

**Welcome to Honorable John P. Woodley, Jr,
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works**

23 April 2008

Mr Woodley, on behalf of your Great Lakes stakeholders, thank you for coming to Chicago. This city was born from its location as a meeting point of the Great Lakes and the western rivers, and water transportation remain essential to this region's economy.

Reviewing the principal routes of Great Lakes shipping, approximately 90% by mileage use the shipping lanes as the glaciers left them. The nation has entrusted the improvement and maintenance of the remaining 10% - the harbors, dredged connecting channels, and the Soo Locks - to the able hands of the Army Corps of Engineers. This is tremendous route leverage – maintain 10%, get 90% free – and the utilization of this leverage for the low cost transportation of millions of tons of bulk material is essential to this nation's industrial might and standard of living.

There is another kind of leverage that is a fundamental in water transportation but is worthy of focus for its own sake in today's energy strapped, carbon conscious environment: fuel consumption vs. other modes. Great Lakes ships use 1/3rd to 1/5th the horsepower to propel a ton of cargo vs rail, and 1/60th that of

trucks. The consequences of diminishing Great Lakes shipping capacity due to harbor and channel maintenance issues are the diversion to other modes, with a consequence of the multiplication of fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The partnership and communication between the Corps of Engineers and Great Lakes stakeholders has never been stronger, and this meeting is one manifestation of that partnership. The need to retire the backlog of dredging and maintenance projects, and plan for improvements, has never been more clearly illustrated than in the impact of budget-squabble induced deferments on the capacity of Lake shipping in recent years, and its impact on Lake shippers. We need to continue to translate this partnership into action to recover from these deferments and plan for improvements.

America has no sustainable strength without economic strength. The Army Corps of Engineers' tasks that enable commercial navigation of the Great Lakes are essential to that strength. We ask and thank you for your continued help in keeping us Army Strong.

Thank you,

Daniel J. Cornillie
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