation, and of course waterways infrastructure. Describe how you think about legislation when seeking ways to improve market conditions and expand competition in the world marketplace for not only Illinois farmers and agriculture producers but for all Illinois businesses?

A: My goal over the years was to focus on the big-picture groundwork of policies designed to create a stronger future for Illinois agriculture. Looking back on my time in Congress, I think farmers can see those results.

To reduce farming costs, including stronger crop yields, disease and weather resistance, and creating new technologies, I have worked to secure federal funds to support research at the Peoria USDA Agricultural Research Laboratory, and at land-grant institutions like the University of Illinois, and the National Soybean Research Laboratory, the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, and the National Corn to Ethanol Research Center at Southern Illinois University. To create more markets for crops, I've worked to preserve Illinois as a central crossroads in our national transportation network by securing major funds for road and highway improvements, and for upgrades to the lock and dam system for barge traffic on Illinois waterways.



Not just an advocate for inland waterways infrastructure, Senator Durbin joined U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), author of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's water infrastructure division, in April 2023 to announce more than \$6.5 billion for states, Tribes, and territories for essential drinking water infrastructure upgrades across the Nation.

I have been a longtime champion of biofuels, from the gasohol days, from increasing ethanol and biodiesel with the enactment of the Renewable Fuels Standard, to the present, working to expand the sale of E15, and developing bio-based jet fuels. I also supported the creation of the USDA Office of Urban Agriculture, and currently I am working to expand federal crop insurance protections to cover smaller farms that grow a diversity of specialty crops for local markets. And for the first time ever, I worked to ensure the Illinois Farm Service Agency advisory committee during the Biden Administration reflected the rich agricultural diversity of Illinois farmers, including the people, their locations, and farm sizes.

Q: You received WCI's Leadership Service Award in 2013 for championing the inland waterways. Why have the inland waterways and its infrastructure been something to fight for, and what is your hope for the future of this critical multi-beneficial system?

A: Illinois is lucky to have one of the greatest shipping assets in the world – the Mississippi River. But if we want to use the Mississippi River to its full potential, we need to modernize

Continued on page 5

LEGISLATOR PROFILE: SENATOR DICK DURBIN (D-IL)

Continued from page 4



In 2013, Senator Durbin (D-IL) was presented WCI's Leadership Service Award for his championing of the inland waterways from then-Illinois Corn Growers President Paul Taylor.

our locks and dams to make the waterway even more efficient for shipping. The modernization of our shipping system along the Mississippi has been the driving force behind my pursuit of funding NESP and restoration projects along the river. My hope is that the funding I helped secure over the years will yield a more modern, efficient system that reflects the capabilities of a 21st century shipping industry.

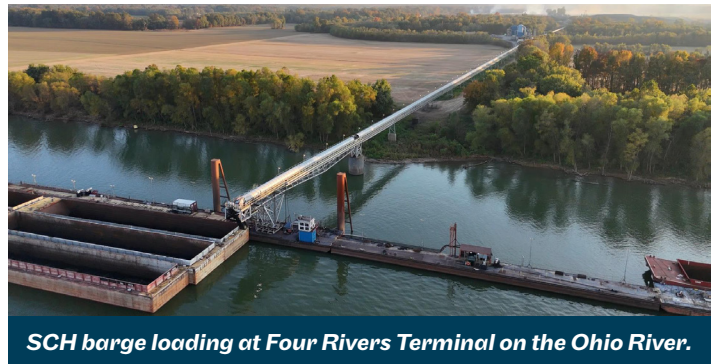
Q: What are some activities and hobbies you enjoy now and plan to do more of post-retirement?

A: I have piles of books on my shelf waiting to be read, but I'm most looking forward to spending time with my family, especially my grandkids. I'm sure you'll spot us all at Wrigley Field, enjoying America's favorite pastime. ❖

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: SCH SERVICES



In the final decade of the 20th century, electric utilities in the southeastern United States were faced with a logistical dilemma as an amendment to the U.S. Clean Air Act compelled managers of coal-fired power plants to modify the types of fuel they could source. While coal mined in the Illinois Basin region would remain attractive thanks to its renowned thermal content, it would need to be blended with lower-sulfur fuel to meet the new EPA guidelines. Of course, utilities found such coal to be abundantly available, though in an area thousands of miles across the country with limited access to navigable waterways—a region encompassing parts of Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado known as the Powder River Basin. This predicament, however, was just the sort that John Hunt Sr. and his Southern Coal Handling Company, later to be known as SCH Services, were building a reputation for solving.



SCH barge loading at Four Rivers Terminal on the Ohio River.

With engineering, construction, and transloading expertise all under one roof, SCH developed Calvert City Terminal (CCT) in Kentucky on the Tennessee River (mile marker 14) to provide a vital link between the mines of both Illinois and Powder River Basin and the barge-served electric utilities of the Southeast. A marine transloading facility with barge loading and unit train capacity, an advanced blending system, a vast storage yard, and access to multiple Class I railroads offered its customers a reliable, efficient, and cost-effective means to deliver a fuel blend to meet their specific requirements. CCT began operations in 2002 and later this year will transload its 115,000,000th ton of product, having since added rail loading

Continued on page 6

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: SCH SERVICES

Continued from page 5

and barge unloading capabilities, as well as petroleum coke handling operations. In 2024, products loaded at CCT shipped to 20 different locations on the inland rivers for its customers.

In 2014, SCH added to its unit-train facility portfolio with the construction of its Four Rivers Terminal (FRT) in West Paducah, Kentucky. Located on the Ohio River (mile marker 943), and with direct access to multiple Class I railroads, FRT handles a variety of commodities, including grain, grain by-products, coal, and petroleum coke. FRT's customers dot the inland waterways, but the facility has also proven to be a natural transloading destination for product bound for export in the Gulf; this is thanks in part to the efficiencies afforded by the sole lock and dam separating FRT from open waters to New Orleans - Olmsted.

“The reliability of the Olmsted L&D pool not only makes the Paducah area more competitive year-round, but gives our customers confidence in the services we provide,” said SCH Services CEO John Hunt Jr.

The SCH family further expanded in 2019 when Watco joined the ownership group and added its Cora Terminal to the mix. Sited in Illinois on the Upper Mississippi River at mile marker



Energy stockpiles at SCH's Calvert City Terminal.

99.7, the expansive Cora Terminal was designed to optimize its customers' unit train and barge cycle times while offering the flexibility of an abundance of short- and long-term storage options. Cora primarily handles coal for the domestic and export markets and operates harbor services to support its transload operations, as well as those of the surrounding grain terminals.

“SCH Services is proud to be a member of Waterways Council. The benefits of being a member of WCI include advocating for inland marine terminals, influencing public policy, and improving overall industry communication,” said Mr. Hunt.

HOUSE MEMBERS VISIT MEL PRICE

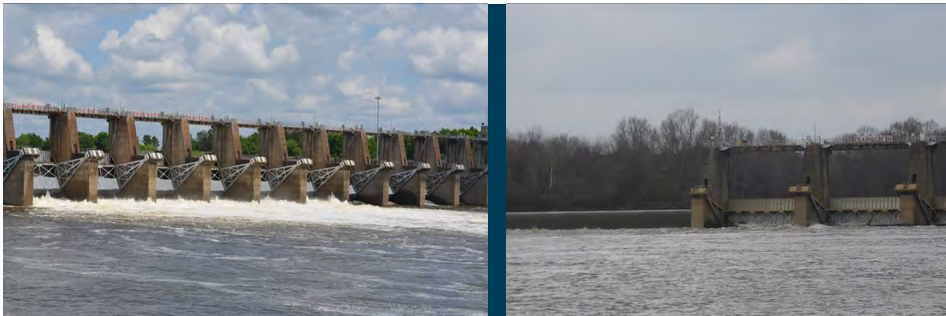


WCI's public education events provided WCI staff outreach opportunities with media and Congressional staff, among others. During the August Congressional recess, nearly 30 House and Senate staff members boarded an ARTCo towboat and Corps barge for an up-close look at the 1,200-foot chamber at Mel Price Locks and Dam, as well as a tour of the structure (photo).

The event was part of the St. Louis AgriBusiness Club's biennial "AgMazing' Congressional Tour Education Event." The three-day event, targeted for Agriculture Committee staff from the House and Senate, as well as regional Congressional offices, highlights the St. Louis metro area's agriculture impacts on the Nation.

CONSERVATION COLUMN: ONE FISH, TWO FISH ALABAMA FISH PASSAGE STUDY AIMS TO INCREASE SIZE OF NATIVE FISH POPULATIONS BY RESTORING CONNECTIVITY

Reprinted from Corps Environment, Volume 26, Issue 1, Winter 2025



Millers Ferry, left, and Claiborne, right, locks and dams in Alabama restrict access to historical spawning grounds on the Cahaba River. The Corps, The Nature Conservancy and other agencies seek to improve fish passage by reconnecting over 230 miles of the Alabama and Cahaba rivers to the Mobile River Delta. (Photos by USACE)

By Jenny Jacobson, Heather Bulger and Terry "TJ" Rickey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mobile District

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) are partners in a feasibility study regarding improved fish passage at both Claiborne and Millers Ferry locks and dams on the Alabama River in southern Alabama.

These two dams restrict access to historical spawning grounds on the Cahaba River from Millers Ferry, left, and Claiborne, right, locks and dams in Alabama restrict access to historical spawning grounds on the Cahaba River. This disruption of natural fish migration patterns has resulted in a decline in native aquatic species populations.

The Claiborne and Millers Ferry Locks and Dams Fish Passage Study, also known as the Alabama Fish Passage Study, seeks to establish fish passage by reconnecting over 230 miles of the Alabama and Cahaba rivers to the Mobile River Delta into the Gulf of America, providing connectivity for multiple species of fish, crayfish, mussels, turtles and more. The Alabama River System provides one of the last habitats for many of these species, which are critical to sustaining biodiversity and a healthy ecosystem.

Successful Partnerships

Partnering with TNC allows USACE to benefit greatly from the non-federal partner's extensive public outreach, considerably raising the project's visibility both locally and

nationally. USACE has also been fortunate to utilize TNC's vast network of scientific experts to capture key species requirements that factor into design elements.

TNC and other cooperating agencies, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Alabama Department of Environmental Management, have been critical in defining screening and success criteria. These partnerships have strengthened the project delivery team's modeled outputs, screening criteria, the semi-quantitative risk analysis, National Environmental Policy Act compliance and impacts analysis.

Using the planning and guidance criteria, as well as cost effectiveness and multi-criteria decision analyses, the draft report identified a tentatively selected plan consisting of a natural bypass channel at each of the two locks and dams.

In response to agency and public comments on the Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment, the fish passage alignment at Millers Ferry was adjusted to avoid crossing private land. The final integrated report underwent state and agency review in August 2024.

Public involvement and collaboration with TNC and state and federal partners have strengthened and will continue to strengthen the analysis and preliminary design of this project.

WCI'S 'FIVE ON THE FIVES' THRIVE

WCI has shared several "Five on the Five" interviews over the last few months, with a summer break in July:

June 6: Theodore "Tab" Brown, Chief of the Programs Integration Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

August 5: Rep. Riley Moore (R-WV)

September 5: Katie Williams, Professional Staff Member, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee



Rep. Riley Moore was WCI's guest for the August installment of 'Five on the Five.'

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

WCI welcomes its newest members!



WCI HOLDS ANNUAL MEDIA TOUR AT MONTGOMERY LOCK

On August 19-21, WCI held its annual tour of a lock project for news media. This year's event was at Montgomery Lock near Pittsburgh. The Montgomery project is the replacement of the auxiliary chamber with a new, larger lock. It's part of the Upper Ohio Navigation Project, replacing chambers at the Emsworth and Dashields locks and dams. Media tour attendees included the following:

- Ken Hocke, Senior Editor, *WorkBoat*
- Greg Trauthwein, President, New Wave Media: *Maritime Reporter & Engineering News, Offshore Engineer, Marine Technology Reporter, MarineNews*
- Shelley Byrne, Ohio Valley Correspondent, *The Waterways Journal*
- Jeff Yoders, Associate Technology and Equipment Editor, *Engineering News Record and ENR Midwest*
- Angela Grett, Vice President - Corporate Affairs, Ingram Barge Company
- Sophia Sackleh, Program Coordinator, Special Projects, National Oilseed Processors Association (NOPA)
- Ashley Burns, Director of Community, Workforce & Economic Development, West Kentucky Community and Technical College
- *KDKA-TV CBS*
- *90.5 WESA NPR Radio*
- *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

The tour was led by WCI's Deb Calhoun (Senior Vice President), Jen Armstrong (Vice President, Government Relations) and Miranda Lang (Operations Manager).

After the Corps briefing of the Montgomery project and tour, attendees enjoyed a boat ride on the Gateway Clipper to see Pittsburgh's waterfront and Emsworth Lock. The event concluded with a dinner with industry representatives at the Duquesne Club in downtown Pittsburgh.



Participants of WCI's 2025 Media Tour of Montgomery Lock on August 20 gather for a photo high atop the dam.



Local CBS affiliate KDKA-TV reporter Ross Guidotti and videographer Fred Williams do a live shot from Montgomery Lock as part of the Waterways Council media tour.

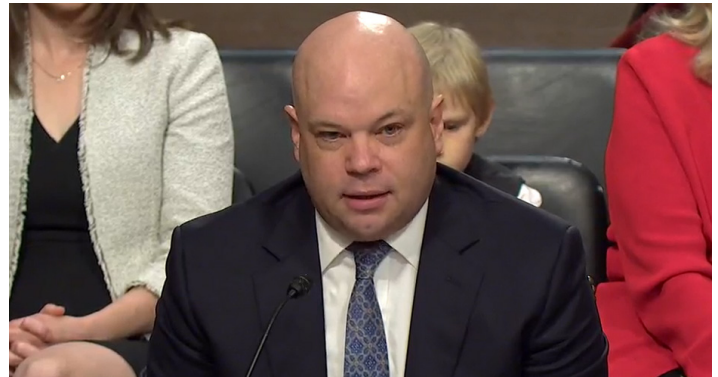


Corps of Engineers' Pittsburgh District Commander Colonel Nicholas O. Melin is interviewed by Julia Fraser, Development & Growth Reporter for 90.5 WESA, Pittsburgh's NPR News Station, during the 2025 media tour.

SAVE THE DATES: DECEMBER 9-10, WCI DECEMBER MEETINGS, ANNUAL WATERWAYS SYMPOSIUM



WCI's 22nd Annual Waterways Symposium will be held at the Loews Vanderbilt Hotel in Music City, Nashville, TN.



Recently confirmed Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Adam Telle has been invited to address WCI's Waterways Symposium guests. Photo courtesy of Senate Armed Services Committee

WCI will hold its Board of Directors meeting and 22nd Annual Waterways Symposium in Nashville at the Loews Vanderbilt Hotel beginning Tuesday, December 9 and concluding Wednesday, December 10. [Register here.](#)

These dates allow participants to attend the Seamen's Church Institute's annual River Bell Awards in Paducah. Visit SCI's website for more information.

All times are listed in Central.

Tuesday, December 9

- 7:30 AM Registration Opens
- 8:30 AM WCI Annual Membership/Board of Directors Meeting (WCI Members Only)
- 11:30 AM Keynote Address by Adam Telle, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) – Invited
- 1:30 PM “Geopolitical Importance of the U.S. Inland Waterways” with Jacob Shapiro, Geopolitics Pundit
- 2:15 PM Current Political Landscape with David Wasserman, Senior Editor & Elections Analyst for The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter

- 3:15 PM Recommendations for Improving Inland Waterways Capital Projects Delivery with Paul Dierking and Christine Altendorf, HDR
- 4 PM Closing Remarks

Wednesday, December 10

- 9 AM Opening Remarks and Civil Works Update with Major General James E. Kelly, Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- 9:50 AM Economic Outlook: Global Supply Chain for Commodities Moving on the Inland Waterways with Ken Eriksen, Managing Member, Polaris Analytics and Consulting
- 10:35 AM National Rivers Hall of Fame National Achievement Award Presentation
- 10:50 AM Closing Remarks and Adjourn

WCI/INGRAM OFFERS WATERWAYS 101

On August 14 in Paducah, KY, Ingram Barge Company, working with Waterways Council, Inc., hosted a “Waterways 101” event to help further educate congressional staffers from Kentucky and Tennessee about the importance of the inland waterways and its lock and dam infrastructure.

Participants visited the Seamen’s Church Institute training simulator, boarded an Ingram towboat to see the workings of a vessel, heard from a variety of waterways carriers (Crounse, ACBL, Hines Furlong, Marquette, Reliant Maritime), tourism providers (American Cruise Lines) and other waterways beneficiaries (U.S. Coast Guard’s Marine Safety Unit Paducah, Bacon Farmer Workman Engineering, Inc., Western Kentucky Community and Technical College, LIUNA) about their businesses and reliance on an efficient system. The event wrapped up with a briefing and tour from the Corps of Engineers at Kentucky Lock.



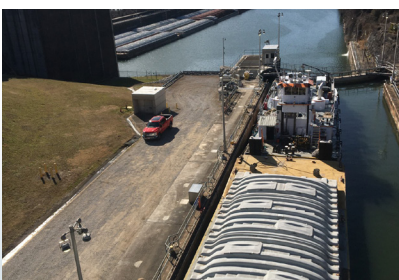
Participants of the Waterways 101 event toured Ingram’s M/V Sarah L. Ingram.



The Waterways 101 event ended with a tour of Kentucky Lock.

ALL ABOARD!

WCI member American Cruise Lines, Inc. invited Senior Vice President Deb Calhoun to have lunch and tour the American Symphony cruise ship while it was docked in Nashville, TN on May 13. Here, Deb (center) stands with American’s Kristin Meira, Director of Government Affairs, and Cassandra Caldwell, Government Affairs Manager, Mississippi River & Tributaries.



On July 24, the main chamber at Wilson Lock was opened and fully functional, a week ahead of its anticipated reopening. The lock, located on the Tennessee River, closed in September 2024 after its main gate hinge (pintle) cracked. Commercial and recreational vessels needed to use the auxiliary lock during repairs.

WCI HOSTS INDUSTRY PANEL AT IMX2025 TO ADDRESS INFRASTRUCTURE, PROJECT OVERRUNS, FUNDING

At this year's Inland Marine Expo (IMX2025), WCI's Vice President-Midwest Area Paul Rohde was invited to moderate a panel, "Keeping Traffic Flowing with Modern Infrastructure & the Challenge of Cost Overruns," that included panelists WCI President & CEO Tracy Zea, with Neil Maunu, Executive Director, Pacific Northwest Waterways Association, and Cline Jones, Executive Director, Tennessee River Valley Association.

The panelists addressed cost overruns of construction of lock and dam modernization, the status of efforts to close locks in the Pacific Northwest, and the climate for cutting funding for the inland waterways.



Shown here, Paul Rohde poses questions to panelists Neil Maunu (far left), Cline Jones (center) and Tracy Zea (far right).

WCI PUBLIC EDUCATION HEATS UP IN SUMMER

It was a busy summer for Waterways Council's public education efforts as multiple groups from WCI members and partners got an up-close look at river transportation infrastructure. The programs, designed by WCI staff, include lock tours to provide unique perspective in understanding the National importance of waterways transportation. WCI thanks the Corps of Engineers districts for hosting these groups!



A delegation from Nebraska Corn Growers Association's "PRIME" Program (aimed at younger or newer producers) stands high atop Mel Price Locks & Dam with Andy Schimpf (blue shirt) of the Corps' St. Louis District. The June event helped the group prepare for traveling to DC for National Corn Grower Association's annual Capitol Hill fly-in.



Marty Schwager (left), Executive Director of Iowa Farm Bureau, talks with Colonel Aaron Williams, Commander of the Corps' Rock Island District, during a tour of Lock 15.



Iowa Farm Bureau's board of directors toured Lock 15 in late June at an event arranged and led by WCI and the Corps' Rock Island District.



Members of the U.S. Grains & Bioproducts Council heard from WCI's Paul Rohde in August, in an event that included a look at the new miter gates installed at Lock 7 near LaCrosse, WI just a week earlier.



AWO ANNOUNCES 2026 EVENT DATES

February 18: Atlantic Region Annual Meeting (Baltimore, MD)

February 24-26: Combined Regions Annual and Winter Safety Meeting (New Orleans, LA)

March 10: Pacific Region Annual Meeting (Vancouver, WA)

May 11-13: Spring Convention & Barge-In (Washington, DC)

June-August: Annual Roundtable meetings (Location TBD)

July 28-30: Summer Safety Meeting (Location TBD)

October 14-15: Fall Convention (Location TBD)

Capitol Currents
is published by



WATERWAYS
COUNCIL, INC.

Tracy Zea, Publisher
Deb Calhoun, Editor

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

waterwayscouncil.org

Vol. 22, No. 2

2025 INDUSTRY CALENDAR

SAVE THE DATE:

September 15: PIANCUSA, Smart Rivers 2025, Memphis, TN

October 15-16: AWO Fall Convention and Board of Directors Meeting (InterContinental Houston in Houston, TX). Details and reservation links are here.

December 3-5: International WorkBoat Show, New Orleans (Morial Convention Center)

December 9-10: WCI Annual Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting, and Annual Waterways Symposium (Nashville, TN), followed by Seamen's Church Institute River Bell, December 11 (Paducah, KY).

February 2-5, 2026: WCI Capitol Hill Fly-In, Washington, DC (InterContinental, The Wharf). Details forthcoming.