



NATIONAL  
WATERWAYS  
CONFERENCE



OCTOBER 2019

# Celebrating History and Soul, NWC Gathers in Memphis for the 2019 Annual Meeting and the City's Bicentennial

Commemorating the founding of the city 200 years ago on the Chickasaw bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, NWC members and guests convened at the legendary Peabody Hotel, as the landmark celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Reflecting NWC's growth in size and influence, attendance



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this year surpassed the record level numbers we experienced last year in New Orleans!

The conference program opened with a Keynote Address by the Honorable R.D. James, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. The overriding theme of his message was that the nation needs to commit to support our critical infrastructure, pointing out that ready access to the country's navigation system, adjacent to the largest, contiguous, fertile growing area in the world, is what has made the United States a global power since the 1930s.

Delving into civil works operations, Secretary James discussed his efforts to further increase efficiency across the regulatory program, enhancing consistency across districts. He further pledged to push decision-making back to the districts, particularly related to real estate, contracts, and legal decisions,

rather than having those decisions centralized at headquarters. All of these initiatives would improve the Corps' partnership with its nonfederal sponsors and stakeholders, critical, according to the Secretary, throughout the entire project process. In turn, these efforts would result in Mr. James' signature initiative – to move dirt,

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 2*



The Honorable R.D. James, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)



## Priorities for USACE Levee Safety Guidelines

NWC and FAIR (Floodplain Alliance for Insurance Reform) submitted a letter to USACE leadership offering recommendations for the Corps' consideration as it continues to develop the engineering circular on levee safety. The letter was a follow-up to NWC's partnership meeting late last fall with the Corps and several local levee sponsors. Local levee sponsors must be integrally involved as full partners in formulating the tools for levee risk assessment; identifying viable, economic flood risk reduction solutions and responsibly informing and educating their communities. To that end, we recommended:

- To address levee system deficiencies and remedies, create a durable and effective framework for establishing intergovernmental consensus on levee safety improvements to better capitalize on engineering expertise at the Corps;
- In carrying out risk characterizations for levee systems, the Secretary should ensure the integral involvement of non-federal project sponsors in all actions and should include, as a part of any Levee Safety Action Classification

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### *"2019 ANNUAL MEETING" FROM PAGE 1*

speeding up the process, saving money, and maintaining the nation's global prominence.

Next up, presentations from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers headquarters leaders, Eddie Belk, Chief of the Programs Integration Division, and Tom Smith, Chief of Operations and Regulatory. Belk provided an overview of civil works investment trends, highlighting the robust appropriations from the Congress as making a significant difference in the Corps' ability to address critical infrastructure needs. Included in these amounts are the FY18 emergency supplemental funds and the FY19 disaster supplemental funds, with accompanying details about where these funds are allocated. Smith provided an overview of a cross-section of initiatives important to NWC's diverse membership. He described the Corps efforts to deal with the significant navigation challenges impacting stakeholders nationwide as a result of historic flooding and long-term high water, including along the Upper Mississippi, the MKARNS, the Tenn-Tom and Southwest Pass. He highlighted the collaborative efforts working with power marketing agencies to improve O&M efficiencies. He noted that the levee safety engineering circular under development at headquarters is on hold amid efforts to develop an engagement plan to seek comprehensive feedback from sponsors and stakeholders.



Colonel Robert Hilliard, Commander of the Vicksburg District, USACE

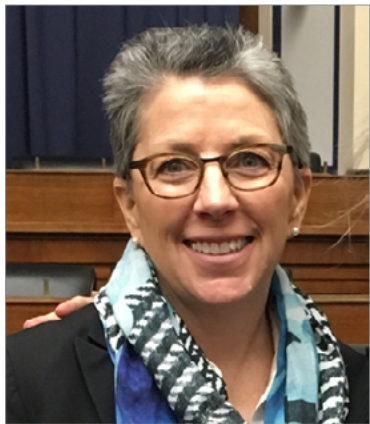
The regional spotlight featured a trio of new District Commanders, Colonel Zach Miller from Memphis, Colonel Rob Hilliard from Vicksburg, and Colonel Stephen Murphy from New Orleans. As evidence of their shared message that no stakeholder or district can work alone, but that a team effort is necessary for success, Miller focused on navigation, notably bank stabilization to address high water issues; Hilliard addressed the importance of partners with respect to levees, highlighting the effects of sustained high water and flooding, but stating "If we can talk, we can solve anything"; and Murphy focused on Louisiana's working coast, home to 40% of all wetlands in the United States as well 2 of the nation's largest petroleum reserves.

They were followed by a provocative presentation from Ed Grimm, the president of Southern Towing Company. Asserting that the inland waterways are the "arteries of the nation," Grimm stressed the importance of sustaining an efficient global supply chain. He urged attendees to think of new ways to do things, invoking Sir

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## A Farewell from Outgoing President Amy Larson



Amy Larson, Outgoing President

By now you might have heard that I have decided to step down from my position as NWC's leader at the end of the year. This is not a decision that came without a lot of thought and deliberation. However, I know it's the right decision for me personally and to bring renewed energy and commitment to an organization I love. As I look back on the past eleven and a half years, I am filled with gratitude. It is truly an honor and a privilege to have had the opportunity to work with so many dedicated professionals and fine people.

In early 2008, NWC was at a crossroads. It had endured a tumultuous period, its future uncertain. However, a well-respected group of water resources leaders firmly believed it was an organization worth saving, and they dedicated themselves to that cause. Rebuilding NWC was a team effort, and I consider myself fortunate to have been in the right place at the right time. We worked diligently to build what I called "a stewardship of the whole," fostering cooperation and collaboration

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## NWC Elects New Officers and Directors

David Yarbrough, Executive Director of the Tulsa Port of Catoosa, has been elected as Chairman of the National Waterways Conference for the coming year. David succeeds Randy Richardson, Executive Director of the Port of Memphis, who served in the post for 2 years, capping off his tenure by hosting this year's engaging and entertaining annual meeting.

Tom Ray, representing the Texas Water Conservation Association, has been elected Vice Chairman. Other Officers include First Vice President Tim Feather, CDM Smith; Vice President, Rob Rash, St. Francis Levee District; Secretary and Counsel, Steven Burns, Balch & Bingham, representing Alabama

Power; and Treasurer, Linda Christie, Tarrant Regional Water District.

Newly elected members of the Executive Committee are Nicki Fuller, Southwestern Power Resources Association, and Rick Johnson, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. They join members renominated for another year, Mike Fallon, Half Associates; Deidre Smith, Arkansas Waterways Commission; Judy Adams, Alabama State Port Authority; Brad Pickel, Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association; Bryan Day, Little Rock Port Authority; Phyllis Harden, Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel; and Charles Brittingham, Cassidy and Associates.



David Yarbrough, new NWC Chairman

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*"AMY LARSON FAREWELL" FROM PAGE 3*

among stakeholders and across all levels and agencies of government, respecting differences in priorities and values, striving for a common good. Behind the scenes, I knew I could count on Carole to handle member concerns, plan fabulous meetings, and generally keep me moving in the right direction. I take a good deal of pride in knowing that collectively, we built the premiere water resources organization focused on the Corps of Engineers. Along the way, I've had the good fortune to meet so many inspiring people, devoted to our country, and to forge lasting friendships. I am reluctant to attempt to list all of those who have helped me, as I will inevitably miss a few. However, I would be remiss not to mention my gratitude and devotion to Fred Caver, leader and mentor extraordinaire, who somehow managed to explain to this nerdy lawyer how the Corps of Engineers works. Despite his best efforts, I'm still a work in progress.

Since the issuance of the press release announcing the selection of NWC's new president, I've received many good wishes and some expressions of concern. I am touched by your thoughtfulness; please be assured that my decision is not health related. That said, my family and I are eternally grateful for the love and support we've received over the last two years.

I've given my heart and soul to NWC, and turning over the reins might otherwise have been a challenge. However, I could not be more thrilled that Julie will be my successor. I know with her at the helm, NWC will thrive and continue

## National Waterways Conference Introduces New President



Julie Ufner, Incoming President

The Board of Directors of the National Waterways Conference, Inc. is pleased to announce that Ms. Julie Ufner will take over as President and CEO effective November 4, 2019. Ufner will succeed longtime NWC President Amy Larson, who will step down at the end of the year, ensuring a seamless leadership transition.

"My goal is to build on the successes of Amy and the NWC membership. NWC is the only national organization advocating for water resources issues with a collective membership representing

navigation, flood control, water supply, hydropower, and recreation sectors. I am honored to become a part of this well-respected organization," Ufner said.

Previously, Ufner held several other positions in Washington, D.C., including Associate Legislative Director for Environment, Energy and Land Use at the National Association of Counties (NACo). Since 2002, she has worked with NACo's 3,069 counties on the development and implementation of federal policies with the U.S. Congress, the White House, and numerous

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to lead the way in water resources policy matters. Much like sending a child off to college or into the professional world, I will do my best to offer whatever support she needs, very little I suspect, and stay out of the way to the best of my ability. I plan to join NWC as a

member in 2020, staying involved in policy issues, and enjoying the camaraderie and support of this amazing group of people.

I look forward to our paths crossing again. ●



## Is There Time for WRDA in 2020?

Both the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee have signaled their intention to move towards enactment of water resources legislation in 2020.

The Senate oversight committee held a hearing on September 18 entitled, "Improving American Economic Competitiveness through Water Resources Infrastructure."

Witnesses included Jamey Sanders, Vice President of the Choctaw Transportation Company, representing NWC member Associated General Contractors of America; Patrick O'Toole, President of the Family Farm Alliance; and Derek Brockbank, Executive Director of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association.

Sanders urged the Committee to ensure that the revenues from both the inland waterways and harbor maintenance trust funds be used for their intended purposes, noting that dedicated and predictable funding is necessary to ensure the nation's long term water infrastructure needs are met. He also recommended changes to current budgetary and environmental review processes, as existing processes hinder and slow down projects, stating "While we must be good stewards of the taxpayer dollars and protect our environment, we must find ways to 'move dirt' more quickly to deliver the benefits to communities that depend on quality water resources infrastructure."

O'Toole, representing family farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts, and allied industries in 16 Western states, focused on the need for reliable and affordable irrigation water supplies for farmers and ranchers. Brockbank encouraged the use of a multi-benefit approach to coastal management and project development, recognizing the benefits of protection, ecological habitat, economic vitality, and recreation.

It is expected the Senate committee will hold another hearing on October 23<sup>rd</sup> with witnesses from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, including the Honorable R.D. James, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

The House T&I staff is in the process of engaging stakeholders and nonfederal sponsors on priorities for a WRDA in 2020, and the Committee plans to hold a roundtable discussion later this month in Florida. It is expected both committees will hit the ground running early in 2020 to introduce, mark-up and conference their respective bills in the first half of next year so that they don't get caught up in the election-year schedule morass. ●

### "2019 ANNUAL MEETING" FROM PAGE 2

Francis Bacon, who stated, "If we are to achieve things never before accomplished, we must employ methods never before attempted."

The regional panel closed out with a challenge by Stephen Gambrell of the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association. Using a tennis analogy, where better play occurs with better equipment, he urged attendees to play our best game when addressing the myriad challenges facing our declining infrastructure.

Major General Mark Toy, the new Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, served as the lunch speaker, filling in for the Chief of Engineers, LTG Todd Semonite, who'd been called away for other business.

The afternoon session provided



Major General Mark Toy, Commander, Mississippi Valley Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Photo by US Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District

an engaging look at current and emerging issues. With a presentation entitled "Thriving Together," Elliott Bouillion, President and CEO of RES (Resource Environmental Solutions), described RES's approach to providing ecological restoration services, from start to

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*"2019 ANNUAL MEETING" FROM PAGE 5*

finish with permit requirements to long term performance and risk management. Ken Eriksen of IEG Vantage offered insight into the state of the inland barge industry, with a compelling look at global events and trade issues impacting domestic agriculture and supply and demand. Tom Kula, Executive Director of the North Texas Municipal Water District, described the Bois D'Arc Lake project, the first major reservoir to be constructed in Texas in nearly 30 years. The complex



Outgoing Chairman Randy Richardson, Executive Director of the Port of Memphis, with the Honorable Jim Strickland, Mayor of Memphis, welcoming NWC members and guests.

project took more than a decade of planning before all permissions and permits were secured. Kula offered recommendations to reform the lengthy process and keys to success, reminding attendees that "Water is Life."

After an evening of barbeque and blues at the world famous Charlie Vergos Rendezvous, the following morning session featured a panel of industry leaders who offered insight into how a comprehensive and collaborative approach to water resources management can yield multiple benefits. Rick Johnson, Executive Director, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, described the need for an integrated study for the Central Valley's Yolo bypass, but noted the challenges presented by the current project study model. Lamenting that an incremental cost-benefit approach inhibits a comprehensive approach, Johnson offered ideas on how to best capture multi-purpose benefits that can be achieved with a system wide approach. Kirsten Wallace, Executive Director, Upper Mississippi River Basin Authority (UMRBA), described regional efforts to facilitate cooperative action on navigation and ecological health, and the policy hurdles that hinder those efforts. Building upon the

theme of partnership, Dustin Boatwright, Chief Engineer and Executive Vice President of The Little River Drainage District, described his efforts to forge partnerships, taking a critical look at new ways to do business, with win-win solutions. Michael D. Klingner, PE, Chairman of the Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association (UMIMRA), closed out the panel with a plea for a systemic plan on the Upper Miss, after years of study with no resolution.

The program concluded with an outlook from our federal and state partners, largely focused on prospects for a WRDA in 2020 and appropriations, including Gene Higginbotham, Projects Director for Senator John Boozman (Arkansas); Jay Sherrod, Projects Director for Rep. Rick Crawford (Arkansas); Jeff Parrish, State Counsel and Field Director for Senator Marsha Blackburn (Tennessee), and Dan Pallme, Tennessee Department of Transportation.

The meeting presentations are on our website at [waterways.org/2019-annual-meeting](http://waterways.org/2019-annual-meeting) •

*"NEW OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS" FROM PAGE 3*

New members of the Board of Directors include Blake Hardwich, Coalition of Alabama Waterways Associations; Dan Engemann, Upper Mississippi, Illinois, Missouri Rivers

Association (UMIMRA); David Combs, Missouri and Associated Rivers Coalition (MOARC); Kevin Studer, Iowa Corn Growers Association; Julie Minerva, Carpi Clay; Hong

Huynh, Multnomah County Drainage District; and Chris Collins, Louisiana Department of Transportation.

The complete listing is available on our website at [waterways.org](http://waterways.org) •



## Report Touts Importance of Inland Waterways to Agriculture

In late August, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Work, R.D. James, joined Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam to discuss the importance of waterways to the competitiveness of agriculture and the economy. The event provided an opportunity to brief industry stakeholders on a report issued by the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service, "Importance of Inland Waterways to U.S. Agriculture."

The nation's "water highway" extends 12,000 miles, including 218 lock chambers at 176 sites and moves more than 530 million tons annually, accounting for nearly 60% of all corn and soybeans we export with a combined value of \$17.2 billion. "Logistics and transportation are some of the most important aspects to farming and America's superior inland waterways are critical to our overall agricultural system," Secretary Perdue said. "We must continue to invest in modernizing our lock and dam infrastructure that flows through the heartland of agricultural production."

Secretary James similarly touted the waterways, "This Nation's inland waterways are vital to our economy as they provide cost-effective transportation to producers and manufacturers throughout system while reducing pressure on our overburdened interstate highways."

According to the report, increased investment in the inland waterways

system of \$6.3 billion over a 10-year period would cumulatively grow the country's GDP by \$73 billion by 2045 and add more than 77,000 new jobs. Moreover, that investment would allow for the transportation of increased volumes of commodities with farm products growing from 14% of commodity

volumes on the system in 2016 to 25% by 2029 and 29% by 2045. •

The complete report can be viewed here: [ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/ImportanceofInlandWaterwaystoUSAggricultureFullReport.pdf](https://ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/ImportanceofInlandWaterwaystoUSAggricultureFullReport.pdf)

### "NEW PRESIDENT" FROM PAGE 4

federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency. Ufner began her career in Washington with U.S. House of Representatives member Phil English (Pa.) who served on the Ways and Means Committee.

In announcing the Board's decision, newly elected Chairman David Yarbrough, Director of the Tulsa Port of Catoosa, stated, "We are thrilled that someone with Julie's expertise and experience will take the helm. She is a successful policy advocate, and well respected for her stakeholder engagement and partnership building acumen."

Mrs. Larson, who has served as NWC's President since March 2008, similarly praised the Board's selection. Reflecting on her tenure, Larson stated, "It has truly been an honor and a privilege to have worked with so many dedicated professionals for the past eleven and a half years. My decision to step down was not easy, but I know that NWC will continue as the nation's premier water resources organization under Julie's leadership. I will be forever grateful to have had the opportunity to lead this amazing group of people. Their dedication and support for me personally and for the nation's water resources reflect their integrity, commitment and professionalism."

The immediate past Chairman, Randy Richardson, Executive Director of the Port of Memphis, stated, "NWC has been extremely fortunate to have had an exceptional leader like Amy Larson as President for the last eleven years. I look forward to Julie's tenure and wish Mrs. Larson great success as she transitions to consulting on water resources policy issues in Washington, D.C."

Julie can be reached at [Julie@waterways.org](mailto:Julie@waterways.org)



# Virginia Maritime Celebrates 100 Years

Congratulations to the Virginia Maritime Association as it prepares to celebrate a century of maritime industry growth in 2020. In 1920, Germany and the Allied Powers signed the Versailles Treaty that ended World War I. During that war the Norfolk Naval Shipyard grew to accommodate 11,000 employees and Sewell’s Point became the site of what would become the largest Naval Base in the world. With the oceans safe for commercial shipping, the Panama Canal six years old and trade resuming in abundance,

56 business leaders in Hampton Roads came together to form the Norfolk Maritime Exchange with the goal of promoting, protecting and encouraging international and domestic commerce through Virginia’s Ports. A century later, that organization is now the statewide Virginia Maritime Association representing hundreds of companies engaged in the maritime industry in the Commonwealth.

Festivities will commence on February 13<sup>th</sup>, with the 100<sup>th</sup>



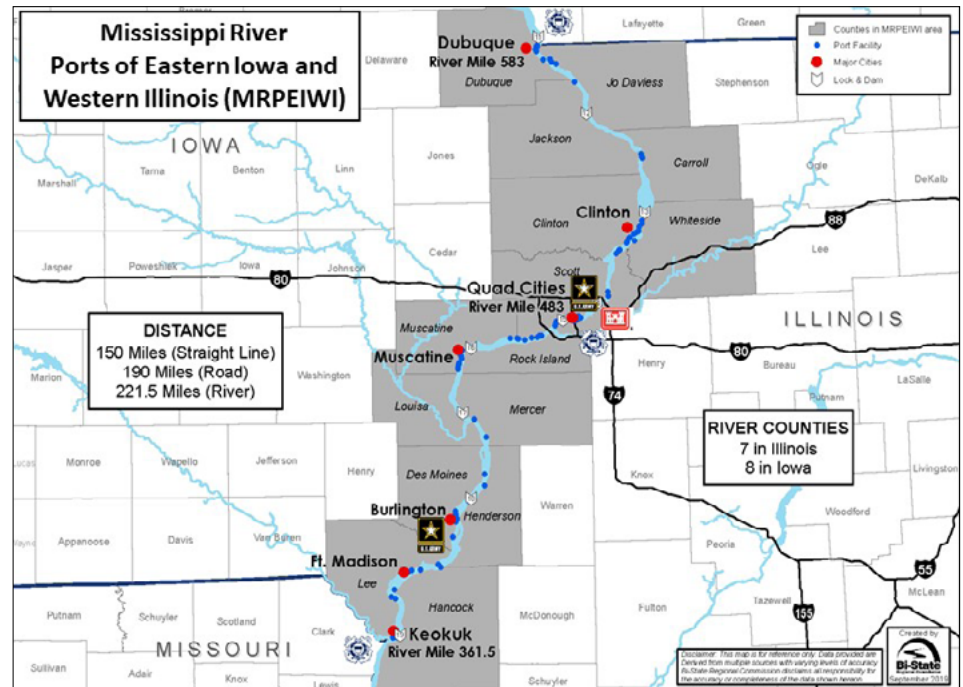
Celebrating 100 years of Maritime Industry Growth

Anniversary Reception and Kick-off to the “100 Days for 100 Years.” For the next 100 days, local partners will participate in a variety of different events, culminating in the 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Maritime Banquet and Finale on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

# The Midwest Could Soon See Two Top 100 Ports Recognized

BY COL. (RET.) ROBERT SINKLER

Cities and counties along the Mississippi River in Iowa and Illinois are exploring the creation of the Mississippi River Ports of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois (MRPEIWI) statistical area. Their effort is modeled after the Ports of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky Statistical Area, which was approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in January 2015. The Ports of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky extend 226.5 river miles in length and include 15 counties. Similarly, MRPEIWI would be 221.5 river miles in length and include 15 counties between the cities of Keokuk and Dubuque. The MRPEIWI area includes 50 existing



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# USACE Making Progress to Revolutionize Civil Works

BY REVOLUTIONIZE USACE CIVIL WORKS TEAM

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is making real progress accelerating project execution through the Revolutionize USACE Civil Works (CW) initiative. The Corps is taking a different approach to this initiative by working with stakeholders, exploring innovative tools, simplifying processes, and pursuing alternative financing approaches. Innovative Corps staff is pushing for change by challenging the status quo. The image below shows the three main objectives of the Revolutionize USACE CW Initiative.

Over the past two years, the Corps has engaged partners from the Civil Works missions to gain insight into

specific actions the Corps could implement to improve delivery. Partners have identified the need to better leverage relationships with non-Federal sponsors and improve two-way communication, especially when developing and/or changing policies and guidance. The partners also expressed support for more local decision-making which has resulted in increased delegations of authority across the agency. These insights have helped the Revolutionize team facilitate change throughout the Corps.

While it will take time for Corps partners to fully see the accomplishments of the Revolutionize USACE CW,

there have been significant improvements. Specifically, the Corps has delegated more than 20 decisions to appropriate lower levels of the organization. These decisions pertain to feasibility study milestones, reviews of planning documents, and the establishment of a single policy and legal team for all planning studies or budget decisions requiring action by the Chief of Engineers, among others.

The Corps is implementing a concept called risk-informed decision-making that is focused more on making a decision and understanding the risks than trying to protect against every

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## OBJECTIVE 1 Accelerate Project Delivery

Goal: start and finish projects faster



## OBJECTIVE 2 Transform Project Financing and Budgeting

Goal: more efficient project delivery using alternative financing tools and new budgeting processes



## OBJECTIVE 3 Improve Permitting and Regulation Reform

Goal: streamlined permit processes and elimination of duplicative reviews to expedite delivery of projects



*"MIDWEST TWO TOP 100 PORTS" FROM PAGE 8*

Iowa barge terminals and about 20 existing terminals in Illinois. It would currently rank 68<sup>th</sup> on the U.S. Ports list, based on the tonnage of imports and exports handled in the area.

Iowa is currently the only major exporting state on the inland waterway system that is not serviced by a federally recognized port. Samuel R. Hiscocks, the Freight Planning Coordinator for the Iowa Department of Transportation said, "The State of Iowa has been a strong supporter of the inland waterway system by working closely with public and private stakeholders to develop and implement reconnaissance studies, grant applications, and other analysis to improve the efficiency and reliability of the Upper Mississippi navigation system. Designation of the MRPEIWI, the state's first federally-recognized port area, will supplement these efforts and bring more visibility to the region, make Iowa producers and shippers more competitive, and grow the state's economy." Denise Bulat, Executive Director of the Bi-State Regional Commission, who is coordinating the planning effort, said, "Waterborne traffic in the two states has been crucial throughout their history and expands the efficiency of the substantial roadway and rail access along the proposed MRPEIWI statistical port area."

Likewise, a nearby 200-mile section of the Illinois Waterway servicing Chicago and Central Illinois may have been similarly overlooked as a port statistical area designation. The impact of Chicago, the nation's third largest city, on the Illinois Waterway's Ports and Terminals is substantial. An ongoing Illinois

Marine Transportation System Planning Study could recommend the grouping of existing ports and terminals, resulting in the Illinois Waterway Ports and Terminals also being federally recognized as a top 100 port.

Today, the Marine Highway System cannot overlook Iowa, ranked overall second in the nation for value of agricultural exports. Iowa is first in the nation in corn exports (\$1.58 billion) and feed grain exports (\$1.22 billion); and second in soybean exports (\$3.05 billion). And, Illinois accounts for 6% of all U.S. exports, is a top 5 exporting state, and is another top producer of agricultural goods. Federal recognition of MRPEIWI and the Illinois Waterway Ports and Terminals as federal port statistical areas might just simply highlight this midwestern region as the nationally and globally significant multi-modal transportation center that it is. "These waterways not only provide the region with intrastate and interstate connectivity but also international connections through the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico," said BJ Murray from the Illinois Department of Transportation Office of Planning and Programming. •

*Col. (Ret.) Robert Sinkler is a Senior Advisor with Dawson & Associates, [dawsonassociates.com](http://dawsonassociates.com)*

## Water Supply Rule on Hold

At the direction of Secretary James, the release of the final rule for the "Use of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Reservoir Projects for Domestic, Municipal and Industrial Water Supply" will be halted for at least six months in order to better integrate input from stakeholders.

It was largely expected that a final rule would be issued this fall. However, numerous concerns have been raised about the proposal's encroachment on state water rights, among other things. In addition, impacted stakeholders had urged the Corps to engage in additional outreach and consultation before moving forward. In directing the additional coordination, at the end of the delay, Secretary James has also requested a summary of comments received and responses to those comments. •



*"REVOLUTIONIZE CIVIL WORKS" FROM PAGE 9*

risk. This approach was recently used in the New Soo Lock Economic Validation Report where concurrent reviews to fast-track project delivery and key decisions resulted in the completion of the report seven months earlier with potential avoided costs of around \$100 million.

Collectively, the Revolutionize efforts have already potentially saved over 200 months of time in project schedules, accelerating delivery of projects across the nation

The Corps is breaking new ground by exploring innovative funding approaches to better address the significant infrastructure needs across the country. The Corps Water Infrastructure Financing Program which was authorized by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act is a Federal loan program that will allow partners to apply for low interest loans to finance water infrastructure projects. When implemented, this tool will enable non-Federal entities to take a leadership role and build more infrastructure that benefits local communities. The Corps continues to develop its Private Public Partnership (P3) program and, although in the early stages, has seen some success on the Fargo-Moorhead Flood Risk Management project. The Corps asked for public input in identifying additional P3 projects in January 2019 and will do so again in 2020. The agency is working to develop four additional projects, with the intention of finding innovative ways to deliver those projects.

The Corps has been working to improve the regulatory process to expedite permit decisions while protecting the environment.



The Fargo: Moorhead Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management Project is the first USACE project to use a public private partnership. Photo by the City of Fargo, N.D.

Changes have eliminated duplicative reviews, streamlined permitting for authorized Civil Works projects undertaken by non-Federal interests, and simplified Section 408 permissions for modifications to Civil Works projects. These efforts eliminated significant review time and have reduced pending 408 decisions by as much as 50% in many Districts.

Over the next year, the Corps plans to focus on overhauling our Continued Authorities Program to get smaller projects completed faster while still ensuring quality. The Corps is committed to seeking input from our partners through small group discussions and webinars. Last month, the Corps hosted a small group partner session at Corps Headquarters focused on non-Federal implementation of projects. The Corps continues

to work with partners to gain insight and ideas on how to better communicate, improve non-Federal implementation of projects, and accelerate project delivery. A summary of partner feedback on the Revolutionize effort can be found at: [usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Infrastructure/revolutionize/rev\\_feedback/](https://usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Infrastructure/revolutionize/rev_feedback/). Revolutionize USACE Civil Works would not be successful without the support and input we have received from our partners. Working together, we can revolutionize the Corps and accomplish critical projects more efficiently and effectively.

More information on Revolutionize USACE Civil Works can be found at: [usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Infrastructure/revolutionize/](https://usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Infrastructure/revolutionize/) and the team can be contacted directly at [CW.Infrastructure.Team@usace.army.mil](mailto:CW.Infrastructure.Team@usace.army.mil) •



# Continuing Resolution Funds Federal Operations Through November 21<sup>st</sup>

Prior to leaving town for a 2-week recess in late September, the Congress agreed to a continuing resolution to fund federal operations through November 21<sup>st</sup>. The measure generally continues funding at the FY19 levels, which funded the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civil works program at \$7.2 billion.

Earlier this year, the House approved funding of \$7.36 billion for the civil

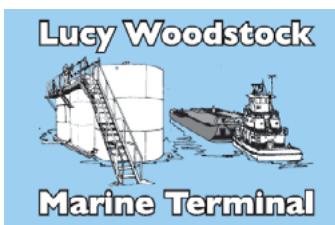
works program for fiscal year 2020, increasing the current year's funding level by more than \$350 million and rejecting the Administration's proposed 30% cut. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved a higher funding level of \$7.75 billion, \$751.5 million above the FY2019 enacted level and \$2.786 billion above the budget request.

While reconciliation of the civil works measures may be achievable, it remains uncertain whether other issues, including border wall funding, will stymie an agreement on overall funding matters. It's further unclear whether those disagreements can be overcome before November 21<sup>st</sup> or whether another CR will be necessary. ●

## Welcome New Members



**Fullen Dock and Warehouse**  
Memphis, TN  
Marvin Frick



**Lucy Woodstock Marine Terminal**  
Memphis, TN  
Joy Terral



**National Marine  
Manufacturers Association**  
Washington, DC  
Callie Hoyt



**Pickering Firm, Inc.**  
Memphis, TN  
Bob Pitts



**Wood.**  
Ballwin, MO  
Randy Cook, Jr.



## Upcoming NWC Events

**March 9-11, 2020**  
**Legislative Summit**  
Washington, DC

**March 8-10, 2021**  
**Legislative Summit**  
Washington, DC

## Industry Events

**October 8-12**  
**Interstate Council on  
Water Policy (ICWP)**  
Mobile, AL  
[www.icwp.org](http://www.icwp.org)

**October 9-11**  
**Pacific Northwest  
Waterways Association**  
Vancouver, WA  
[www.pnwa.net](http://www.pnwa.net)

**October 13-16**  
**American Association  
of Port Authorities**  
Norfolk, VA  
[www.aapa-ports.org](http://www.aapa-ports.org)

**October 16-18**  
**American Waterways Operators**  
San Diego, CA  
[www.americanwaterways.com](http://www.americanwaterways.com)

**October 16-18**  
**Texas Water  
Conservation Association**  
San Antonio, TX  
[www.twca.org](http://www.twca.org)

**October 22-23**  
**Mississippi Water  
Resources Association**  
Jackson, MS  
[www.mswater.org](http://www.mswater.org)

**October 22-23**  
**Tri State Rivers**  
Troy University  
Phenix City, AL

**October 29-30**  
**Upper Mississippi River  
Basin Association**  
St. Paul, MN  
[www.umbra.org](http://www.umbra.org)

**November 6-7**  
**Arkansas  
Waterways Association**  
Hot Springs, AR  
[www.arwaterways.com](http://www.arwaterways.com)

**November 6-8**  
**Waterways Council, Inc.**  
Pittsburgh, PA  
[www.waterwayscouncil.org](http://www.waterwayscouncil.org)

**November 21-22**  
**Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway  
Association Annual Meeting**  
Savannah, GA  
[atlanticintracoastal.org](http://atlanticintracoastal.org)

**December 5-7**  
**Mississippi Valley Flood  
Control Association**  
New Orleans, LA  
[mvfca@att.net](mailto:mvfca@att.net)

### *"LEEVE GUIDELINES" FROM PAGE 2*

assignment by the Corps, the following information and activity:

- A) a complete explanation, written in plain and easy to understand language, of the way project condition, design, hydrology, flood frequency, probabilities of failure and overtopping, consequence analysis for life safety and property damage and any other relevant factors that were integrated in arriving at the rating assigned;
  - B) all incremental corrective actions that can be taken to progressively improve the relative levee safety action classification assigned to a levee system;
  - C) the incremental costs associated with each corrective action, including benefit cost ratio and flood frequency calculations for each corrective action; and
  - D) public notice and a comment period on any proposed levee safety action classification assignment by the Corps of Engineers.
- The Secretary should establish a panel of experts to conduct a peer review of the levee safety action classification tool developed by the Corps and provide to any impacted non-federal sponsor the opportunity to seek review of any prior levee safety action classification assignment. •