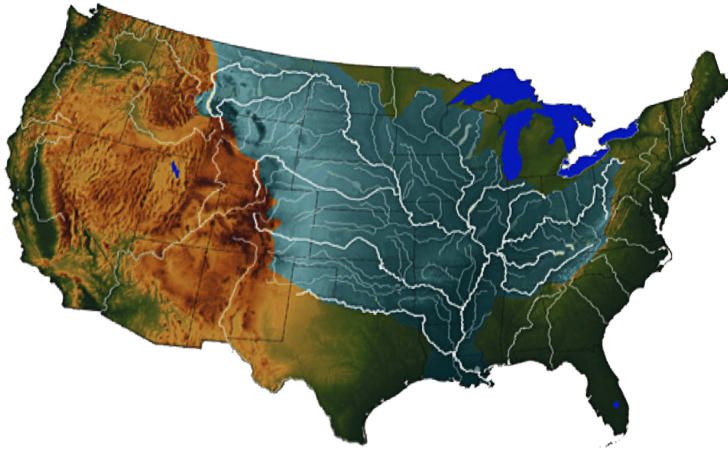


BIG RIVER COALITION



Sean M. Duffy, Sr.
Executive Director
4741 Utica Street, Suite 200
Metairie, LA 70006

Office (504) 833-4190 x 805
Cellular (504) 338-3165
sean.duffy@bigrivercoalition.org

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FULL FUNDING FLOATS ALL BOATS CAMPAIGN

The Full Funding Floats All Boats Campaign was created by the Big River Coalition to enhance the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley New Orleans (MVN) ability to maintain Congressionally authorized channel dimension on the Mississippi River Ship Channel (MRSC). The annual funding provided to the MVN for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) of the MRSC is insufficient and the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2020 of \$91,970,000 will again be inadequate to maintain authorized dimensions on the Ship Channel. The Big River Coalition requests the President's Budget Request be increased to a level of \$200,000,000 annually in an effort to promote trade, create jobs and enhance economic prosperity.

“Full Funding Floats All Boats” was designed to increase the MVN’s ability to maintain authorized channel dimensions of the MRSC. The Big River Coalition estimates that \$200 million in annual funding would enhance the MVN’s ability to restore and maintain Congressionally authorized channel dimensions:

A) SOUTHWEST PASS: Specifically, from the Venice Jump (Mile 11 Above Head of Passes - AHP) to the end of Southwest Pass (Mile 22 Below Head of Passes - BHP) at the Gulf of Mexico.

The MVN would be able to start each fiscal year (October) with two industry cutterhead dredges contracted in Southwest Pass to perform advanced channel maintenance before high river conditions and increased shoaling typically begin. The proposed level of funding is also sufficient to provide for approximately 6 industry hopper dredges (10-year average need) and the Ready Reserve Days on the Corps’ hopper dredge WHEELER to work throughout high water periods.

Southwest Pass is the top priority as the entrance and/or exit to the Mississippi River Ship Channel the nation’s most prolific waterway – **“the revolving door to international trade.”**

B) CROSSINGS ABOVE NEW ORLEANS: Specifically, from Baton Rouge (Mile 234 AHP) to New Orleans (Mile 115 AHP)

Fund all three dustpan dredges for up to five months with the option to also utilize a hopper dredge(s) from Southwest Pass.

C) NEW ORLEANS HARBOR:

Fund a cutterhead dredge to maintain the channel approaches to the Julia Street Cruise Terminal and City Front Wharves within the Port of New Orleans Harbor.

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D) HOPPER DREDGE DISPOSAL AREA (HDDA):

The HDDA is a critical channel maintenance project feature located at the Head of Passes where sediment removed from the Ship Channel by hopper dredges is placed. The Full Funding would be adequate for a cutterhead dredge to dredge out the disposal area at the HDDA. All material removed from the HDDA is beneficially used and each dredge contract creates 400 or more acres of wetlands in the environmentally sensitive birds'-foot delta.

E) FORESHORE ROCK and WINGDAM REPAIRS:

Provide funding to the MVN to perform maintenance to the water infrastructure features along the banks of Southwest Pass which are designed to protect the channel and reduce dredging costs. The repair of these maritime project features would occur in years requiring less dredges, such as in years without significant periods of elevated river stages.

The Mississippi River and Tributaries is undergoing changes related to more frequent highwater events caused by increased precipitation levels and the impacts of inadequate funding. Adaptive financial commitments are needed to modernize our fluid infrastructure. One metric that helps highlight this fact is that for the first time ever the Bonnet Carré Spillway has been operated twice in one year and also in back-to-back years (2018, 2019). The operation of the Bonnet Carré Spillway has now been required four times in the last four years (2016, 2018 and twice in 2019). The second opening in 2019 is the longest single opening in the history of this flood control structure (79 days of operation).

The MVN has been unable to maintain federally authorized channel dimensions on the Mississippi River Ship Channel and draft restrictions have been required every year since 2011 but 2013 and 2014. The Ship Channel was at reduced dimensions from January 31 to August 16 in 2019, during the most severe shoaling the controlling draft was 40 feet a loss of five feet. The federally authorized channel dimensions are a depth of 45 feet and width of 750 feet.

Shippers engaged in international trade are forced to move less cargo per ship by reducing vessel loading drafts to accommodate deficient channel dimensions. Light loading increases waterborne transportation costs impacting their economic competitiveness in world markets.

The **"Full Funding Float All Boats Campaign"** must be a multi-generational commitment to invest in the nation's water commerce infrastructure such as was completed by our national leaders after the Great Depression. There is no doubt the Mississippi River is changing, and our leadership must commit to remove the obstacles created by inadequate funding. Inadequate funding creates inadequate channels and directly impacts our ability to compete as a world economic power.

Sincerely,



Sean M. Duffy, Sr.
Executive Director

CC: Director Mick Mulvaney
Acting Director Russel Vought
The Honorable R.D. James