

AWO Holds Spring Convention in Washington

Members Participate in Capitol Hill "Barge-In;" Elect New Chairman; Determine 2007 Priorities; Affirm Transition Plan

The American Waterways Operators held its annual membership meeting and convened its Board of Directors at its April 18-20 Spring Convention. In connection with the Convention, AWO members held their 5th annual "Barge-In" on Capitol Hill, briefing members of Congress on industry issues. The membership met in Common Issues Council, sector committees and Public Affairs Committee meetings on Thursday, April 19. The Board met on Friday, when it approved its national and regional priorities, affirmed AWO's Transformation and Transition plan, endorsed a funding plan for ballast water litigation, and received Responsible Carrier Program sample policies and procedures for comment. Members also heard progress reports on RCP recertification status, Massachusetts oil spill law litigation, AWO Political Action Committee (PAC) fundraising goals and plans, the grassroots program for the 110th Congress, advocacy outreach and AWO-member communication.



During the Harbor Services Sector Committee meeting at the AWO Spring Convention, CAPT Timothy Close, Chief, Western Rivers Division, Eight Coast Guard District, briefed the committee on limited geographic licensing while new committee Vice Chairman Tom Tray, Bay-Houston Towing Co., and Sector Secretary Krista Reddington, AWO, listened.

In the Common Issues Council on Thursday, AWO members discussed a number of important industry issues, including the proposed Coast Guard rulemaking on towing vessel inspection, AWO priorities for Jones Act defense in 2007, AWO efforts to ease the burden of Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) implementation, activities on licensing and draft medical standards, industry safety trends, AWO's

safety committees' work programs, the status of the crew endurance management system implementation, and analysis of a new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) marine engine emissions proposal. The council also heard from a panel of government and private sector experts on TWIC implementation (see story, page 7).

At the Membership Meeting on Friday, new directors were enrolled from each region. New officers were also elected,

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AWO Convention Special Edition

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including Chairman of the Board Royce C. Wilken, President, American River Transportation Co.; Vice Chairman of the Board Merritt Lane, President and Chief Executive Officer, Canal Barge Company, Inc.; President & CEO Thomas Allegretti, AWO; Secretary Vickie Hammond, AWO; and, Treasurer Mark Buese, Senior Vice President, Kirby Corporation.

Leadership Remarks

Outgoing Chairman Describes Year of “Patient Progress”

In his farewell address to the Board, outgoing Chairman Dale Sause described his year as chairman as a year of “patient progress.” He said, “By following our strategic game plan on several issues of importance, we did make steady, sure progress on towing vessel inspection, federal preemption, the TWIC proposal, Jones Act integrity, mariner licensing, salvage and firefighting, and recruitment and retention of vessel personnel, among other things. We fought good battles that are still not over on the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), the Petroleum Business Tax in New York State, the treatment of ballast water, and Missouri River navigation.” Mr. Sause noted that many issues remain a challenge for the industry going forward. “But,” he said, “having gotten a front row seat over the past year to the views of AWO members



and the way that AWO works, I am very confident that we have an association that can coalesce to achieve our goals. It is amazing, really, how well AWO members – often competitors – work together when it comes to improving the industry.”

Mr. Sause talked about his travels as chairman, saying, “I witnessed the diversity of the industry, its members and their opinions on the issues facing us. I was very impressed with how the organization responded to the challenges that confronted us: providing people resources or sweat equity, contributing fundraising resources, and participating in the development and deployment of the proper strategies to employ on the issues.”

Mr. Sause predicted, “One thing we can all count on is that the way of the future will be one of challenge – whether in our individual companies or in our association.” He asserted that “The diversity of AWO is one of our greatest strengths in meeting these challenges – our geographic diversity, our sector diversity and our demographic diversity.” He continued, “If we are patient – and smart – we can respond to any situation by devising a gameplan, mustering our resources and leveraging our diversity to make an impact, reframe the dialogue, and change the course of ill-conceived legislation or regulation. Only in this way can we ensure a safer, more secure tugboat, towboat and barge industry.”

Mr. Sause thanked the members of the Board for their dedication and praised incoming Chairman Royce Wilken as “well qualified to lead AWO, perhaps particularly at this time of internal transition and transformation.” He

observed that the new chairman “is not only very approachable, but I believe he will provide a strong, steady hand to lead us through the challenges that lie ahead this year.”

New Chairman Outlines His Agenda

Incoming Chairman of the Board Royce C. Wilken paid tribute to outgoing Chairman Dale Sause, saying “Dale has done



a tremendous job during a difficult year of challenges in the industry and in our association. We all owe him our gratitude for being just the kind of leader we needed – someone who is knowledgeable, insightful, thoughtful and dedicated, and who has a sense of humor. We needed all those qualities in our leader over the past year and Dale certainly came through for us.” He thanked Chairman Sause for his sacrifices and for “representing and leading us so well!”

Mr. Wilken then laid out his agenda. He said that one major focus would be the internal challenge of the AWO Transformation and Transition plan put into effect as a result of the turnover of two major staff roles for the association, the chief financial officer and the membership and meeting planner. He asserted, “Although this has been an undeniable sea change, it has also provided an opportunity to reinvent AWO as a more efficient and effective organization.” Mr. Wilken observed that “AWO is obviously a resource-constrained organization, and

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has been even more so since the turnovers took place in November and December. It is imperative that the organization be focused on achieving this transformation and becoming a modern, first-class association. I intend to do all I can to oversee this process and ensure its success."

Mr. Wilken went on to list the external challenges that would be a focus during his time as chairman, including the major goals and priorities that are determined by the Board. He said that the number one challenge would be "the defeat of the proposal to increase the user tax on the inland industry. The inland operators have paid more than \$1.6 billion in user taxes into the Inland Waterways Trust Fund over the past 20 years to cover our share of new construction and major rehabilitation projects, but those taxes have not been spent in a fully-efficient enough manner. Contracting practices of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have to be corrected and the whole range of options available for dealing with the declining balance in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund need to be considered."

He also listed the towing vessel inspection rulemaking as a top priority. He noted, "This is a critical time in the process, fleshing out the details of vessel inspection with the Coast Guard through the Towing Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) process and in the rulemaking." He said further, "For



those with doubts and questions, we need to remind ourselves that the process is in good hands. We are well represented by numerous AWO members engaged in the TSAC process who share our concerns and understand boat operations. We believe that they are working hard to ensure a vessel inspection system that raises the bar of safety for the industry, yet is practical with regard to real-world operations."

Mr. Wilken encouraged members to be involved in the process.

The passage of a Water Resources Development Act, or WRDA bill, was another major goal of the new chairman. He noted that "A WRDA bill is usually passed every two years, but we have not had a WRDA bill enacted since the 106th Congress in 2000. It is critical that a WRDA bill is passed and these waterways infrastructure restoration projects get underway. We must do all that we can to push for the Congress to finally pass this legislation. The efficiency and effectiveness of waterways transportation in this nation depends on it."

Chairman Wilken then talked about member leadership. He said, "When we take on the mantle of leadership, we take on the responsibility that comes with it to act in the best interests of the industry as a whole. I believe that member leaders need to act as 'ambassadors' of AWO to other AWO members and to external audiences. I hope to raise the profile of this issue during the upcoming year

and build a heightened culture of more effective member leadership."

He exhorted the members to practice "consistent, open, candid communication among members and between members and staff. We need to all work in the same direction," he said. "Only in this way can we present a unified front and be effective in convincing government to make the right policy choices. This is, after all, the real strength of a trade association."

Finally, Mr. Wilken thanked the Board members for naming him chairman. He said, "I hope you will provide me with your support, but also your candid feedback. Please convey your concerns to me at any time. Working together in the coming year, we can strengthen AWO internally and externally and ensure that AWO members continue to be the industry leaders who set the standard for safe, efficient, secure and environmentally-friendly waterways transportation."

President Offers Assessment of State of the Association

President & CEO Thomas Allegretti reported to the Board that the state of the association was "sound." He then cited his reasons for that assessment, including,



- "We have a vision, a mission and a strategic plan that strongly position us for long-term success.

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- We continue to deliver important results for our members, providing them with genuine value for the investment they make in AWO.
- We continue to enjoy a deeper and broader capacity born of the expertise, the activism and the passion of AWO's members.
- We continue to benefit by the vision and leadership of our recent Chairmen of the Board, by any measure an extraordinary array of men who have led AWO over the last decade.
- We continue to benefit from the vastly expanded creativity that member engagement and leadership produces day after day.
- We continue to be propelled by a spirit of challenge and innovation within the organization that assures we are never satisfied with the status quo and always thinking about the next enhancement to our work.
- We remain an organization grounded by commitment and accountability, from both members and staff.
- We are more and more an organization that is improving in the areas of open communication and transparency."

Mr. Allegretti then explained why AWO, despite these strengths, is facing unprecedented challenges. He discussed staff capacity and resource issues in detail, noting that he had spoken in the past about ensuring "a proper balance between our organizational work load and member expectations on the one hand, and our day-to-day resources to

get the job done on the other." He thanked members for helping AWO address some of these matters by authorizing new staff capacity for information technology and training.

Mr. Allegretti reported that, "Nonetheless, at least as we stand here today, the staff capacity issue has worsened, not gotten better." He addressed the Transition and Transformation plan approved by the Executive Committee, and pointed out that AWO is currently running with vacancies in three authorized positions. He reported that the situation "has placed a real strain" on the organization and on the staff.

Mr. Allegretti said that the situation also presented uplifting elements. He said that the commitment of the leadership council, including the Chairman, the Vice Chairman and the Immediate Past Chairman, "to worry through the details of the Transformation plan, to share perspective and advice, and to suggest directions, has been nothing short of extraordinary." He also said that AWO's strategic partners had been "unbelievably tolerant and patient with us" and "partners in helping us through the transition." He praised AWO's outside vendors for "helping us make the right judgments along the way." He also said that Interim CFO Dawn Brown had become "a critical member of the team" who "attends to our work and our concerns with great competence and compassion."

"My full confidence in our future remains undiminished. To be sure, the challenges before us remain significant. Just as certainly, we will emerge from this transition much better positioned and able to address them."

*- AWO President & CEO
Tom Allegretti*

Mr. Allegretti then asserted that "the single most important thing we have seen of which you must be aware is the tremendous dedication of all of the members of your staff" who "helped

develop the Transition and Transformation plan, and then have taken on individual responsibilities for its implementation. They do so as they continue to do their regular jobs and attend to all of their more normal work." Mr. Allegretti continued, "Each and every person on the staff has made some contribution to the effort, and some have been nothing short of phenomenal." He provided specific

examples of the staff's extraordinary efforts and concluded, "The commitment and dedication of this truly fine group of people leaves me, and I suggest the membership as well, with a profound sense of gratitude. And, that commitment and dedication is a central element of the enduring strength of AWO's foundation, and the reason why we will emerge from this transition a better organization, much improved, a better place for AWO staff to work, and a better organization in which AWO members can belong."

Mr. Allegretti summarized his assessment by saying, "My full confidence in our future remains undiminished. To be sure, the challenges before us remain significant. Just as certainly, we will emerge from this transition much better positioned and able to address them."

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Special Recognition

During the Board of Directors meeting, special recognition for service to AWO was given to members rotating off the Executive Committee, including Immediate Past Chairman of the Board Steve Valerius; Chairman of the Ohio Valley Region Deane Orr; Chairman of the Southern Region Chuck King; Chairman of the Pacific Region Rich Smith; and, Chairman of the Inland Dry Sector Committee Cathy Shantz-Hammond. 🍀

New AWO Chairman to Speak at 9th Annual Harbor Safety Committee Conference in Chicago

AWO Chairman Royce C. Wilken, President, American River Transportation Co., will be one of the keynote speakers at the 9th Annual Harbor Safety Committee (HSC) Conference on May 9-11 at the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza in Chicago, IL. The U.S. Coast Guard and the Marine Board/Transportation Research Board are co-sponsoring the conference. Mr. Wilken will be the morning keynote speaker on Thursday, May 10.

HSCs are local coordinating bodies located throughout the country that work with the U.S. Coast Guard to address issues relating

to the safety, security, mobility and environmental protection of a port or waterway. HSCs coordinate issues relating to commercial as well as recreational marine transportation. Membership of HSCs is typically comprised of local representatives of government agencies, maritime labor and industry

organizations, and public interest groups. Each year, these committees come together for a national conference that provides an opportunity for HSCs to engage in a robust exchange of information on current challenges, best practices, case studies and lessons learned. Additionally, the conference offers the opportunity for HSCs to engage both public and private executive leaders on issues relating to marine transportation.

Additional information on the conference program, registration and hotel can be found [here](#). For additional information or to discuss sponsorship or exhibit opportunities, please contact Joedy Cambridge at jcambridge@nas.edu. For information on Mr. Wilken's remarks, please contact Anne Burns at aburns@vesselalliance.com or (703) 841-9300, extension 252. 🍀



Welcome New Carrier Member!

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Construction, LLC**
9801 Westheimer, Suite 1070
Houston, TX 77042

Rep: Mr. Richard H. Lee,
Managing Member



Important Dates and Reminders

..... at a glance

All contact persons can be reached by calling AWO's Arlington, VA office at (703) 841-9300 unless otherwise noted.

May 16-17: Coastal Safety Committee Meeting, New Orleans, LA. For more information, contact Kathy Rehak.

June 27-28: Interregion Safety Committee Meeting, St. Louis, MO. For more information, contact Kathy Rehak.

August 15-16: Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions Joint Summer Meeting, St. Louis, MO. For more information, contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474.

House of Representatives Passes WRDA Bill by Large Margin

On April 19, the U.S. House of Representatives approved H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bill, by a vote of 394-25. The WRDA legislation, containing authorizations for a variety of water projects, is usually passed every two years; however there has not been a WRDA bill enacted since the 106th Congress in 2000. A major priority for AWO in the current WRDA legislation is authorization for the Upper Mississippi River/Illinois Waterway (UMR/IWW) project recommended in a U.S. Army Corps Chief of Engineers' report in December 2004.

The bill passed by the House does contain authorization for the UMR/IWW project, as well as a

number of other water projects, including several in the New Orleans area and the Louisiana Coastal Restoration project. The total cost of projects authorized by the bill is estimated to be approximately \$14 billion. Prior to passage of the bill, the House adopted an amendment offered by Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) that would require the revision of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' "Principles and Guidelines." The "Principles and Guidelines" document governs the Corps' planning process.

The legislation will now be sent to the Senate for further consideration. The Senate version of the legislation was previously approved by the Senate Environment and Public Works

Committee (see April 13 *AWO*

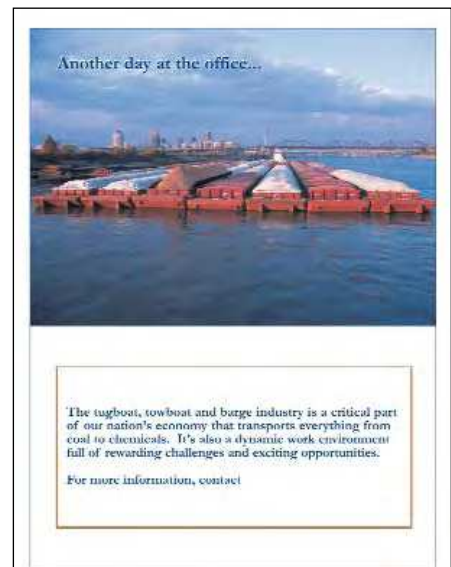
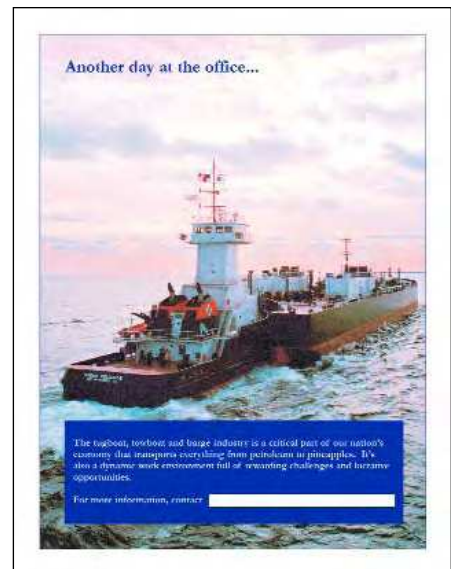
Letter) and action by the full Senate is expected to take place later this spring.

If you have any questions about the WRDA bill or would like a copy of any of its provisions, please contact Krista Reddington at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or via email at kreddington@vesselalliance.com.



Introducing...the *AWO Industry Tool Kit*

In order to help members in their efforts to alleviate the vessel personnel shortage, AWO has created the *Industry Tool Kit*, consisting of two brochures and two posters that can be distributed to potential employees and displayed anywhere to increase the visibility of the industry and available jobs. The first full-color brochure explains important details that any potential employee wants to know before entering an industry, such as schedules, benefits and requirements, and features first-hand testimonials from mariners. The second brochure describes different positions, both on vessels and shoreside, and their qualifications. The two posters, one featuring a coastal vessel and the other featuring an inland tow, are simple and eye-catching, and there is a blank space on each poster that members can fill with their company information so those interested by the poster can contact them. The *Tool Kit* will be mailed to members and is available on the AWO Web site at www.americanwaterways.com. For more information, please contact Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or via email at mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com.



TWIC Stakeholder Communications Committee Holds Second Meeting

Deployment Schedule Release Delayed, TSA Says

Release of the port-by-port deployment schedule for the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) has been delayed as the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and contractor Lockheed Martin continue to test the program to make sure that it will work as intended when implementation begins, TSA officials told the TWIC Stakeholder Communications Committee meeting, which held its second meeting April 12. TSA officials echoed the testimony of TSA Administrator Kip Hawley, who told the Senate Commerce Committee earlier that day that while the agency respects the SAFE Port Act deadlines for TWIC implementation, further testing is needed to make sure that all systems work as intended before enrollment begins. TSA officials told committee members that they were seeking permission to share a list of enrollment sites grouped in implementation priority order and would report back at the committee's next meeting (scheduled for May 1) on whether such a document could be released to the public.

In other business:

- TSA and the Coast Guard announced the availability of several options for answering questions from the public about the TWIC program. Questions can be directed by phone to either of the following numbers: 1(866) DHS-TWIC or (202) 372-1126. Questions can also be emailed to: credentialing@dhs.gov or uscg-twic-helpdesk@uscg.mil.
- TSA and Lockheed Martin advised that pre-enrollment will begin approximately two weeks before enrollment begins in Wilmington, DE, the first port selected for TWIC implementation. Applicants will be able to pre-enroll via the Internet or by phone, and may make an appointment to complete the enrollment process at the center of their choice. (Once an applicant enrolls at a given center, he or she will be required to return to the same center to pick up the TWIC.) Pre-enrollment will not only reduce waiting time at the enrollment center, but will also help Lockheed Martin determine whether its projections of the number of enrollees at any given location are accurate. If necessary, equipment and personnel can then be redeployed to meet higher-than-expected demand.
- Lockheed Martin will develop a one-page fact sheet for entities interested in hosting fixed or mobile enrollment centers on their premises. AWO will make this fact sheet available to members when it is released.

For more information on the TWIC program, please contact Jennifer Carpenter at (703) 841-9300, extension 260, or via email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com.



*** LATE-BREAKING NEWS ***

TSA Posts List of Enrollment Center Sites

Just before the *AWO Letter* went to press, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) released a list of the cities that have been selected for fixed TWIC enrollment centers as of April 26. The list has been posted on the TSA Web site and can be viewed [here](#). To AWO's deep disappointment, Paducah, KY, is not on the list. However, AWO has been assured that the agency is actively working with TWIC enrollment contractor Lockheed Martin to add Paducah to the list of fixed enrollment center sites. AWO will provide further information to members as it becomes available.

Recreational Boating Season is Almost Here...

Have You Ordered Your "Lifelines" Brochures?

AWO's popular brochure, entitled "Lifelines: Safety Tips That Could Save Your Life," delivers important safety tips to recreational boaters in an easy-to-read, user friendly format. Have you ordered your brochures yet?



AWO has reprinted almost one million "Lifelines" brochures, which are available to the general public free of charge, although shipping costs may apply. To request copies of the brochure, please complete the attached order form and fax it to AWO using the information listed on the form. Order your brochures today and help make our nation's waterways safe for everyone!

“Dams Threaten Salmon, 9th Circuit Court Agrees”

The following article, written by Brad Knickerbocker, appeared in the Christian Science Monitor on April 22.

ASHLAND, Ore. - The wild salmon in the Pacific Northwest – already at a fraction of their historic numbers and facing many threats, from sea lions to global warming – may be getting a reprieve.

A federal appeals court has upheld a ruling that threatens to breach the biggest threats to their survival – four major dams in the Columbia River basin – if the U.S. government doesn't come up with a realistic recovery plan.

The decision, rendered last week by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, represents the latest in a long line of court rulings throwing out salmon-recovery plans by administrations of both parties going back to 1993.

“I can strongly affirm that it is the policy of this administration to uphold the law faithfully,” Bob Lohn, a regional administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said after the ruling.

“But when the underlying issues are difficult or contentious, there is often great debate about what the law means or how it should be applied.”

The salmon's recovery is complicated, however, by a variety of factors, including growing development and climate change.

Dams stay, Bush says

The dams are particularly controversial. President Bush has said he would not consider breaching or taking out any of the dams, which provide power, irrigation, and barge

transportation – all viewed as essential to the region's economy.

Under the latest administration plan, the eight dams along the Columbia and Snake Rivers (as well as the irrigation, flood control, and power generation they provide) are considered part of the landscape because they were built before the Endangered Species Act was passed in 1973.

In other words, the administration argued, only the effects of dam operations and not the dams themselves should be considered under the Endangered Species Act.

But the appeals court last week found that point of view to be “little more than an analytical sleight of hand” that seemed to imply that salmon “could be gradually destroyed, so long as each step on the path to destruction is sufficiently modest.”

“Statistically speaking,” the court declared sardonically, “the dead fish were really alive.” The court also lambasted NOAA, the agency charged with protecting endangered fish species, for taking a “cramped view” of its authority.

“This decision should compel the federal agencies to look at all recovery options – including removing the four lower Snake River dams, and develop a solution that works for people and fish,” said Steve Mashuda of Earthjustice, the non-profit law firm representing a coalition of fishing business and conservation groups in the case.

Salmon need the right amount of water at the proper temperature to spawn upstream, after which their offspring head out to the Pacific Ocean before returning to the place of their birth

several years later to repeat the cycle. Dams, irrigation diversions, logging, mining, and urban development have made the river trips to and from the ocean increasingly difficult.

Before the eight dams were built on the Columbia and Snake rivers, 16 million salmon a year filled annual fish runs. Today, that number is down to about 1 million fish, and 12 species of salmon are listed as endangered.

Meanwhile, the challenge of reversing the steady decline in salmon populations across an area the size of central Europe is becoming increasingly difficult because of growing commercial and residential development.

Now, say scientists, global warming is making the problem more difficult.

Earlier this month, research scientists from NOAA and the University of Washington in Seattle reported that climate change is likely to cause warming of water, lower spawning flows and increased winter water flows – all of which could raise salmon mortality.

“Under assumptions of warming temperatures and shifts in local precipitation, these stream habitat attributes will change for the worse as far as salmon are concerned,” said Mary Ruckelshaus, a NOAA fisheries scientist and coauthor of the study, which was published by the National Academy of Sciences.

Rapid climate change

An earlier University of Washington report found that climate change in the Puget Sound area has been taking place relatively rapidly.



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“House Passes Delayed Water Projects Bill”

The following article, written by Sam Hananel of the Associated Press, appeared in many major newspapers nationwide, including the Washington Post, on April 19.

WASHINGTON - The House on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a massive water projects bill that has languished for years over its price tag and how the Army Corps of Engineers does business.

The overall cost of the bill is at least \$15 billion. Supporters of the bipartisan measure, passed by a 394-25 vote, say it's needed to fund hundreds of projects in nearly every state to improve flood protection, modernize the nation's waterways and restore the environment.

“This is an investment in America,” said the bill's chief sponsor, Rep. James Oberstar, D-Minn.

The Water Resources Development Act includes \$1.8 billion for construction of seven new locks on the upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers and another \$1.6 billion for ecosystem restoration along the rivers.



Farm groups and shipping interests have been pushing for years to upgrade the lock system to help speed grain-laden barges to Southern ports.

Billions more are targeted for restoration of the Florida Everglades and for hurricane and flood protection in Louisiana and the Gulf Coast in the wake of damage from Hurricane Katrina.

Similar measures passed in both the Senate and the House last year, but they never made it out of conference committee before the end of the session. Senate consideration of nearly identical legislation is expected later this year.

The White House opposes the bill, arguing that it's even more expensive than the \$10 billion version considered last year. The Bush administration wants states to share more of the cost for certain projects and ensure that they are economically and environmentally feasible.

Supporters credit much of the increase to a surge in construction costs and say projects only get more expensive every year they are delayed.

“I do realize the constraints the administration is working on with a tight budget situation,” said Rep. John Mica, R-Fla. “But we're finding billions to reconstruct Iraq and we have a crumbling infrastructure in our own back yard.”

No water construction legislation has passed Congress since 2000, when a government auditor discovered that Army Corps of Engineers officials doctored a report to justify new locks on the Mississippi. Since then, environmental and taxpayer groups have called for an independent panel to review corps projects to ensure that are not wasteful.

“This bill has a peer review section, but it's wholly inadequate,” said Steve Ellis, vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense. “Something that came out of Hurricane Katrina was the idea of having truly independent peer review for costly, controversial or critical projects.”

Ellis said he is satisfied with independent review provisions in the Senate's version of the bill, though his group still opposes the bill overall because it costs too much and is loaded with wasteful projects.

Taxpayer and environmental groups praised an amendment from Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., that requires the corps to update its guidelines to make sure projects are economically and environmentally sound. ♻️

Dams Threaten Salmon, Ninth Circuit Court Agrees

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Another relatively recent threat to salmon are the California sea lions that have been gobbling up salmon at the fish ladders designed to help adult salmon over the dams on the way upstream to spawn.

Officials have tried scaring off the sea lions with firecrackers and rubber bullets, but it hasn't worked. Sea lions themselves are protected under the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act.

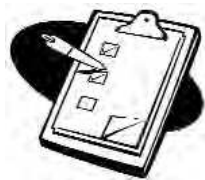
Congress is now considering a bill that would allow Oregon, Washington, and Columbia River Indian tribes to kill a limited number of sea lions.

The National Marine Fisheries Service and other federal agencies are expected to present a new strategy for the Columbia River basin next month. ♻️

RCP Recertification in 2007

During last week's AWO Spring Convention, Bob Clinton, AWO Vice President - Safety, reported to the Board of Directors that 2007 would be a busy year for Responsible Carrier Program (RCP) audits, with 61 members required to undergo an initial or recertification audit before the end of the year. Mr. Clinton reminded the Board that AWO carrier members should not wait until the last minute, especially with the large number of members due this year, to complete their audits. AWO-certified auditors will be busy and companies waiting until the last minute risk incurring delays in completing their audits.

In addition to difficulties in scheduling the audit, a problem can occur when a company finds that it has minor nonconformities that have been overlooked during its internal audits that need to be corrected before



completing the audit. Companies having nonconformities may be granted up to 90 days to complete their audits; however, this imposes an additional deadline and may cause further problems, such as scheduling and interruption of operations.

Another potential snag members may encounter with their RCP audits can be characterized as "jumping the gun," or completing the audit more than 90 days before it is due. "Jumping the gun" results in a company resetting its audit date, which causes "audit creep," effectively reducing the time between audits. The RCP audit protocol allows a company to complete its audit "up to 90 days prior to the anniversary date" of its audit and still retain its original audit due date.

The message here is clear: don't procrastinate. Third-party audits should be scheduled sufficiently in advance,



but not more than 90 days in advance, to allow time to correct any nonconformities that may be found. Companies may be granted up to 90 days to correct nonconformities and still retain their original audit dates, but this can lead to needless last minute stress, additional deadlines and operational challenges.

As always, if you have any questions about your company's audit due date or any other RCP-related question, please call Bob Clinton or Kathy Rehak at (703) 841-9300, extensions 253 and 263, respectively. ☘

CEMS Training Opportunities

The Crew Endurance Management System (CEMS) is a system for managing risk factors in maritime work environments that can lead to human error and performance slumps. The Coast Guard and AWO have been working together to help companies implement the principles of CEMS. In this space, AWO will publish details of CEMS training opportunities around the country. For further information on CEMS training opportunities, please contact LCDR Vivianne Louie, U.S. Coast Guard, at (202) 372-1358. ☘

DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
May 8-10	Experts Training Northeast Maritime Institute Fairhaven, MA	LCDR Vivianne Louie (Contact) (202) 372-1358
May 9-10	Coaches Training Inland Waterways Academy Huntington, WV	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net Capt. John Whiteley (Director) (304) 697-5616
May 24-25	Coaches Training Kirby Corporation Baton Rouge, LA	Kelly Parker (Contact) (713) 435-1775 kelly.parker@kirbycorp.com
June 20-21	Coaches Training Inland Waterways Academy Huntington, WV	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net Capt. John Whiteley (Director) (304) 697-5616
July 25-26	Coaches Training Inland Waterways Academy Huntington, WV	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net Capt. John Whiteley (Director) (304) 697-5616

CEMS: Ask the “Pioneers”

➔ 8th in a series

Have you thought about implementing the Crew Endurance Management System (CEMS) at your company? Do you have questions about how to get started?

One of the best ways to learn about CEMS implementation is from those companies that are actually doing it. In a panel forum at the AWO 2006 Fall Convention, senior representatives from seven AWO carrier member companies shared their experiences, successes and “lessons learned” from implementing CEMS in their organizations.

To help all AWO members (including those who were not able to attend the panel forum) “learn from the pioneers,” a series of eight articles highlighting the experiences of these CEMS implementers concludes with this article.

Over the course of the series, some of the questions addressed general concerns that any company might have when introducing a CEMS program: How did you get started? What was the reaction from crews? Other installments addressed specific operations, such as dayboat and coastal.

This series has been compiled into one document and is posted on the AWO Web site [here](#).

A final quote summarizes one company’s experience in implementing CEMS:


“The most exciting thing we have seen is watching our vessel employees implementing their CEMS education, which begins in initial orientation and

is advanced through all phases of their training. The result is a stronger team that is able to enjoy a healthier and happier quality of life both at home and onboard our vessels, which improves overall performance by enabling them to make better risk-based decisions.”

-Norb Whitlock, American Commercial Lines LLC



AWO is committed to helping its members understand and achieve the benefits of CEMS. By sharing their experiences, members can help each other to improve the quality of life of their crewmembers and the reliability of their operations.

For further information, please contact Kathy Rehak at (703) 841-9300, extension 263, or via email at krehak@vesselalliance.com 

Coastal Safety Committee to Begin Work on 2007 Priorities


The spring meeting of the AWO Coastal Safety Committee will take place on May 16-17 at the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel, 739 Canal Street at Bourbon, New Orleans, LA, (504) 962-0500. The committee will begin its work on its 2007 priorities, which include communication and improved safety performance, and disaster preparedness (also known as business continuity).

All those who have responsibility for safety in AWO member companies that have coastal operations are invited to attend. The meeting will commence at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 16 and conclude by 5:00 p.m. The committee will reconvene at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 17 and the meeting will

conclude by 12:00 noon. Please call (800) 684-1127 to make hotel reservations.



Among the invited speakers are Rob Tietsma, Cost Reduction Technologies, and Steve Brundrett, Canal Barge Company, Inc. Mr. Tietsma will present information on isokinetics and a method of evaluating fitness for duty. Interregion Safety Committee Chairman Brundrett will guide a discussion of preparations undertaken to prepare for a disaster.

For further information and/or to RSVP for the meeting, please contact Kathy Rehak at (703) 841-9300, extension 263, or krehak@vesselalliance.com 

Southern Region

Tax Credit Bill Introduced in Louisiana

On April 17, House Bill (HB) 287 was introduced for Louisiana's 2007 Regular Legislative Session. HB 287, if passed, will provide companies that operate boats and barges in Louisiana a credit on income taxes based on the amount of property taxes paid by the company.



Specifically, this legislation provides for an income and corporation franchise tax credit for ad valorem taxes paid by barge line, towing and other water transportation companies. The credit against income and franchise taxes would be in the following amounts of the aggregate ad valorem taxes paid: eight percent in 2008, 16 percent in 2009, 24 percent in 2010, 32 percent in 2011 and 40 percent in 2012 and beyond.



The credit will apply to income taxes paid by a corporation, an individual, a Sub Chapter S Corporation, a partnership and a Limited Liability Company.

For additional information, or for a copy of HB 287, please contact Matt Holzhalb, Vice President - Southern Region, at (504) 799-2239 or via email at mholzhalb@vesselalliance.com.

If you receive a hard copy of the AWO Letter and need to know the exact Web addresses of the hyperlinks in any articles, please contact Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300 or via email at mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com.



DID YOU KNOW

The U.S. Coast Guard-AWO Safety Partnership, the first industry-Coast Guard partnership of its kind, has launched more than 20 quality action teams that are improving safety and training throughout the tug and barge industry's operations.

www.americanwaterways.com

THE AMERICAN WATERWAYS OPERATORS
AMERICA'S TUG & BARGE INDUSTRY

OUR COMPASS ALWAYS POINTS TO SAFETY.

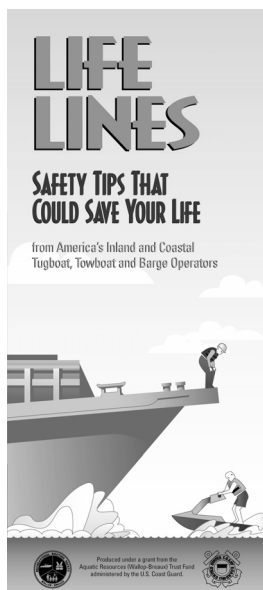
2007 AWO Letter Sponsorships Still Available



AWO is still accepting sponsorship applications for the 2007 AWO Letter. Each great advertising opportunity costs \$500, which includes a front-page "sponsorship block" featuring your company's name, location, logo, and Web site address.

If you are interested in securing a sponsorship, please contact Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or via email at mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com.

Lifelines: Safety Tips That Could Save Your Life



While our nation's inland and coastal waterways play host to thousands of recreational boats each year, they also carry barges, tugboats, towboats, and large ships loaded with tons of cargo. Being aware of the constraints under which these commercial vessels operate can arm recreational boaters with the best protection against danger and could save many lives.

The American Waterways Operators' "Lifelines" brochure addresses this important safety message and delivers it to recreational boaters in an easy-to-read, user friendly format.

To order copies of this free* brochure, simply complete this order form and fax it to (703) 841-0389. Order your brochures today and help make our nation's waterways safe for everyone! If you have any questions about the "Lifelines" program, please contact Mary McCarthy, Public Affairs Assistant, at (703) 841-9300, extension 254.

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** No P.O. boxes, please!*

Forms should be faxed to (703) 841-0389

Or mailed to the address below:

The American Waterways Operators
801 North Quincy Street, Suite 200
Arlington, VA 22203
Attn: Lifelines Brochure Order