

# ARKANSAS WATERWAYS COMMISSION

## OUR RIVERS. OUR RESPONSIBILITY.



## Biennial Report

### Calendar Years 2020 & 2021



*Compiled by the Arkansas  
Waterways Commission for the  
Citizens of Arkansas, the Governor  
of Arkansas, and Members of the  
Arkansas General Assembly*



**Michael Preston**  
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

**Cassandra Caldwell**  
DIRECTOR,  
ARKANSAS WATERWAYS  
COMMISSION

December 1, 2021

The Honorable Governor Asa Hutchinson  
State Capitol, Room 250  
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Governor Hutchinson,

The Arkansas Waterways Commission is proud to present a review of some of the activities and initiatives the team has worked on over the past two years. The Commission has been vigilant and purposeful within its authority and resources to maximize the benefits of Arkansas' commercially navigable waterways.

The Commission recognizes and appreciates the continuous support you have shown for these treasured natural resources and your acknowledgement of the benefits they provide to Arkansas' economy.

The Arkansas Waterways Commission is the sole state agency charged with developing, promoting, and protecting the commercially navigable rivers of Arkansas for waterborne commerce and transportation. The Commission coordinates and cooperates with various local, state, and federal agencies in ongoing efforts to develop these assets as an important economic driver for Arkansas.

We welcome your comments and suggestions on how we can better utilize and develop these vital assets to benefit Arkansas' current citizens and future generations.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Harden, Chairman  
Arkansas Waterways Commission

Arkansas Department of Commerce  
Arkansas Waterways Commission  
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# Arkansas Waterways Commission

The mission of the Commission is to develop, promote, and protect the commercially navigable waterways of Arkansas for waterborne transportation and economic development to benefit the people of Arkansas

## Authorizing legislation, responsibilities, and duties

The Arkansas Waterways Commission was established by Acts 1967, No. 242 and its powers and duties were amended by Acts 1973, No. 414.

The Arkansas Waterways Commission's powers, duties and functions assigned by law are as follows:

1. Study and coordinate efforts designed to promote the development of the navigable stream areas in this State for water transportation purposes;
2. Encourage and coordinate the development of river port and harbor facilities;
3. To recommend to the proper officials, recreational restrictions in critical commercial navigation areas in order to promote public safety and expedite water transportation.
4. Intercede on behalf of and to represent the State of Arkansas in matters pertaining to the application of fees, tolls or user charges levied or contemplated to be levied against the water transportation industry engaged in either intrastate or interstate water commerce.
5. Receive and use any federal, state or private funds, donations and grants made available for the development, use and expansion of river transportation resources of this State, provided that nothing herein shall be deemed to deny or prohibit any city, county, port authority or other governmental or private agency or authority from accepting such donations and grants they are now authorized by law to receive.
6. Cooperate with and furnish assurances to the United States Government and any agencies thereof, for improvement of the waterways of this State for the purpose of commercial navigation and other project purposes, and to contract with the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Engineers to provide the necessary lands, easements, and rights-of-way in connection therewith; to share if necessary in the costs of the projects in the event the Chief of Engineers determines that it is necessary under applicable federal laws and policy; and to otherwise furnish local cooperation requirements of the Acts authorizing projects.
7. Have and exercise the power and authority to acquire such real and personal property, in the name of the State of Arkansas, by gift, grant, purchase, negotiation or by condemnation, as the Commission deems necessary or desirable to carry out its functions and responsibilities under this Act.

8. Require all State agencies, boards or commissions, when such agencies, boards and commissions are planning industrial, residential or recreational zonings, operational regulations or improvements involving channel alignments, bank stabilization, bank and adjacent land uses, which would directly or indirectly affect commercial navigation on any of the State's inland waterways, to coordinate such planning with the Commission.
9. Require all State agencies, boards and commissions having the power to give assurances over water resource projects to coordinate such activities with the Arkansas Waterways Commission prior to giving such assurances if such assurances are given in regard to projects and programs that are on the navigable waterways of the State or may affect these waterways.
10. Authorizes the assignment, transfer, lease, conveyance, grant or donation of any or all of its property to the United States of America or to any agency or department thereof, for use of the United States in connection with the purposes of this Act.
11. Represent this State in the promotion of the development of commercial water transportation in this State and to cooperate with other states, other agencies of this State or agencies of the United States Government, in any manner whatsoever, in an effort to develop the commercial use of the waterways in this State. The Commission is hereby empowered to study all executive orders and legislation, state and federal, which may affect the commercial development of interstate or intrastate water transportation and to make recommendations concerning any such executive orders or legislation.
12. United States Army Corps of Engineers - has responsibility for planning, improving and maintaining the inland river system to provide for flood control, navigation and recreation. It operates most locks and dams on the inland waterways system. It also administers the "Section 10" and "Section 404" federal permit programs.
13. United States Coast Guard - is responsible for the establishment of navigation regulations and the operation and maintenance of physical aids to navigation. Other responsibilities include search and rescue, and enforcement of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. It administers a program for recreational boating safety which includes the establishment and enforcement of minimal safety and signal equipment standards, and inspection of certain classes of commercial vessels. The Coast Guard also administers the laws pertinent to the construction, operation and maintenance of bridges over navigable waterways.
14. United States Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MARAD) - is charged with the responsibility within the government to promote a merchant marine services sufficient to carry the nations domestic waterborne commerce. MARAD administers a number of programs for the industry and undertakes research to support the industry.
15. Other Agencies – These include the Department of Homeland Security which works to secure all modes of transportation, land, air and water. Securing the global supply chain, while ensuring its smooth function, is essential to the USA's national security and economic prosperity; Environmental Protection Agency, which is involved in pollution control and noise control; the Department of Labor, which is the administrator of the Occupational Health and Safety Act; the Federal Communications Commission; and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers various laws regarding the protection of fish and wildlife resources.



## Funding

Activities of the Commission are funded from general revenue appropriated by the General Assembly. The Commission has the authority to receive and use any federal, state or private funds, donations or grants made available for the development, use and expansion of river transportation resources of the State. In 2019, legislation was added to include \$50,000.00 from ad valorem taxes for operations and maintenance.

Through its contribution line item, the AWC supports the efforts of:

- ◆ Arkansas Waterways Association
- ◆ Mississippi Valley Food Control Association
- ◆ Red River Valley Association
- ◆ Ouachita River Valley Association
- ◆ White River Coalition

The Commission also promotes economic development for ports on the commercially navigable rivers of the state.

## River Updates

### Arkansas River

The McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) is a 445-mile channel that begins at the confluence of the Mississippi, White, and Arkansas Rivers in Arkansas and then merges with the Verdigris River at the confluence of the Arkansas, Grand, and Verdigris Rivers at Muskogee, Oklahoma, and ends at the head of navigation in Catoosa, Oklahoma. An average of about 12 million tons of cargo, valued at \$3.5 billion moves on this system annually. June 5, 2021 marked the 50th anniversary of MKARNS' dedication. Since the system was dedicated in 1971, more than 500 million tons of goods have been shipped on the river. The Regional Economic Impact Study revealed 34 thousand jobs; \$64 million in business taxes; \$4.5 billion in sales nationally; and \$2.3 billion in transportation savings can be attributed to the State of Arkansas' segment of the MKARNS. Currently, the MKARNS is responsible for approximately \$1.25 billion in waterborne trade in Arkansas. The Little Rock District USACE is responsible for the Arkansas segment of the MKARNS.

The Three Rivers Feasibility Study has been completed and the project is currently in the final stages of the Pre-Construction Engineering & Design phase, wherein a permanent fix will be determined to remove the threat of a potential breach during high water events at the base of navigation. Construction is expected to begin in June 2022. Construction was authorized in WRDA 2004 to deepen the MKARNS from 9' to 12' along the entire 445 miles, however funds were never appropriated. In FY21, \$559,000 was provided to update cost estimates, economics and design. Updates are expected to be completed by June 2022.

### White River

Funding was received to survey the White River navigation channel. While high water levels delayed the process, the survey was completed. Following the survey, the Memphis District developed maps to highlight areas identified as placement areas for snagged material removed from the river. Mussel surveys were also conducted. The dredging and snagging necessary for reliable navigation will be completed upon receipt of funding. The Memphis District USACE is responsible for the navigation, recreation, flood control, and operation-maintenance of this navigation system.

## **Ouchita-Black River Navigation System**

In FY2020, the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project received only \$500,000 in funds for dredging. Considering mobilization costs of between \$1.2M and \$1.8M, \$500,000 was insufficient to enter a dredging contract. It is estimated that the minimum annual requirement for the Project includes \$3.3M for dredging, \$1.6M for routine maintenance of the waterway, \$4M for lock operations, and \$1.8M for recreation. FY2021 funding totaled \$7.62M. FY2022 funding will be \$12.065M. The 2020 Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA 2020) added water supply as an authorized purpose of the Project, which was a tremendous victory for the people within the Ouachita River Basin. The Vicksburg District USACE oversees the channel's operation-maintenance activities, as well as flood control, recreation, and most importantly navigation on the Ouachita River. Meetings have been held in Camden and Crossett to discuss and encourage port and economic development along the Ouachita River.

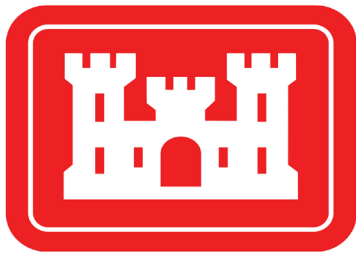
## **Red River Navigation System**

The Arkansas Red River Commission (ARRC) is pursuing a feasibility study through Section 203 to determine whether or not there is enough cost benefit to begin construction to extend navigation from Shreveport-Bossier City, LA to Index, AR. The Arkansas Legislators and Governor provided \$1.5M to fund 50% of the study. Louisiana partners and stakeholders will provide the remaining \$1.5M required to complete the study. The Arkansas Waterways Commission contributed just over \$271,000 from funds left over from the Three Rivers Study. ARRC is working on a RFQ to hire a contractor. Once a contractor is hired, a media event will be held making the announcement. The Vicksburg District USACE will oversee the Section 203 Study.

## **Mississippi River**

The Mississippi River forms the 320-mile eastern border of the state and is the main trade corridor for goods produced in the northern part of the U.S. traveling to gateway ports near the Gulf of Mexico. Approximately 200 million tons of commodities pass by the state on the waterway each year. Public ports in Arkansas are located at Osceola, West Memphis, Helena-West Helena, and Yellow Bend. Osceola Port Authority has been working on enlarging their port statistical boundaries, which would result in a significant increase in funding for dredging, benefiting multiple industries utilizing the waterway in that region. West Memphis has been dealing with an eddy issue, which impacts the port's ability to load and unload cargo during high water conditions. Unfortunately, high water conditions are occurring more frequently and for longer periods of time in recent years. This trend is expected to continue. AWC has been working with West Memphis Port Authority and the Memphis District to determine a solution. The Memphis District USACE is responsible for the West Memphis and Osceola areas of the Mississippi River in Arkansas. The port at Helena-West Helena is rapidly developing under current leadership and will provide container-on-barge service in the very near future. In 2021, Helena Harbor was named a "designated project" on the U.S. Marine Highway System by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The marine highway designation makes Helena Harbor eligible for an annual grant funding program that could support the development and expansion of waterborne transportation services. The Yellow Bend Port (Chicot-Desha Port Authority) has also been working on development and plans for future expansion, which will provide a much-needed economic boost to communities in the region. The Vicksburg District USACE oversees the channel's operation-maintenance activities, as well as flood control, recreation, and most importantly navigation on the lower part of Mississippi River in Arkansas.

# Federal Agency Partners



## **United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**

Plans, improves, and maintains the inland river system to provide for flood control, navigation, and recreation. It operates most locks and dams on the inland waterways system. It also administers Section 10 and Section 404 federal permit programs.



## **United States Coast Guard (USCG)**

Responsible for establishing navigation regulations, and operating and maintaining physical aids to navigation. Other responsibilities include search and rescue and enforcement of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. The USCG also administers the laws pertinent to the construction, operation and maintenance of bridges over navigable waterways.



## **United States Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MARAD)**

Promotes merchant marine services to carry the nation's domestic waterborne commerce. The United States Department of Transportation Maritime Administration administers a number of programs for the industry and undertakes research to support the industry.



## **United States Department of Homeland Security**

Working to secure all modes of transportation, land, air and water. Securing the global supply chain, while ensuring its smooth functioning, is essential to the USA's national security and economic prosperity.

**Other Agencies:** Environmental Protection Agency, controlling pollution and noise; the Department of Labor, administrator of the Occupational Health and Safety Act; and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers various laws regarding the protection of fish and wildlife resources.

# The Commission

*The Governor appoints each of the seven Commissioners to serve seven-year terms. These appointments are staggered to maintain consistency so that optimally only one is appointed annually.*



**Phyllis Harden**, of Redfield, serves at-large and her term expires in 2026. She is primarily responsible for Legislative and Special Projects for Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel Company. She began her career with Pine Bluff in 1981. Ms. Harden was instrumental in the initiation of Pine Bluff's most successful Safety Program, which dramatically reduced injury and illness to the company's highly productive people. She is frequently in Washington, DC lobbying for Corps of Engineers waterway projects and funding. Ms. Harden is on the Board of Directors and a Past-President of the Mississippi Valley AGC, which is the largest geographical Branch of the Associated General Contractors of America and represents contractors on the river system from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Dredging Contractors of America and is on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of the National Waterways Conference. Ms. Harden is also Vice-Chairman of the Pine Bluff-Jefferson County Port Authority Board. She was the first female commission member, and on June 23rd, 2020, she became the first female AWC chairman.



**Marty Shell**, of Fort Smith, represents the Arkansas River and his term expires in 2025. A second generation port terminal operator, Mr. Shell has been employed by Five Rivers Distribution for the past 26 years. He was able to work with his father, Buck Shell, the founder of Five Rivers Distribution for 15 of those years. Mr. Shell is active with both the Fort Smith and Van Buren chambers. He also serves as a Civil Service Commissioner for the City of Fort Smith police and fire departments. Mr. Shell and his wife Shannon have been married for 22 years and have three children, Mackenzie, Avery, and Nathan Shell.



**Joe Harris**, of Osceola, represents the Mississippi River and his term expires in 2028. Mr. Harris is a consultant/lobbyist on national, state and local levels for counties, cities and organizations. He serves on The Arkansas Delta Commission and the Osceola Port Authority board. He has served three terms as a member of the Arkansas House of Representatives. Mr. Harris was Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore. He served as chairman of Public Transportation and was a member of House Rules, House Management Committee, and The Tobacco Settlement Task Force. He served as an alternate member on the committee of Joint Energy.



**Matthew King**, of Little Rock, serves at-large and his term expires in 2023. Mr. King is the Senior Vice President of Administration and Advocacy at Arkansas Farm Bureau. He has a degree in agribusiness from Arkansas State University and a Masters in Agricultural Economics from the University of Arkansas. Mr. King is a member of the University of Arkansas College of Agriculture Deans Advisory Board. Prior to coming to Farm Bureau, Mr. King was an economist with the USDA Foreign Agriculture Service in Washington, D.C.





**Jeff Rutledge**, of Newport, represents the White River and his term expires in 2024. Mr. Rutledge, a native of Newport, graduated from Newport High School and earned a B.S. in Plant Science from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro and a Masters in Agronomy from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Mr. Rutledge has been farming full time since 1999 in Newport along the White River producing rice, wheat, corn, soybeans and milo. Mr. Rutledge serves on the Newport School Board, Levee Commission, and several industry organizations.



**Sherrel Johnson**, of El Dorado, represents the Ouachita River and her term expires in 2027. She is so closely associated with Union County Sparta Aquifer Recovery that if people can't recall her name, they refer to her as the "water woman" or "that Sparta woman", a moniker she readily accepts. Ms. Johnson first dedicated herself to Sparta aquifer recovery in 1997 following the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission's (ANRC) 1996 designation of Union and four contiguous South Arkansas counties as the state's first Critical Groundwater Area. Ms. Johnson earned her BA in political science at Southern Arkansas University – Magnolia, and her AA from South Arkansas Community College in El Dorado. Her husband Ben is an Arkansas historian, author, and recently retired history professor who held the John G. Ragsdale Endowed Chair in Arkansas Studies at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia.



**David Haak**, of Texarkana, represents the Red River and his term expires in 2022. He was born and raised in Texarkana, Arkansas, and owns a pecan farm on the banks of the river. After graduating from Henderson State University with a degree in Biology, he became a science teacher in the Texarkana Arkansas School District. In 1980, he started his business, First Tape and Label. Today, First Tape and Label prints tire labels for every tire manufacturer in the U.S. and ships worldwide. In 2019, Mr. Haak started a new business, Natural State Label, a sister business that prints labels for the prime label market. He served on the Texarkana, Arkansas Board of Directors for three years, the Arkansas House of Representatives for six years, and the Arkansas Economic Development Board for five years. For the last few years, Mr. Haak has enjoyed a partial retirement and during this time he has spent many hours on the farm. Being a Biology major and a farmer, he has always had an interest in protecting the state's waterways. Mr. Haak and his wife, Debbie, have been married for fifty-two years. Their daughter, Jennifer and son-in-law, Michael Chesshir, are both working in the family business. They have three wonderful grandchildren; Mica, Reese, and Haak.

# Financial Overview

Agencies Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Commerce - Arkansas Waterways Commission for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$161,593
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	54,613
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	93,879
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	3,151
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(04) STATE'S CONTRIBUTIONS	<u>2,555</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$315,791</u>

SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION - WATERWAY DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Commerce, to be payable from the Arkansas Port, Intermodal, and Waterway Development Grant Program Fund, for grants to port authorities and intermodal authorities under the Arkansas Port, Intermodal, and Waterway Development Grant Program for port development projects as defined by Arkansas Code 15-23-205 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, the following:

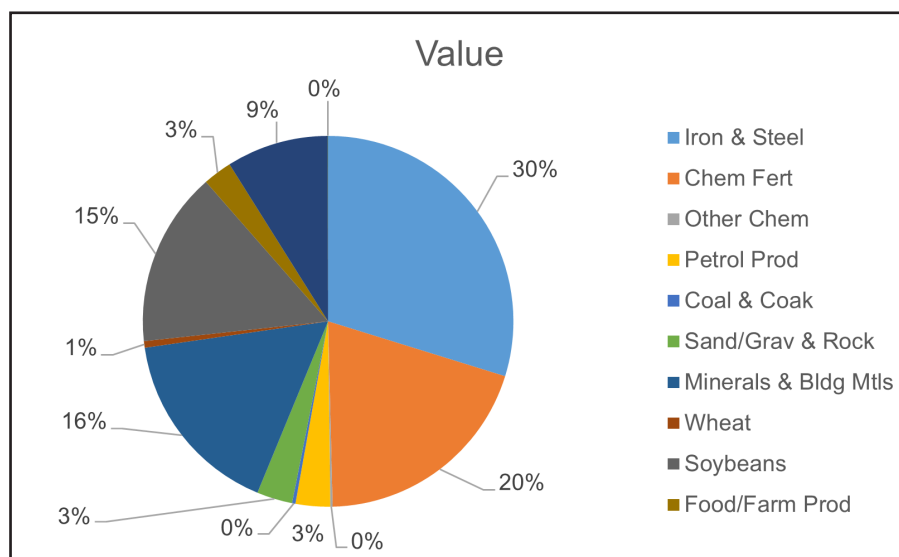
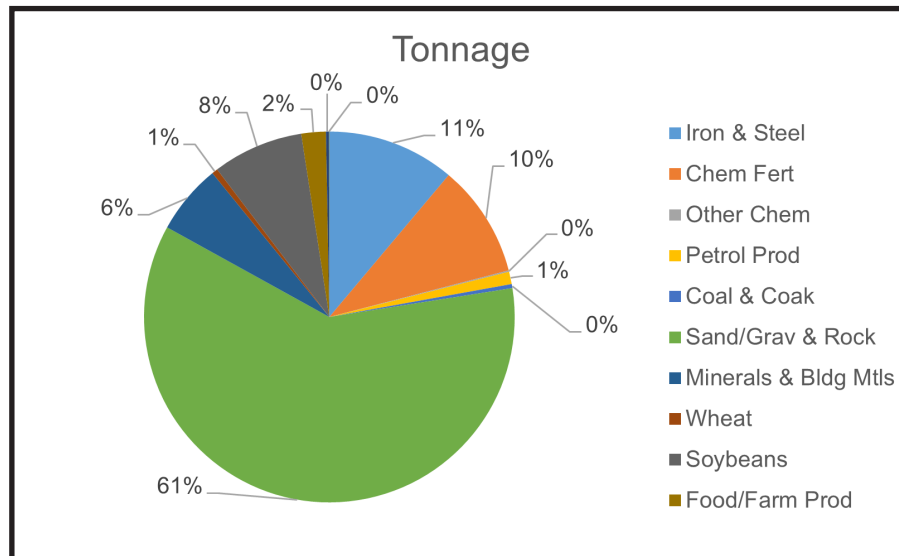
ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022
(01) WATERWAY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS	<u>\$5,000,000</u>

SECTION 4. APPROPRIATION - ARKANSAS RIVER NAVIGATION SYSTEM FUND. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Commerce, to be payable from the Arkansas River Navigation System Fund, for expenses for the development, improvement, and expansion of river transportation resources within the portion of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System located in the State of Arkansas for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022
(01) ARKANSAS RIVER NAVIGATION SYSTEM EXPENSES	<u>\$2,000,000</u>

# CY2020 Arkansas Segment Tonnage & Value on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Tonnage</i>	<i>Value</i>
Iron & Steel	619,937.00	\$ 353,550,071.10
Chem Fert	546,681.00	\$ 235,313,369.64
Other Chem	6,662.00	\$ 2,414,308.80
Petrol Prod	60,128.00	\$ 35,780,970.24
Coal & Coak	19,820.00	\$ 3,473,256.80
Sand/Grav & Rock	3,368,750.00	\$ 36,921,500.00
Minerals & Bldg Mtls	339,767.00	\$ 195,682,008.31
Wheat	28,678.00	\$ 6,825,937.56
Soybeans	441,163.00	\$ 181,013,590.53
Food/Farm Prod	118,972.00	\$ 29,982,133.72
Manufactured	14,684.00	\$ 105,577,960.00
MISC	1,700.00	\$ 428,417.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>5,566,942.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,186,963,523.70</b>

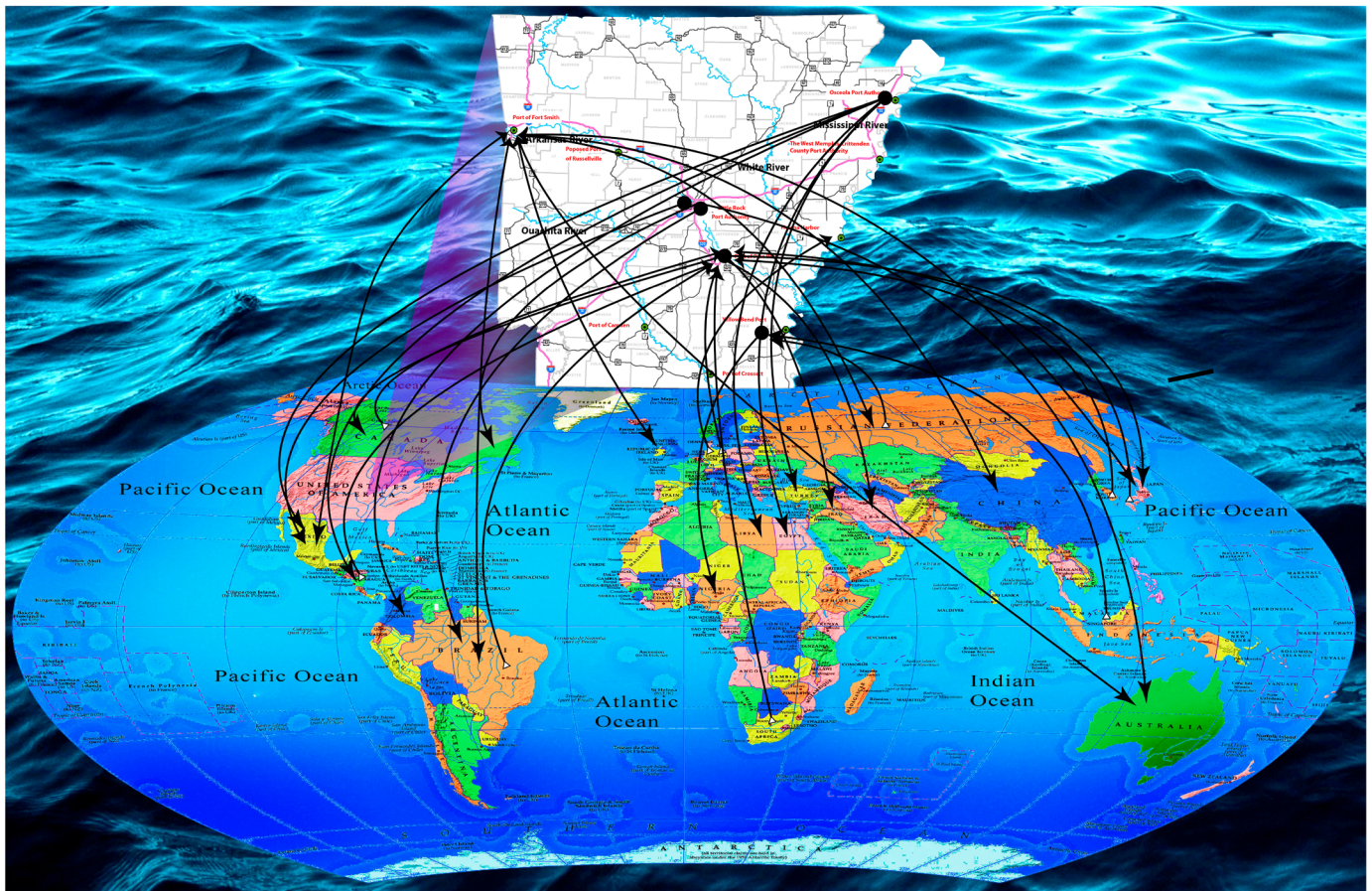




# *MKARNS USERS: Improving the Economy*

The McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) is an economic driver for the state of Arkansas with the various manufacturing and agricultural industries utilizing waterborne commerce and the thousands of jobs created in the region.

The map below shows the commodities being shipped to and from Arkansas while giving some perspective to how vital our waterways are in regards to the economy. Our waterways provide thousands of jobs and connect us with the rest of the world in a unique way.





# The 50th Anniversary of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS)

*2021 marks 50 years of service from the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The waterway partners along the MKARNS commemorated the 50th anniversary of the System with virtual and in-person events throughout the year.*



*Cassandra Caldwell, director of the Arkansas Waterways Commission, speaks with media, stakeholders and partners at an overlook on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.*

The Southwestern Division of the Corps of Engineers and its partners along the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) hosted a media day March 9, 2021 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the system that strategically connects the heartland of the United States with the rest of the world. The event was followed by the christening of the new Corps survey vessel Peevy.

The media-only event was livestreamed for the public on Facebook from the Dardanelle Lock and Dam Overlook in Russellville, Ark., as one of many commemorative events being held throughout 2021.

“The Southwestern Division, Little Rock and Tulsa districts, are honored to participate with our partners and support these events throughout the year. Having a media event like this allows us to tell everyone about the past 50 years and the future of the MKARNS,” said Brig. Gen. Christopher Beck, commander of the Southwestern Division.

*The waterway originally opened on June 5, 1971 with 17 locks and dams. USACE construction spanned more than a quarter of a century at a cost of \$1.3 billion. In July 2004, an 18th lock and dam opened on the system. Each Lock and Dam has a minimum depth of 9 feet and are 110 feet wide and 600 feet long.*

*Today, the MKARNS serves a 12-state region, the Port of Catoosa being the most westerly inland river port that is ice free year-round. The states include Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana and Idaho.*

## USACE Division, Districts celebrate 50 years of the MKARNS with partners at Port of Catoosa



Representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division and its Tulsa and Little Rock Districts joined partners from along the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System at the Tulsa Ports, Port of Catoosa on June 4, 2021 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the waterway.

Brig. Gen. Christopher Beck, commander, Southwestern Division, joined Tulsa Mayor G. T. Bynum, Oklahoma Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell, Director of the Arkansas Waterway Commission Cassandra Caldwell and others to talk about the past, present and future of the system.

Named in honor of two of the waterway's most persistent and persuasive supporters, the late U. S. Senators John L. McClellan of Arkansas and Robert S. Kerr of Oklahoma, the system crosses two of the Division's districts, the Tulsa District in Oklahoma and the Little Rock District in Arkansas.





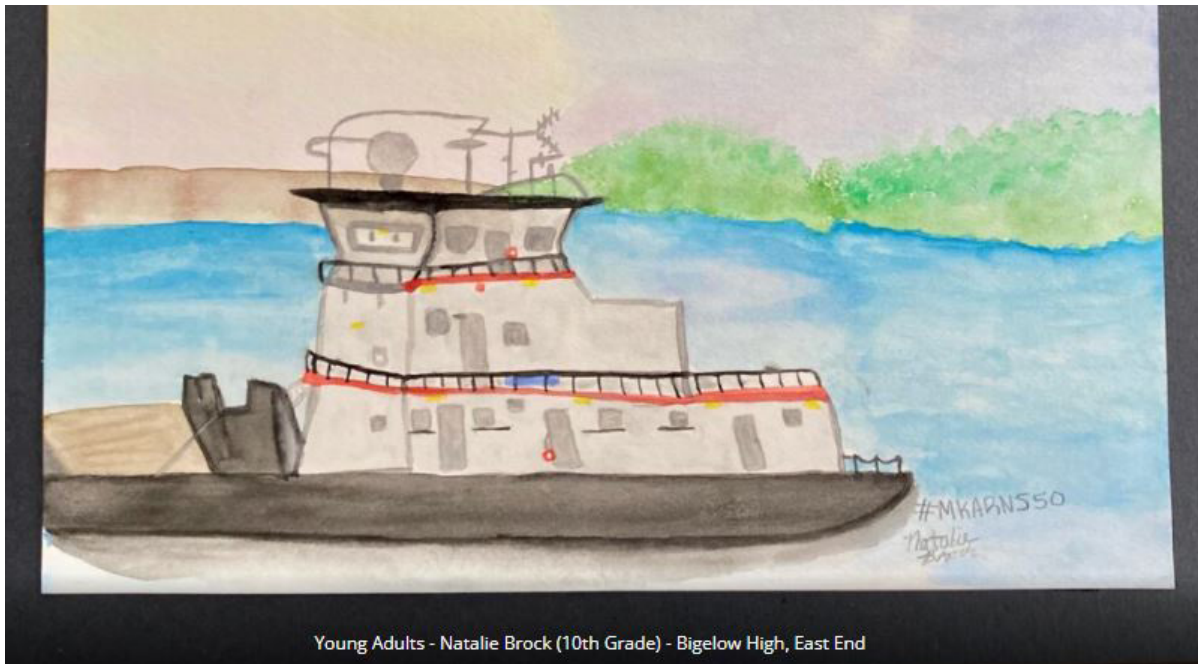
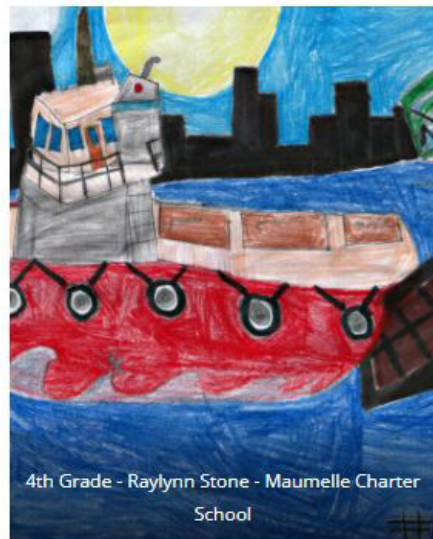
# #MKARNS50 Art Contest

The AWC hosted an art contest that brought in schools around the state to help commemorate the 50th anniversary of the MKARNS. Grades K-12 saw a winner that was selected by the number of likes each art piece earned on Facebook. Winning posters were presented at a press briefing to memorialize the 50th Anniversary of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 1:30 PM. The event was attended by Governor Asa Hutchinson and dozens of other river commerce partners. The AWC also presented awards to the student winners of the #MKARNS50 Art Contest.





# #MKARNS50 Art Contest Winners





## MKARNS 50th Spotlights

As part of the 50th Anniversary, the AWC produced several spotlight videos showcasing different aspects of the MKARNS such as its history, economic impact, and personal experiences through the eyes of stakeholders and industry leaders. These videos can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ArkansasWaterways/videos>



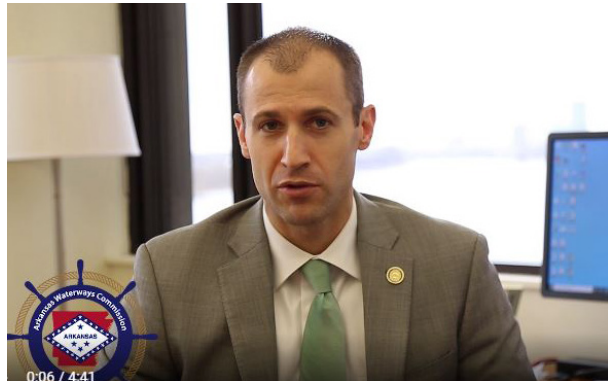
**Cassandra Caldwell**



**Marty Shell**



**Col. Eric Noe**



**Mike Preston**



**Justin Oakley**



**Allison Thompson**



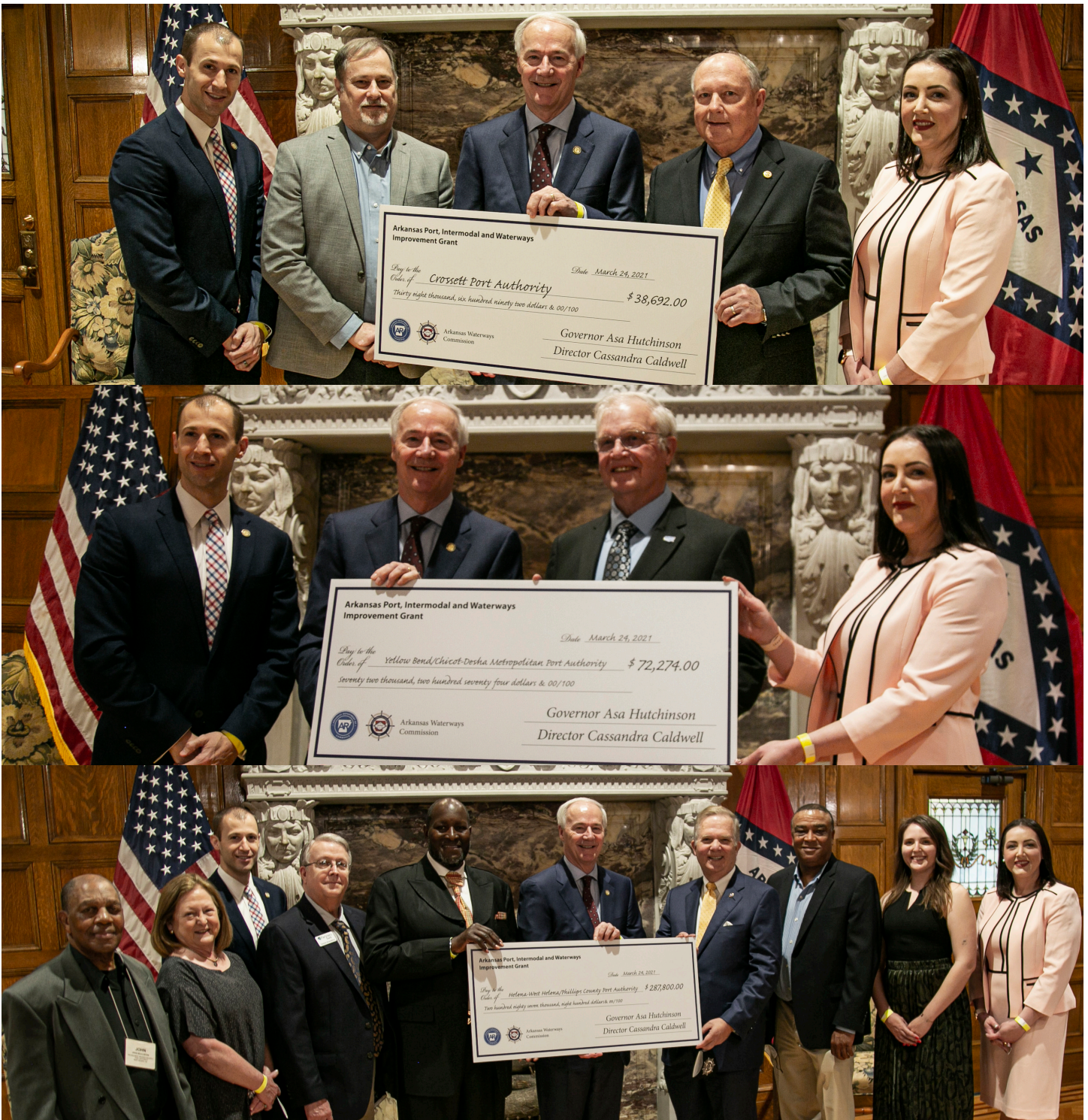
**Bryan Day**



# Arkansas Port, Intermodal, & Waterway Development Grant Program Awards 2021

Arkansas Waterways Commission grant program awardees met with Governor Asa Hutchinson on April 26th, 2021 for a photo op showcasing their grant checks.

The Crossett Port Authority (Ouachita River) received \$38,692.00 for liquid product tank cleaning and inspection. The Chicot-Desha Metropolitan Port Authority/Yellow Bend Port (MS River) received \$72,274.00 for structural painting of the facility crane and building repairs. Helena-West Helena/Phillips County Port Authority (MS River) received \$287,800.00 for the Helena Harbor 2021 Port Development Project in preparations for container on barge operations by 2023.





# 2020-2021

## Grant Award Applicants



## Arkansas Waterways Commission

Asa Hutchinson, Governor

Cassandra Caldwell, Director

### Arkansas Port, Intermodal, and Waterways Development Grant CY2021 Applicant Summary

Name of Applicant: Amount Requested: Match/Who Provides: Total Project Cost: Project Description:	Helena-West Helena/Phillips County Port Authority \$ 287,800.00 \$ 34,200/Helena Harbor \$ 322,000.00 Helena Harbor 2021 Port Development Project – Preparing for container on barge operations (by 2023). <b>Awarded \$287,800.00</b>
Name of Applicant: Amount Requested: Match/Who Provides: Total Project Cost: Project Description:	Osceola Port Authority \$ 522,000.00 \$ 33,000.00(land acquisition) & \$250,00.00(dredging)/Osceola Port Authority \$ 830,000.00 Port shoreline expansion and dredging. <b>Awarded \$0.00</b>
Name of Applicant: Amount Requested: Match/Who Provides: Total Project Cost: Project Description:	Chicot-Desha Metropolitan Port Authority \$ 72,274.00 \$ 10,000.00/Chicot-Desha Metro Port Authority \$ 82,274.00 Structural painting. <b>Awarded \$72,274.00</b>
Name of Applicant: Amount Requested: Match/Who Provides: Total Project Cost: Project Description:	Crossett Port Authority \$ 38,692.00 \$ 9,673.01/Crossett Port Authority \$ 48,365.01 Tank cleaning and inspection. <b>Awarded \$38,692.00</b>
TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED: TOTAL PROJECT COST: AMOUNT AVAILABLE TO GRANT:	<b>\$ 920,766.00</b> <b>\$ 1,282,639.01</b> <b>\$ 923,937.49</b>

# HIGHLIGHTS



March 16, 2020 - Arkansas Waterways Commissioner Director, Cassandra Caldwell, ODOT Waterways Program Manager, Thaddaeus Babb, and Bruce Oakley, Inc. Barge VP, Josh Childress, met with delegates at NWC Legislative Summit in D.C. to discuss the top priorities on the MKARNS. Director Caldwell also spoke on the White, Red, Ouachita, and Mississippi Rivers and their priorities. In this featured photo, Director Caldwell and company were preparing to speak with Congressman Markwayne Mullin to discuss advancement projects in both Oklahoma and Arkansas.

June 3rd, 2020 - Director Caldwell and administrative analyst J.W. Misenheimer met with John Edwards, Helena Harbor & Phillips County Economic Development, to inspect the improvements on the water supply infrastructure. The improvements were funded under a grant from the AWC during the 2019 grant season.



July 10th, 2020 - The AWC toured the Watco terminal at the Port of Pine Bluff. The tour was led by terminal manager Chad Lester (pictured far right), Allison Thompson, President & CEO of the Economic Development Alliance for Jefferson County (far left next to J.W.), and Nancy McNew, vice president (center of picture). Director Caldwell (right) spoke with the port leaders to discuss the needs and progress of the area. Pine Bluff is a major powerhouse for the Arkansas River.



Its official! The port of Yellow Bend is now operational, with an updated crane system. The Waterways team met with the board of Yellow Bend on Wednesday, December 16th, 2020, to check out the crane as it lifted heavy materials and transported it out of the port and to the water as part of a demonstration. The overhead bridge crane was installed in 1995 but fell into despair. It is a major component of the port operation. Using funds provided by the Arkansas Waterways Commission, the crane has been upgraded and is fully operational. The AWC is excited about Yellow Bend's future in waterborne transportation with their new capabilities.



“A big pink barge on the Arkansas River is doing a lot more than carrying goods to farmers and manufacturers. BIG HOPE 1 is also helping fund cancer research. The pink barge from Ceres Barge Line in East St. Louis was launched in 2012 and since then has helped raise more than \$1 million for the Mary Crowley Cancer Research in Dallas as they help expand cancer treatment options with investigations on vaccine, gene and cellular therapies. The pink barge was anchored near the Port of Van Buren as part of the Inland Rivers Ports & Terminals Inc. Christmas, COVID, Cancer Challenge to raise \$100,000 for cancer research. Marty Shell of Five Rivers Distribution in Fort Smith and Van Buren said they have donated \$5,000 to the challenge.” AWC Director Cassandra Caldwell met with Mr. Shell and other river family figureheads to take part in the Big Hope 1 celebration on December 24th. The challenge was successful! The goal of \$100,000 was met and money was raised for cancer research!

August 4th, 2021 - Developer Cliff Chitwood, Mississippi County Judge John Alan Nelson and others met at the Osceola City Hall to discuss strategies to increase federal funds devoted toward Mississippi County river trade. Pictured are (from left) Chitwood, Port of Osceola Board Member Ray Fulmer, Port of Osceola Operator Jeff Worsham, Senator John Boozman's Program Director Gene Higginbotham, The Lawrence Group's Director of Economic Development Bevin Hunter, Caldwell and Nelson.





August 30th, 2021 - AWC Director Caldwell touring the dewatering of the David D. Terry Lock. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District conducted a dewatering maintenance operation at David D. Terry Lock and Dam near Scott, Ark. This was the first time this specific lock chamber had been dewatered since 2000. The lock was dewatered to inspect the structural integrity of underwater components, complete critical maintenance tasks and perform multiple other inspections. Maintenance is critical to ensure the lock stays operational. This year, approximately 10 million tons of commodities have passed through David D. Terry Lock and Dam.

David D. Terry Lock and Dam is part of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System which is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year.

September 21st, 2021 - The National Waterways Conference (NWC) in Baltimore, MD. AWC Director Caldwell represented Arkansas' navigable waterways. The NWC is the only national organization to advocate in favor of national policy and laws that recognize the vital importance of America's water resources infrastructure to our nation's well-being and quality of life. Established in 1960, NWC supports a sound balance between economic and human needs and environmental and ecological considerations.



November 3rd, 2021 - AWC Director Caldwell, stakeholders, and federal partners met with Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon to discuss priorities for the MKARNS.

AWC Director Caldwell, stakeholders, and federal partners met with Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon yesterday to discuss priorities for the MKARNS.

"Tulsa Ports is hosting Lt. Gen. Spellmon, USACE Commanding General and the 55th Chief of Engineers to discuss challenges and opportunities on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The 445-mile navigation system is managed by the Little Rock District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Tulsa District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers."

-U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division





# Meet the Staff



**Cassandra Caldwell, Director**

Cassandra Caldwell grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma. After graduating from high school, she served in the United States Navy. Following an honorable discharge from the service, she entered the workforce and began attending college. She earned Associate of Science degrees in Legal Studies and Biology. She went on to study Medical and Molecular Biology at Rogers State University.

Cassandra was named Director of the Arkansas Waterways Commission in February 2020. She previously served as an Administrative Programs Officer with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Waterways Program, where her passion for our nation's inland waterways was born. Prior to beginning a career in waterborne commerce, Cassandra spent several years in the medical field, working for a private practice physician. She also worked for many years as a corporate paralegal, with a strong focus on contracts, regulation and compliance, and business development.

Cassandra is a certified Inland Maritime Port Manager. She is a member of the International Association of Maritime and Port Executives. She serves on the Maritime Transportation Research and Education Center Board with the University of Arkansas, the National Waterways Conference Navigation Caucus, the Inland Rivers Ports and Terminals Board of Directors, and serves as the voting member for the State of Arkansas on the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials Council on Water Transportation. She also serves on the State Freight Advisory Committee.

Cassandra and her husband, Jon, collectively, have four children, one dog and two cats. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, hiking, kayaking, and listening to live music.

J. W. started working for the Arkansas Waterways Commission in October 2017. J.W. acquired a Bachelor of Arts Degree in mass communications and film production from Southern Arkansas University. After college, he started his own company, Misenheimer Media, a freelance production business that produces videography and photography for various clients. J.W.'s main duties include research, education, marketing and web development for the AWC. J.W. also manages the Arkansas Port, Intermodal, and Waterway Development Grant Program and works closely with grant applicants from ports and intermodal authorities throughout the process.

J.W. is an avid outdoorsman who enjoys hiking, kayaking, and camping. He is also a fitness fanatic who promotes health and wellness through the use of social media and group sessions.



**J.W. Misenheimer,  
Administrative Analyst**

**LaWanda Campbell,  
Business Operations**



First employed with Arkansas Waterways Commission as an Administrative Assistant in 2002, LaWanda retired after 35 years of service with the State of Arkansas In January 2016 as a Budget Operations Specialist. In October 2017, LaWanda returned to the Arkansas Waterways Commission to her former position.

LaWanda is a graduate of Alabama A & M University and Pulaski Technical College. She enjoys spending time with family and traveling.