



The American Waterways Operators



NEWS RELEASE

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MORE THAN 200 ORGANIZATIONS, COMPANIES ENDORSE INLAND WATERWAYS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Arlington, VA – To date, more than 200 industry stakeholders including national organizations, state, regional and local organizations, and companies have endorsed the new comprehensive, consensus-based package of recommendations formulated by an industry and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers working group to improve the reliability of the U.S. inland navigation system over the next 20 years, known as the Inland Waterways Capital Development Plan. Among the supporters are the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, American Land Conservancy, National Corn Growers Association, National Grain & Feed Association, Steel Manufacturers Association, National Mining Association, National Council of Farm Cooperatives, and many others from diverse segments of the American economy.

This Inland Waterways Capital Development Plan is being proposed in lieu of the imposition of a lockage fee that has been unsuccessfully offered in the last three fiscal year budgets and is strongly opposed by Waterways Council, Inc. (WCI), American Waterways Operators (AWO), and National Waterways Conference (NWC), as well as many Members of Congress.

In April 2010, the final report and recommendations of the Inland Waterways Capital Development Plan were ratified unanimously by the Inland Waterways Users Board and submitted to Congress. If adopted into law, the Plan will better address the needs of the entire inland waterways system and provide more funding for critically needed infrastructure improvements.

Modern lock and dam infrastructure is essential to U.S. competitiveness in the world market, to environmental protection, to energy efficiency, to the sustainment of well-paying American jobs and to congestion relief. America's inland waterways are a precious resource, and the envy of the world because of the natural "water highway" the waterways system provides for commerce.

The proposal calls for \$7.6 billion for the 20-year Inland Waterway Capital Investment Program and would entail an average annual investment level of \$380 million, comprised of two sub-

component average annual program levels: \$320 million for “construction” projects and \$60 million for major rehabilitation projects.

Also, the proposal would:

- Preserve the existing 50% industry/50% federal cost-sharing formula for new lock construction and major lock rehabilitation projects costing \$100 million or more.
- Adjust the current model to provide 100% federal funding for dam construction and major rehabilitation and smaller lock rehabilitation projects, recognizing the value derived by other beneficiaries from dams and the pools created by dams.
- Include a cost share cap on new lock construction projects to incentivize keeping projects on budget and prevent industry taxpayers from bearing the burden of paying for unreasonable cost overruns. This will strengthen the ability of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund to fund more priority projects in the pipeline.
- Necessitate a 30% to 45% increase in the existing fuel tax of 20-cents-per-gallon that is paid by the barge and towing industry, the only users of the system who currently are taxed. At the same time, the recommended reforms to the Corps of Engineers’ project management and delivery process would ensure that these additional resources are spent wisely.

The complete list of supporters can be found at www.waterwayscouncil.org

Waterways Council, Inc. is the national public policy organization advocating a modern and well-maintained national system of ports and inland waterways. The group is supported by more than 250 waterways carriers, shippers, port authorities, shipping associations and waterways advocacy groups from all regions of the country. Visit www.waterwayscouncil.org

The National Waterways Conference, established in 1960, is the national organization to advocate for the enactment of common sense policies recognizing the widespread public benefits of our nation’s water resources infrastructure. Membership is comprised of the full spectrum of water resources stakeholders, including flood control associations, levee boards, waterways shippers and carriers, industry and regional associations, port authorities, shipyards, dredging contractors, regional water districts, engineering consultants and state and local governments. www.waterways.org

The American Waterways Operators is the national trade association of the inland and coastal tugboat, towboat and barge industry. Established in 1944, AWO’s mission is to promote the long term economic soundness of the industry, and to enhance the industry’s ability to provide safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible transportation, through advocacy, public information, and the establishment of safety standards. Visit www.americanwaterways.com