

*The Flow of Arkansas Waterways* is a joint publication of the Arkansas Waterways Association and the Arkansas Waterways Commission. It is published quarterly.

The Arkansas Waterways Association is comprised of private companies, corporations, and municipal, county and state agencies. It is dedicated to establishing Arkansas as a leader in waterborne transportation usage for economic development.

The Arkansas Waterways Commission is a state agency charged with protecting, promoting and developing the five navigable rivers of the state for commercial navigation. Those rivers are the Arkansas, Mississippi, Ouachita, Red and White Rivers.

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## White River Endangered?

### Parsing the American Rivers Pronouncement

A group called American Rivers recently made headlines by naming the White River one of the most endangered rivers in the U.S. The Washington, D.C.-based organization said two proposed projects on the White, the navigation improvement project and the Grand Prairie irrigation project, will cause the river to become "just another over-engineered barge channel and an over-taxed source of irrigation water."

Associations such as American Rivers survive on contributions from members and other sources such as foundations. To maintain the interest of their members and keep them sending in their dues, and to keep grant money flowing in, these groups rely on scare tactics, half-truths and misinformation.

A recent *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* article attributed American Rivers as critical of, "...a \$30 million plan to construct wing dikes along 250 miles of the lower river that would constrict its flow to scour out a nine-foot deep channel to support increased barge traffic." This over-generalized, exagger-

ated public statement requires responsible examination.

**Fact:** Final cost estimates haven't been released but a much lower estimate, perhaps \$20 million is possible. American Rivers conveniently fails to acknowledge that millions of dollars will be saved over time, because dredging will be greatly reduced.



**Fact:** While the wing dikes are planned along a 250 mile stretch of the river, only about 11 miles would actually be affected. These are known trouble spots that have to be repeatedly dredged in order to maintain a minimum 9-foot-deep navigation channel as authorized by the U.S. Congress.

**Fact:** The action of the wing dikes would simply speed up the river's flow at that location, and cause the sediment to be deposited on the opposite bank or in another location, instead of in the navigation channel. Experience with such dikes in other rivers has been that additional wildlife habitat is created where the relocated sediment builds up on the riverbank

adjacent to the dikes. The remaining 239 miles of river would not be affected.

**Fact:** Except in periods of very low water, the dikes would be submerged. They would not interfere with the natural flooding of wetlands and wildlife habitat. The dikes would not lower the

**(see FACTS on page  
6)**

The third phase of the **Little Rock Port Authority's** slackwater harbor development project will begin this spring. Bids were opened March 26, 2002 in the Port office for the road embankment phase of the project. Gattis Excavating, Inc. of Little Rock was awarded the project. Construction is expected to begin in May and continue through early fall. This phase of the project will connect Slackwater Harbor Drive to the new, now existing road, which was funded by the city of Little Rock. The road will extend Frazier Pike to the harbor and onto Industrial Harbor Drive.

**Senator Tim Hutchinson, Senator Blanche Lincoln and Congressman Vic Snyder** have taken great interest and leadership in securing Department of Transportation funding for this project. This funding was crucial in the completion of the infrastructure development of the slackwater harbor. It will make this area a premiere location for industrial development.

## From Barry McKuin Arkansas Waterways Commission Chairman

I wonder how many Americans are aware that the Mississippi River Valley flood control project, authorized by Congress is only 87 percent complete. This is the congressional authorization that built the McClellan/Kerr waterway, the system of locks and dams that made the Arkansas River navigable from the Mississippi River to Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Often overlooked is the benefit of flood control that the system brings. In 1927, a massive, devastating flood cost hundreds of lives and many millions of dollars in property damage, inundating thousands of square miles of land. The Mississippi Valley flood control project was authorized in response to that flood and the prospect of it recurring.

The project includes the Mississippi River and its tributaries including the Arkansas River. Construction on the McClellan/Kerr

waterway was begun after World War II and the waterway was opened for navigation to Tulsa in the early 1970's. Now, more time has passed since the waterway has been completed, as it took to build it.

It's a safe bet that many who pass over the many bridges that cross it, or boat on the lakes or fish in the river itself, may not be aware of the river before the Corps of Engineers transformed it. Instead of alternately, a wide, sandy riverbed or a raging, uncontrolled torrent, the Arkansas River now provides recreation, world-class sport fishing, water for environmentally friendly power generation and other uses, in addition to a navigable waterway whose promise is only partially realized today.

But now, before the project as originally envisioned by Congress is complete, the Corps of Engineers struggles annually

for adequate funding to merely maintain the river and its structures, let alone move toward completion of the project.

The Arkansas Waterways Commission and Arkansas Waterways Association were recently represented in Washington by a group of us, for the purpose of updating our Congressional delegation on the funding needs of our navigable rivers. We received a positive response from both senators and our four congressmen.

But there is more that we need to do to ensure the future of these valuable resources. The more we can educate our children, and by extension their parents, and the general public about the enormous value of our rivers, the greater the chance the rivers will fulfill their potential to make Arkansas an even better place to live and prosper.



**Members of the Arkansas Waterways Association and staff of the Arkansas Waterways Commission and others interested in**

**waterways issues met with Rep. Marion Berry on a recent trip to Washington to update the Arkansas congressional**

**delegation on the needs of the waterborne transportation industry. Pictured (l to r) are Frank Ivey, executive director, Arkansas Waterways Assoc; Barry McKuin, chairman, Arkansas Waterways Commission; Jack M. Long, Jr., gen mgr., LSI Inc, Little Rock; Paul Latture, executive director, Port of Little Rock; Harvey Joe Sanner, president, Arkansas Waterways Assoc.; Rep. Marion Berry; Phyllis Harden and Scott McGeorge, Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel; Wally Gieringer, chairman, Arkansas River Basin Interstate Committee; and Keith Garrison, executive director, Arkansas Waterways Commission.**

## Repeating a lie can't make it the truth

Recently, East Central Arkansians have been exposed to a prime example of the danger that misguided “do-gooders” drunk on misinformation can cause our region. Forces outside the borders of Arkansas ventured into the state and waged war on honest, hard working rural and farm families under the guise of being

protectors of the environment, our environment.

A group calling itself American Rivers, without the benefit of an environmental impact statement, has chosen to list the White River as an “endangered” river. They claim that the White River Navigation Improvement Project poses a threat to the river, yet there is no scientific data supporting their contention. On the other hand, the WRNIP research has resulted in an exhaustive study that is near completion. This research has proven that economic benefits will result from the project without any harm to the river. In fact the WRNIP offers opportunities for environmental enhancements.

American Rivers has declined invitations from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to participate in the study process and share data. The Memphis District Corps of Engineers is the agency charged by Congress to investigate the feasibility of the WRNIP. The study process is very complex and inclusive. It employs the most qualified professionals who use the most modern methods and it is far more credible than critics of the Corps will admit.

The word “endangered” represents the inflammatory language used by American Rivers. The question they can't

answer is how the WRNIP will “endanger” the White River. The two species that I see as being “endangered” by American Rivers is the truth and the families that live in the White River basin.

They claim they want to “save” the White River, yet they

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can't say what they are “saving” it from. The word “save” implies that they are acting out of nobility. Noble folks don't use such tactics. If the “savers” were confident in their position they would be a part of the open study process and raise their concerns in that setting. Their refusal to participate while attacking those using science to determine the environmental impact of this project, reveals a less than honorable approach. It is also worthy to note that those with extreme views always find the Corps officials conveniently absent when they attack them. It's always easier to criticize someone when they aren't there to defend themselves; of course it indicates a cowardice in the critics.

Those of us who live, work, love and die in the White River basin have far more at stake in the river's future than the modern day carpet baggers who drift into town to inflame, confuse and then leave. Our efforts to improve our communities can't develop and construct projects by relying on fact-deficit rhetoric like that offered by American Rivers. We have to prove and prove again the positives and deal factually with all the negatives, real and imagined.

So, our job is tougher and it's made unnecessarily so by the arrogance of outsiders who claim

to have a monopoly on all natural resources. If there ever should be a call to arms for the White River Basin residents, it should be this latest effort headed by elitists whose mission is to dominate our lives, farms, businesses and ultimately the elimination of opportunities for our children and

grandchildren in this part of Arkansas.

They may argue that de-

population of rural areas is not on their agenda but they can't argue that depopulation won't result if their agenda is advanced. The biggest misrepresentation being promoted by these groups is that they are concerned for White River basin citizens and that eco-tourism should be our economic salvation. A bait shop every 30 miles does not an economy make.

The eco-tourism facade is a cruel trick and parallels the dishonesty in their claims of environmental damage the WRNIP would cause. Their claims were not true when they were made, before the study got underway and they are not true today. We have the facts to prove them wrong. That should tell the story about who you can trust. We, the project sponsors, have not lied. The opponents seem to have no reservations about spreading untruths.

Hopefully soon, the outrageous claims of the project opponents will have to meet the facts of the completed environmental impact statement head on and when it happens the carpet-baggers from Washington D.C., Austin, Texas or Little Rock, AR, can go off to fight another battle against rural folks elsewhere who are still committed to honesty and integrity in their efforts to improve their livelihood.

**This article appeared in the April 22, 2002 edition of Arkansas Business**

The Little Rock Port Terminal Operator, Logistics Services, Inc., reports February tonnage is up more than 60 percent from February 2001.

This follows an increase of near 30 percent over the previous year that the Port of Little Rock experienced in January.

The marked increase can be attributed to the additional aggregate tonnage secured in the fourth quarter of last year. The influx of steel products was also a contributing factor. Wood chips also accounted for a portion of the significant tonnage increase.

Logistics Services General Manager **Jack Long** said, “We're off to a good start this year and we predict further growth in additional new business.

Construction of the slackwater harbor area with new roads, rail service and a new dock facility will help meet the increased activity.

The Little Rock Port Authority's Board of directors has released the first-ever directory of businesses in the Little

Rock Port Authority.

This book includes all industries in the industrial park, photos of the industry, a brief description of the business, and the primary contact for each business.

The new directory will be used by companies in the park and as a marketing tool by the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce, the Port Authority and local leaders as new business and industry are recruited into the industrial park and Central Arkansas.

Port Authority Chairman **Gary Barket** said, "We are very pleased with the new publication and anticipate the directory will serve as a tool for future growth and development in this area. As the slackwater harbor projects are completed and come on line, the Directory will help showcase the type of industry we have in the Port of Little Rock which employs more than 3,000 people."

For more information on Little Rock Port Authority projects, contact **Paul Latture**, Little Rock Port Authority executive

## Long-Awaited Barge Trip gives new

By **Harvey Joe Sanner**  
President, AWA

**M**id-January of this year afforded me an experience that I've wished for many times — I rode a towboat on the White River.

The boat, the Murray L. II, is operated by the Augusta Barge Company, headquartered at our sister city on the river, Augusta, Ark. It was leaving Des Arc near day-break with two loaded barges filled with grain sorghum (milo) from the Bunge North America Elevator. Each barge held 60,000 bushels or nearly 1,800 tons of grain. Each barge weighs as much as 350 tons empty weight. The boat weighs 110 tons. That totals near 4,410 tons of grain, steel, fuel, a crew and one guest passenger, me.

The pilot is a 25-year riverboat experienced modern day Mark Twain. His name is **Richard Vardaman** of Georgetown, Ark., another upriver sister city of Des Arc. Richard has spent his career on the White and Mississippi Rivers. The White River doesn't have navigational aides, like buoys or other methods, to mark the channel location.

Pilots like Richard have to rely a great deal on their knowledge of the river and the capabilities of their vessel. On this particular day, the White River had fallen to below a 10-foot reading on the Des Arc gage. So, the Murray L II, was pushing a

two-barge tow to a site below DeValls Bluff where deeper water is found. The barges were then tied off and the boat returned to Des Arc to retrieve two more loaded milo barges to be lashed to the two tied below De Valls Bluff for a four barge tow that would then travel to Rosedale, Miss. on the Mississippi River. From there, a larger towboat, perhaps pushing as many as 40 barges, travels to New Orleans. That is right, a tow of 40 loaded barges can be seen on the Mississippi. If you don't believe me, you can ask **Buddy Bell** and **Bill Bethell**, two Des Arc natives who have traveled the Mississippi and other great American rivers many times in the wheelhouse of a towboat.

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**The math on a 40-barge tow is mind boggling. In round numbers, the bushels would equal what the huge Bunge grain tank at Des Arc would hold, roughly two and one-quarter million bushels!**

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The math on a 40-barge tow is mind boggling. In round numbers, the bushels would equal what the huge Bunge grain tank at Des Arc would hold, roughly two and

one-quarter million bushels! Or, if hauled on trucks, the tow would equal 2400 loaded grain trucks. With the river being fairly low, and the two-barge tow being one barge in front of the other, the length of the barges and boat were longer than the river is wide in some bends. It was masterful the way Richard maneuvered those many tons around those narrow bends. With that much weight moving downstream, the pilot must prepare long before he reaches an obstacle, like a bend or a bridge. Second chances aren't available to these guys. As the tow enters a sharp bend, the pilot steers and powers the boat so that the river itself helps him follow the channel and as all those tons are moved along by the river's current, the pilot then increases power and brings his boat around the bend. I never thought about a 5,510-ton load being graceful but it was like a water ballet! It made me want to dance. This scene gets repeated several times between Des Arc and DeValls Bluff in the four-hour ride.

Not too many miles downstream from Des Arc, not long after sunup, a beautiful mature Bald Eagle flew near the boat and lit in a tree. It doesn't matter how many times I see one of these birds, I am impressed. The feathers on its head and near its tail were as white as

# Appreciation of Arkansas' Waterways

cotton. A few more miles downstream, a younger eagle, whose head and tail feathers aren't white yet, flew across

satisfy the needs of millions. I hope God will also bless the towboats and their crews for the contribution they make to

and the lighted White River Bridge is a tribute to the citizens of Des Arc for recognizing the potential of the river to forever provide pleasure, economic benefits and a general appreciation of nature. Some day, we could see much more activity on the river. Hopefully, excursion boats will one day provide opportunities for many to see the eagles, deer, ducks, geese and other wildlife common to the White River. This could be done in harmony with the commercial barge traffic, individual pleasure boaters, skiers and fishermen. A dependable, year-round river flowing from the heart of Arkansas to ports of the world is possible. It is possible to have all these things if our hearts are pure and our respect for the river is revered and enhanced as we learn more about its role in our heritage and our daily lives.

My riverboat trip, although short, was very enjoyable and I'm grateful to **Bob Brannon** of Augusta Barge for allowing me to impose. I'm serving as president of the Arkansas Waterways Association and it was at my request that he granted me time aboard the Murray L II. Furthering my personal education regarding water borne transportation was my excuse for asking Bob. But the whole truth is, I knew it would be fun too.



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**Passing under the Interstate 40 Bridge while watching the volume of truck traffic is another amazing site. God bless truckers, for without them our world would stop. The goods they move everyday, all day and all night long, satisfy the needs of millions. It takes all modes to make a strong country. Shipping some commodities by water isn't very feasible. However, when it is feasible, water borne transportation saves money, fuel, labor, protects the environment and eases crowding on our highways.**

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the river and lit in a tree. Then another mature Bald Eagle lit near it and scared it away. Then we could see why. The younger eagle was clutching his prey as he escaped the bigger bird by flying back across the river and landing in a tree on the other bank. His breakfast looked to be a pretty good-sized fish and he was smart enough and quick enough to avoid sharing with the older bird.

Passing under the Interstate 40 bridge while watching the volume of truck traffic is another amazing site. God bless truckers, for without them our world would stop. The goods they move everyday, all day and all night long,

the overall transportation system this nation enjoys. It takes all modes to make a strong country. Shipping some commodities by water isn't very feasible. However, when it is feasible, water-borne transportation saves money, fuel, labor, protects the environment and eases crowding on our highways.

Moving along the White River on a towboat gives one an appreciation of this great resource. Our very history and heritage in this region of Arkansas is owed to the river. It is why and how the first Des Arc citizens came to be here. Comments from those aboard the towboat and others about the Riverfront Park, Dondie's Restaurant

director, 501-490-1468 or send e-mail to him at paul@littlerockport.com

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Growth also continues in the *Camden Port Authority*. During the steamboat's heyday in the mid-1800's, Camden was a bustling river port shipping tons of export cotton south to New Orleans.

Today a revitalized river tradition continues and is growing again around Ouachita County with the Camden Port Authority commanding a leadership position to stimulate commerce. With a combination of local, state and federal resources including a \$1.9 million EDA grant coupled with a \$250,000 EPA grant, the Port Authority's warehousing and light industrial district will soon occupy more than 70 new acres contiguous to the current site. The "Adams Street/Port of Camden Brownfields Pilot Project" is a one-of-a-kind redevelopment and revitalization model for the nation that will be reported on in future newsletters.

**(FACTS, from page 1)**

water level of the river.

**Facts:** The dike project would:

- < Not create cutoffs
- < Not harm duck hunting
- < Not change the current flow of the river
- < Not harm the White or Cache River Wildlife Refuges
- < Not drain wetlands
- < Not withdraw water from the river
- < Not change the alignment of the river

**Facts:** The dike project would:

- < Save millions of dollars in dredging costs.
- < Produce an enhanced economic benefit to a 24-county area of eastern Arkansas where population losses and unemployment are among the highest in the nation

< Make the White River available for year round reliable, commercial navigation, at a time of decreasing rail service and congested highways

< Save farmers 10-to-30 cents per bushel in transporting crops

< Bring fertilizer and fuel oil to farmers, feed to the poultry industry, scrap iron in and finished steel products out, all at greatly reduced transportation costs

It's important to remember that river transportation helps hold down rail transportation rates through competition. River transportation helps economic



developers attract industries that use barge transportation—industries which typically pay higher-than-average wages.

Enhanced river transportation is not done at the expense of wildlife habitat or environmental concerns. Rather, these concerns are integrated into any river navigation plan.

River transportation is the safest, most environmentally friendly transportation mode. Its utilization can mean reduced highway congestion since one river barge can carry the equivalent of 60 tractor-trailer loads.



## *Come Join Us for . . .*

### *The annual Arkansas Governor's Conference on Waterborne Transportation*



**When:** August 7-9, 2002

**Where:** Little Rock's DoubleTree Hotel

**What:** Relevant topics, excellent speakers, an Arkansas River dinner cruise and time to meet with people who share your interest in waterways

*Hosts: The Arkansas Waterways Association, Arkansas Waterways Commission and Little Rock District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

**Mark your calendar now!**

**Registration information will be distributed in June**

# Justice joins commission, McKuin elected chairman

Governor **Mike Huckabee** recently appointed **Travis Justice** of Little Rock, senior economist for the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation, to a seven-year term on the Arkansas Waterways Commission as an at-large commissioner.

His areas of emphasis at the Farm Bureau include analysis and implications of state and federal tax issues, foreign trade and economic impact analyses of agricultural public policy issues. He has been with the Farm Bureau since 1974.

Justice is active in the Arkansas Beef Council, Farm and Ranch Club of Arkansas and the American Agricultural Law Association.

A native of southwest Oklahoma, Justice received both his bachelors and master degrees in agricultural economics from Oklahoma State University.

“We are excited about the areas of expertise that Justice brings to the Commission and look forward to working with him during his term,” said **Keith Garrison**, executive director of

the Arkansas Waterways Commission.

In addition, the Commission has elected **Barry McKuin** of Morrilton, president of the Morrilton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Arkansas Waterways Commissioner for the Arkansas River, for a one-year term as chairman for the Commission.

The Commission is comprised of seven commissioners appointed by the Governor for staggered seven-year terms.

## Maynard completes long service to Waterways Commission

**Colonel Charles Maynard**, of Little Rock, completed his term as a commissioner with the Arkansas Waterways Commission in January. He had served as a commissioner for a total of 21 years with appointments made by Governors **Nelson Rockefeller**, **Bill Clinton** and **Jim Guy Tucker**. He

served as an at-large commissioner during his tenure.

Because of his unique knowledge of Arkansas waterways, Col. Maynard was an invaluable resource to the commission. He is considered an authority on the state’s waterway system and was dedicated to promoting and

protecting the system for the economic benefit of all Arkansas residents.

He regards obtaining reauthorization of funding for the Montgomery Point Lock and Dam project as the most important issue he worked on during his

**(See Maynard, page 8)**

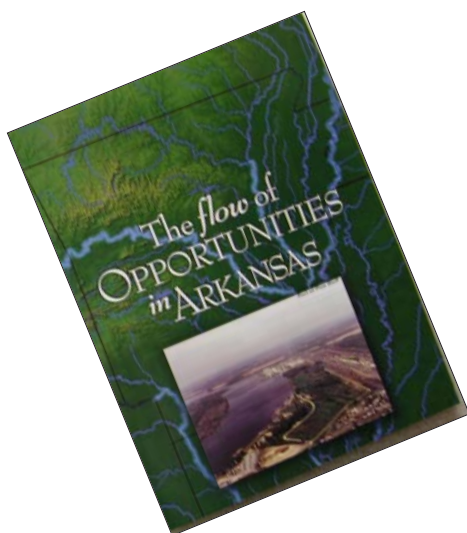
## Updated Arkansas Waterways Commission Brochure Available

### *Colorful piece showcases Arkansas’ unique resource*

The Arkansas Waterways Commission brochure, “The Flow of Opportunities in Arkansas” has been updated and reprinted.

The brochure showcases Arkansas’ unique inland waterway system, which can help industry reduce transportation, and, thus, overall production costs. It includes maps of both the state’s more than 1,000 miles of navigable rivers and intermodel connections; and Arkansas resources and products which can or do use waterborne transportation. Cost comparisons in relation to other forms of transportation, a primer on forms of transportation used on the rivers and general information about the waterway industry is also included.

More than \$2.4 billion worth of cargo is moved annually on Arkansas water-



ways. With improvements to rivers and ports, the potential for growth in this area is virtually unlimited. The waterways present an attractive economic alternative to heavy industry in transporting goods. Arkansas is one of only 24 states that share this unique resource of inland waterways.

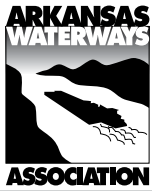
“The Flow of Opportunities in Arkansas” was produced in cooperation with the Arkansas Department of Economic Development. Thanks to ADED for production of the brochure and coordination of printing. If you’d like a copy of the brochure, contact the Arkansas Waterways Commission at 501- 682-1173.



## Arkansas Waterways Commission

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### **(MAYNARD, from page 7)**

service as a commissioner.

Col. Maynard's unique waterways perspective comes from his long military career. He served on active duty for 24 years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers before retiring in 1965. Following graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1941, he earned a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering from Harvard in 1947 and over the course of his military career earned two additional masters degrees; one in mathematics

and another in International Affairs.

His military career as a professional engineer took him around the world. He had wartime duty in New Guinea and the Philippines as well as assignments in Iceland and Europe.

His final assignment was as District Engineer, Little Rock Engineer District. In that position, he was responsible for the design and construction of the Arkansas River Multiple Purpose project (McClellan-Kerr Navigation System). This included 13 locks and dams

and related navigational features. He was also in charge of design and construction of Greers Ferry Dam and Beaver Dam and work done on Bull Shoals Dam. In addition, he had responsibility for operations of Norfolk, Nimrod, Clear Water and Blue Mountain Dams. He supervised a staff of 1,300 employees that included some 700 registered engineers. He remains the only former Little Rock District Engineer currently living in the state.

Commissioner **Ralph McDonald**, chairman of the

Waterways Commission during Col. Maynard's last year of service and a longtime fellow commissioner said, "The Commission appreciates Col. Maynard's service. He was the voice of knowledge and expertise on the Commission for many years. His knowledge and counsel was extremely beneficial to the Commission's mission. We will miss both his expertise and friendship."

