



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WATERWAYS COUNCIL, INC.**  
**STATEMENT ON CATASTROPHIC FAILURE AT MARKLAND**  
**LOCKS AND DAM**

WASHINGTON, DC – Waterways Council, Inc. (WCI) President & CEO Cornel Martin has issued the following statement regarding the September 27, 2009 catastrophic failure of the miter gate at Markland Locks and Dam on the Ohio River near Cincinnati that requires the main, 1,200-foot lock chamber to close, leaving only the 600-foot auxiliary chamber to accommodate traffic until the repair is completed:

**THE FAILURE OF MARKLAND’S MAIN CHAMBER MITER GATE IS DISTURBING FOR MANY REASONS, NAMELY THAT THE REPAIR COULD TAKE 90 DAYS OR LONGER TO COMPLETE. THIS MEANS THAT SHIPPERS, WHO RELY ON THE INLAND WATERWAYS SYSTEM TO SHIP AMERICA’S ‘BUILDING BLOCK’ COMMODITIES SUCH AS COAL FOR ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION, GRAIN TO FEED THE WORLD MARKET, PETROLEUM PRODUCTS FOR FUEL, STEEL FOR CONSTRUCTION, OR AGGREGATE MATERIALS FOR A MYRIAD OF USES, COULD FACE SERIOUS DELAYS IN TRANSPORTING THOSE CARGOES. CONSUMERS, WHO ULTIMATELY RECEIVE AND BENEFIT FROM THE COMMODITIES SHIPPED ON THE WATERWAYS, COULD INCUR HIGHER COSTS AND SIGNIFICANT DELAYS WAITING FOR THOSE GOODS.**

**WATERWAYS COUNCIL, INC. HAS LONG URGED HIGHER FUNDING LEVELS FOR OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE BECAUSE THE CURRENT ‘FIX-AS-FAIL’ APPROACH TO MAINTAINING THE NATION’S LOCK AND DAM STRUCTURES ON OUR WATERWAYS HAS SERIOUS FLAWS, AS NOW WITNESSED AT MARKLAND.**

**THE MARKLAND EVENT ALSO UNDERSCORES THE URGENT NEED FOR CONGRESS TO APPROPRIATE FUNDING FOR THE NAVIGATION ECOSYSTEM SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM (NESP) ON THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND**

**ILLINOIS WATERWAY. AUTHORIZED IN THE 2007 WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT (WRDA), NESP-- WHEN APPROPRIATED-- WILL RESULT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF SEVEN MODERN, 1,200-FOOT LOCKS CHAMBERS TO BE BUILT ALONG-SIDE AGING 600-FOOT LOCKS THAT HAVE NO AUXILIARY CHAMBER. IF A SIMILAR CATASTROPHIC EVENT LIKE MARKLAND OCCURS AT THE EXISTING UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND ILLINOIS WATERWAY LOCKS AND DAMS, THAT SECTION OF THE NATION WOULD LITERALLY BE CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE COUNTRY, RESULTING IN VITAL GOODS NOT REACHING THEIR DESTINATIONS AND CAUSING MAJOR DISRUPTIONS IN OUR NATION'S SUPPLY CHAIN.**

**SHIPPERS AND CONSUMERS DEPEND ON A RELIABLE WATERWAYS SYSTEM TO TRANSPORT AMERICA'S ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES. WCI URGES CONGRESS AND DECISION-MAKERS IN WASHINGTON TO FOCUS ON THE NEEDS OF OUR NATION'S WATERWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE AND TO ADEQUATELY FUND THE OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND MODERNIZATION OF THIS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.**

*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](http://www.waterwayscouncil.org)*