



NEWS RELEASE

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WATERWAYS COUNCIL, INC. MEETS THE PRESS
PROVIDES INDUSTRY YEAR-END REVIEW OF 2005
AND FORECAST FOR 2006

Washington, DC – Waterways Council, Inc. (WCI), the national public policy organization which advocates for a modern, well maintained national system of ports and inland waterways, today held a briefing for the Washington, DC area news media to discuss WCI's 2005 legislative objectives and its goals for 2006.

Waterways Council, Inc. works to educate decision-makers in the states and on Capitol Hill, as well as the news media and general public, about the public value of the inland waterways and the need to modernize, operate and maintain America's waterways infrastructure in a reliable and efficient manner.

“America's inland navigation system is a great success story. Our nation's rivers attract billions of dollars of investment in landside plants and equipment, create and support millions of family wage jobs, provide a critical energy supply line, and help to keep U.S. industries competitive in our global market by facilitating exports. Transporting our nation's building block commodities via water also reduces pollution and saves fuel. Modernization and the proper maintenance of the system is essential to achieve the full benefits of waterborne transportation,” said R. Barry Palmer, President/CEO of Waterways Council, Inc.

“In 2005, the waterways industry achieved a number of important milestones. First, the US Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works program received the highest level of funding in its history, and \$379 million was appropriated for inland waterways trust fund financed projects. In 2006, we will focus on the following: 1) increased spending of the dedicated funds in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund for priority projects; 2) increased spending of approximately \$100 million for critical Operation and Maintenance inland navigation needs; and 3) construction authorization of eight lock and dam modernization projects. These projects include five on the Upper Mississippi River, two on the Illinois Waterway, and the Bayou Sorrel on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. These priorities will help to keep our national waterways system efficient, and our nation's transportation system economically competitive,” he continued.

Waterways Council, Inc. is supported by more than 250 carriers, shippers, port authorities, shipping associations and waterways group members across the country.

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