



RIVER CURRENTS

UPPER MISSISSIPPI, ILLINOIS & MISSOURI RIVERS ASSOCIATION - UMIMRA

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UMIMRA

Affiliate Members

Illinois Valley Flood Control Association
Missouri Levee and Drainage District
Association

UMIMRA Office

600 West Edwards, Suite 403
Springfield, Illinois 62704
217.522.4109 Phone
217.528.6545 Fax

Executive Board

Dave McMurray, Chairman
Burlington, IA
319.752.9527

Michael Klingner, PE, Vice Chairman
Quincy, IL
217.223.3670

Dianne Barnett
Treasurer
Jacksonville, IL
217.243.4397

Vicki Stoller
Burlington, IA
319.937.6667

John Winkelman
Alexandria, MO
660.754.6696

Executive Director

Kim Robinson
Springfield, IL
217.522.4109

Directors

Joseph B. Gibbs, PE
Columbia, MO
573.815.0347

Scott Bunselmeyer
Rockwood, IL
618.763.4726

George Walley
Hannibal, MO
573.221.1033

Dan Wiedemeier
Burlington, IA
319.754.2272

Robert Beck
Danville, IA
319.392.4445

David Koltveit
Bluffs, IL
217.754.3331

Robert Lundberg
Maywood, MO
573.478.3525

UMIMRA MEETS WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS

CHAIRMAN, VICE CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON D.C.



Congressman Tom Latham of Iowa with UMIMRA Executive Director Kim Robinson, Vice Chairman Mike Klingner, and Chairman Dave McMurray in Washington, DC.

On April 27-28, UMIMRA Chairman David McMurray, Vice-Chairman Mike Klingner and Executive Director Kim Robinson headed to Washington, DC to meet with key members of the Illinois, Iowa and Missouri Congressional Delegations.

Over a two-day period, we were able to meet with staff members, Congressmen and Senators to push for funding next fiscal year to complete the Comprehensive Plan for Flood Control and to begin work on the proposed navigation improvements. Also on UMIMRA's agenda is approval of funds to rehabilitate Lock 19 in Keokuk, replacement of miter gates and repair of concrete at Lock 18 in Oquawka, and development of the dredged materials placement program.

UMIMRA appreciates the support and assistance of Senators Durbin and Obama (Illinois), Senators Harkin and Grassley (Iowa), Senators Bond and Talent (Missouri), Congressmen Costello, Evans, Hastert and LaHood (Illinois), Congressmen Boswell, Latham, Leach and Nussle (Iowa) and Congresswoman Emerson and Congressman Hulshof (Missouri). These members of our state delegations have worked hard to make sure that flood control and navigation remain on the radar screen in Washington. Please take a moment to thank them for their support the next time you have the opportunity.

**IN THIS ISSUE OF
RIVER CURRENTS:**

UMIMRA Meets with Congressional Leaders.....1
Date Set for 2006 Annual Meeting.....2
From the Executive Director.....2
ASCE Releases Infrastructure Report Card.....3
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Updates.....5
Guest Column: Congressman Ray LaHood.....5
House Approves FY 2006 Energy & Water Budget.....7
Missouri River Issues Debated.....7
Upcoming Meetings & Events.....8

DATE SET FOR 2006 ANNUAL MEETING



The 2006 UMIMRA Annual Meeting will be held February 17 in Peoria, Illinois. A group of members from the Peoria area proposed that the annual meeting be held in Peoria in 2006 and has offered to provide fundraising support.

We look forward to being in Peoria in 2006. Look for details as they become available on our website, www.umimra.org and in future issues of *River Currents*.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

BY KIM ROBINSON

The board and staff have been contemplating an update to the UMIMRA website (www.umimra.org) in order to better serve our members. At this stage of the project – the contemplation stage – it would be helpful to hear from you about what features you find most useful. Are there items on the current site that you want to make sure we continue to provide? Is there new information or tools we aren't currently offering that would be helpful to you? Are there other websites that you would like the UMIMRA site to link to?



or just want to review the information, you may want to take a look.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As UMIMRA members, we welcome your input on the format, content and suggestions for future articles for *River Currents*. Please direct your comments to Kim Robinson, UMIMRA, 600 S. Second St., Ste. 403, Springfield, IL 62704, or kimrobinson@umimra.org.

I continue to update our website on a regular basis. Recently, I added the regional economic study completed by the Tennessee Valley Authority that documents the tremendous benefits that would result from navigation and flood control projects currently being contemplated. You can also take a look at Gary Loss's presentation from the 2005 annual meeting in which he provided an overview of the federal budget process. This presentation was well-received by attendees so if you missed it the first time,

A website can be an important member resource. We want to make sure that we provide the best level of service and information to UMIMRA members. Please call (217/522-4109) or email me (kimrobinson@umimra.org) with your suggestions. I am still seeking email addresses for members that want to receive my weekly email updates and other timely information. If you have acquired email or changed your email address, please let me know so that I can be sure to include you.

River Currents
is the Quarterly Newsletter of the
Upper Mississippi, Illinois & Missouri
Rivers Association
600 South Second St.
Suite 403
Springfield, Illinois 62704
217.522.4109 Phone
217.528.6545 Fax
www.umimra.org

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS RELEASES INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD



The American Society of Civil Engineers recently released its 2005 report card assessing the status of all major infrastructure in this country. Navigable waters received a D-. The full text of that portion of the report card is reproduced below.

A single barge traveling the nation's waterways can move the same amount of cargo as 58 semi-trucks at one-tenth the cost--reducing highway congestion and saving money. Of the 257 locks on the more than 12,000 miles of inland waterways operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, nearly 50% are functionally obsolete. By 2020, that number will increase to 80%. The cost to replace the present system of locks is more than \$125 billion.

Background

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains more than 12,000 miles (19,200 kilometers) of inland waterways, and owns or operates 257 locks at 212 sites on inland waterways. These waterways--a system of rivers, lakes and

coastal bays improved for commercial and recreational transportation--carry about one-sixth of the nation's intercity freight, at a cost per ton-mile about half that of rail, or one-tenth that of trucks.

Waterways are excellent ways to move large volumes of bulk commodities over long distances. The cargo capacity of a typical barge is equivalent to that of 15 large railroad cars, or 58 semi-trucks. A representative 15-barge tow on a main stem waterway moves the same cargo as 870 trucks stretching 35 miles on the interstate highway system. That same 15-barge tow would require two 100-car unit trains, extending nearly three miles in length.

Locks and dams can affect the environment. They slow the natural velocity immediately upriver from their locations, so that organisms adapted to fast-flowing water are replaced by those adapted to slow-flowing water, and dams trap sediments that would otherwise flow farther downstream. More dredging may be necessary to keep the navigation channels open.

The 12,000 miles of inland and intracoastal waterways, as do highways, operate as a system, and much of the commerce moves on multiple segments. They serve as connecting arteries, much as neighborhood streets help people reach interstate highways. These waterways are operated by the Corps of Engineers as multi-purpose, multi-objective projects. They not only serve commercial navigation, but, in many cases, also provide hydropower, flood protection, municipal water supply, agricultural irrigation, recreation and regional development.

Conditions

Forty-one states, 16 state capitals and all states east of the Mississippi River are served by commercially navigable waterways. Domestic companies operating vessels on U. S. waterways increased 19.6% from 2002 to 2003.

Waterway usage is increasing, but the facilities are aging; many Corps-owned or -operated locks are well past their planned design life of 50 years. Of the 257 locks still in use in the United States, 30 were built in the 19th Century, another 92 locks are more than 60 years old. In other words, nearly 50% of all Corps-maintained locks were functionally obsolete by the beginning of 2005. Assuming that no new locks are built in the next 20 years, by 2020, another 93 existing locks will be obsolete--rendering more than 8 of every 10 locks now in service archaic.

See INFRASTRUCTURE Page 4

INFRASTRUCTURE from Page 3

As the system ages, the infrastructure cannot support the growing traffic loads, resulting in frequent delays for repairs. At the same time, the repairs become more expensive due to long-deferred maintenance.

The Inland Waterway Trust Fund, created in 1978, pays half the cost of the construction and major rehabilitation costs for specified federal inland waterways projects. It receives money from a tax on fuel (currently set at 20 cents per gallon) on vessels engaged in commercial transportation on inland waterways.

In recent years, there has been a number of major inland waterway infrastructure failures--a few years ago, the entire Ohio River system was closed for a time due to infrastructure breakdowns.

The fund earned \$106 million in FY 2005, including approximately \$91 million paid by the barge and towing industry, and \$15 million in interest. The Corps of Engineers received \$149 million for construction projects, leaving a balance of approximately \$307 million. In FY 2006, the Corps is planning to spend \$394 million on current maintenance projects, a sum that will not reduce the backlog of pending repairs that exceed \$600 million.

In addition, the Bush administration proposed in February to spend \$184 million from the trust fund for new construction in FY 2006. The trust fund balance remaining at the end of the year is expected to be \$228 million--enough to begin addressing a

significant portion of the maintenance backlog.

The Corps estimates that it would cost more than \$125 billion to replace the present inland waterway system.

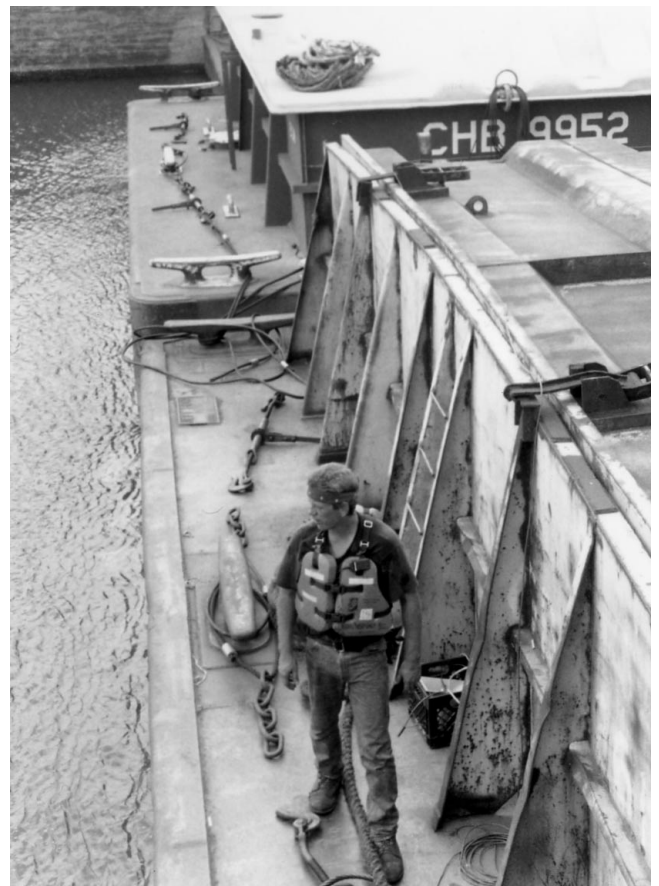
Policy Options

- Congress should amend the Inland Waterways Trust Fund Act of 1978 to allow all funds collected to be used for repair and construction of dams and locks. Congress should then appropriate the full fund balance each year to pay for the cost of rehabilitating the nation's oldest locks. The government needs to set a priority system for restoring locks that have outlasted their design lives, with an initial focus on all locks built in the 19th century. The current federal budget process does not differentiate between expenditures for current consumption and long-term investment. This causes major inefficiencies in the planning, design and construction process for long-term investments.

- In the interim, Congress must appropriate the full amount in the Inland Waterway Trust Fund to begin

reducing the maintenance backlog.

- The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) supports the creation of a federal capital budget to create a funding mechanism that would help reduce the constant conflict between short-term and long-term maintenance needs. This would help to increase public awareness of the problems and needs facing this country's physical infrastructure, and would help Congress to focus on specific programs devoted to long-term growth and productivity.



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS UPDATES: FIVE YEAR PLAN & PERSONNEL

Corps Releases Five-Year Plan

The Army Corps of Engineers recently released its five year development plan covering Fiscal Year 2006-2010. The purpose of the plan is to facilitate informed discussion about funding and how the Corps anticipates carrying out its mission. Items addressed in the report include navigation, flood control, environmental restoration and stewardship, regulatory programs, hydropower, recreation, emergency management and water supply, critical infrastructure and executive management.

There was little to no mention of new or anticipated projects. Rather, the report focuses on projects already under way, and those that are likely to be completed in the next five years. The full text of the plan is available at <http://www.waterways.org/5-yearplan.pdf>.

Corps Personnel Update

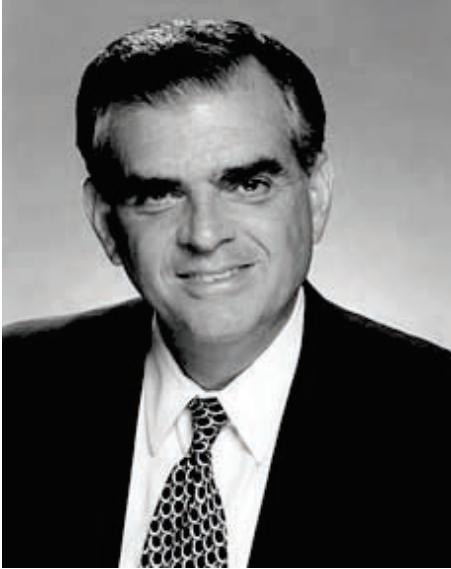
Two long-time Corps civilian staff members left this month to pursue opportunities in the private sector. Fred Caver, Deputy Civil Works Director, and Rob Vining, Chief, Program Integration Division, have been succeeded by Steven Stockton and Gary Loew. Stockton previously served as Regional Business Manager for the South Pacific Division in San Francisco and Loew was formerly programs director on the Southwestern Division in Dallas. UMIMRA extends best wishes to Fred who will be working as a consultant, and Rob who has joined HNTB Federal Services Corporation. They will be missed.

Paul Woodley, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, was finally confirmed by the Senate last month. He had been in the position for 16 months while awaiting confirmation. The Senate also confirmed General Don Riley as President of the Mississippi River Commission.



Kim Robinson, Mike Klingner and Dave McMurray join Congressman Jim Leach in his office on Capitol Hill.

A MESSAGE FROM CONGRESSMAN RAY LAHOOD (IL - 18) RIVER ISSUES ARE CRITICAL TO MISSISSIPPI VALLEY'S FUTURE



For over a decade I have represented a Central Illinois Congressional District which includes hundreds of miles of shoreline along the Illinois River. This district is also home to two sets of Illinois River locks which are in dire need of repair: Peoria and LaGrange.

Issues concerning all our state's rivers, not just the Illinois, have long been one of my legislative priorities. Lock and dam improvements, the Comprehensive Plan for Flood Control, sedimentation and environmental concerns have all been issues which I have worked on as a former member of the Transportation Committee and currently as a member of

the House Appropriations Committee. Flooding in the Illinois River Valley is a fact of life on an almost annual basis and I have worked for many years with local, state, and federal officials to address flooding issues.

The importance of improving our navigational system, our ecological system, as well as creating a comprehensive plan to deal with catastrophic flooding cannot be overstated. From transporting commodities to market to providing wonderful recreational opportunities, the Upper Mississippi, the Illinois, and the Missouri rivers are the arteries which drive the economic engine of the upper Midwest. If this region of the country looks forward to a healthy economic future, we cannot afford to turn our back on the problems which confront these waterways today, and the potential problems which face us in the future.

I have been a vocal supporter of the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway improvements and I am pleased to see the Senate has included over \$3.5 billion in authorization for this plan under the Water Resources Development Act of 2005 which was introduced in that chamber. There are

many constituency groups behind this effort and I am hopeful both the House and the Senate can pass a long-overdue reauthorization of WRDA this year.

At the same time though, we need to ensure the UMR-IWW plan incorporates the Comprehensive Plan for Flood Control, so, to that end, Congress needs to provide the funding to complete that study. The House-passed version of the Fiscal Year 2006 Energy and Water Appropriations contains \$200,000 for the plan, which should provide enough funding for completion. I will continue to work throughout the summer and fall to ensure this funding is in the final version of the bill. I will also continue to work with the Corps to ensure these two plans are put together in a compatible fashion.

I applaud the work that UMIMRA is doing to enhance our region's waterways and I would especially like to thank you for your efforts to bring the Comprehensive Plan to completion. Keep up the good work and please do not hesitate to call on me for assistance.

Contact Congressman Ray LaHood

Washington, D.C.
1424 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C 20515
(202) 225-6201 Office
(202) 225-9249 Fax
www.house.gov/lahood

Peoria
101 N.E. Monroe #100
Peoria, IL 61602-1009
(309) 671-7027 Office
(309) 671-7309 Fax

Springfield
3050 Montvale Drive, Suite D
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 793-0808 Office
(217) 793-9724 Fax

Jacksonville
209 W. State
Jacksonville, IL 62650
(217) 245-1431 Office
(217) 245-6852 Fax

HOUSE APPROVES FY 2006 ENERGY AND WATER BUDGET: WRDA MOVES AHEAD

On May 24, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted to approve a \$29.75 billion appropriation. A little more than \$4.7 billion will go to the Army Corps of Engineers with the remainder set aside for the Bureau of Reclamation (\$977 million) and the Department of Energy (\$24.6 million).

The Corps would receive \$100 million for General Investigations (down \$44.5 million from this year's level), \$1.9 billion for Construction (up nearly \$104 million), \$2 billion for Operations and Maintenance (up \$41 million), \$290 million for Mississippi River and Tributaries (down \$34.5 million), \$160 million for Regulatory (up \$15 million), \$152 million for General Expenses (down \$15 million), and \$144 million for various other programs. Overall the Corps would receive a \$45 million increase over its total 2005 appropriation.

Included in the FY '06 House appropriation is \$200,000 to complete the Comprehensive Plan for Flood Control which UMIMRA has been championing for several years. No funds were appropriated in the bill for navigation improvements on the Upper Mississippi. If those projects

are authorized by the pending Water Resources Development Act, an additional appropriation will be required.

The House took issue with the Corps of Engineers' practice of "reprogramming" funds previously appropriated by Congress. The Corps regularly transfers funds from one project to another in order to make the most efficient use of its appropriation. A new limit on reprogramming would allow the Corps to move a maximum of \$2 million or 10 percent of the project cost, whichever is less. The Corps would also be prohibited from using reprogrammed funds to start a new project, eliminate a project or fund projects that are denied or restricted by legislation.

The Congressionally-mandated process of reducing appropriations by "savings and slippage" was also eliminated in the House bill. In previous years, a significant percentage has been taken off the top of most appropriations, leaving the Corps with much less money for its projects than was actually appropriated. Elimination of this practice means that the Corps will receive the actual amounts listed in the appropriation.

The Senate is scheduled to begin its deliberations on energy and water appropriations in mid-June. It is

anticipated that there may be significant differences in the House and Senate versions which would then require a conference committee in order to reach a compromise. Early indications are that the Senate will seek higher funding levels than those proposed by the President or the House.

Meanwhile, the House is moving forward with its version of the 2005 Water Resources Development Act. Passage of a WRDA is essential in order for the Corps to begin construction of the proposed navigation and environmental restoration projects on the Upper Mississippi.

The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee will mark up its bill in mid-June. The full Senate is expected to take action prior to the July 4 break. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved its version of the bill in April. It is now awaiting action by the full Senate.

MISSOURI RIVER ISSUES DEBATED

Earlier this month, a public meeting was held in an effort to develop a "spring rise" proposal that would balance environmental and navigation interests on the Missouri River. The meeting was convened to seek input from more than 50 key stakeholders in an effort to identify a workable definition of the conditions under which a spring rise would be conducted. Additional meetings to work on the proposal are planned throughout this month, with public meetings to be held June 29-30 in Bismarck, North Dakota and in late July in Omaha. For further information, visit Missouri Levee and Drainage District Association's website at www.mldda.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

Board/Executive Board Meetings

June 16	Executive Board
July 21	Executive Board
August - TBD	Full Board
September 15	Executive Board
October 20	Executive Board
November 17	Full Board
December 15	Executive Board

Conferences/Summits

7th Tri-State Development Summit
October 14, 2005
Truman State University
Kirksville, Missouri
10 AM - 2 PM
Contact: Jim Mentesti 217-223-4313

UMIMRA Annual Meeting
February 17, 2006
Peoria, Illinois

New Rural Realities Conference
February 21, 2006
Burlington, Iowa