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DistrictDigest

Chickamauga Lock Replacement Project work restarts

Posted 4/25/2016

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Nashville District Public Affairs

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (April 25, 2016) – The Chickamauga Lock Replacement Project restarted today with official fanfare as a \$3.1 million cofferdam stabilization project got underway.

Congressman Chuck Fleischmann, Tennessee 3rd District, met with industry leaders, toured the lock and addressed the media about the significance of the resumption of work, the first construction since the physical completion of the coffer dam in 2012.

"This is the restart of the new Chickamauga Lock," Fleischmann said. "Today we are not only going to begin the reopening, the rebuilding of the great new lock, we are going to have a renaissance in America. And that renaissance and rebirth is going to be a 'can do' attitude. It will show our citizens what we can do when we come together with the right goals, with the right hearts, with optimism to get things done."

The Congressman noted positive changes taken to address funding limitations associated with the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, which includes fixing its revenue generation and distribution policy. He also thanked Senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, industry leaders, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and others for partnering to secure the project's position for funding so that the Corps of Engineers and TVA are able to simultaneously maintain the aging and antiquated old lock while building the larger new lock.

Photos

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Congressman Chuck Fleischmann, Tennessee District 3, addresses the media about the cofferdam stabilization project and the restart of work on the new Chickamauga Lock on the Tennessee River in Chattanooga, Tenn., April 25, 2016. Lt. Col. Stephen Murphy, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District commander, also made comments about the status of the project. (Photo by Lee Roberts)

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Lt. Col. Stephen Murphy, Nashville District commander, also lauded the legislative action in 2014 that improved the funding stream for navigation construction projects, which resulted in the coffer dam stabilization contract being awarded to Rembco Geotechnical Contractors Inc., in Knoxville, Tenn.

"We're very excited to be back on site performing active construction," Murphy said. "They will be improving the coffer dam by placing grout along the outer perimeter of the coffer cells you see here today. This is the last step to ensure that future contractors will be working in the dry."

Murphy said the design for this project is complete and "shovel ready." Given efficient funding, the new lock could be completed and able to lock vessels as early as 2022. Final work on the project would extend into 2023, he added.

The congressman said it's important to the region for the Corps of Engineers to get back to work and that he is ready to continue working on behalf of his constituents to keep the project on track.

"When we open the new Chickamauga Lock it's going to be incredible. It's going to be important for our Inland Waterway Transportation System, the jobs that it will create, the suppliers... it's just going to be truly an outstanding new lock," Fleischmann said. "And it will serve our area perhaps for decades to come. Let us celebrate today. Let us look forward to a better tomorrow. And let's build Chick Lock and let it be one of the finest locks in our country."

Chickamauga Lock remains one of the most important current construction projects in the Corps because it is so critical to the economy, commerce, and recreation in East Tennessee. If the current lock were to close prior to completion of the replacement lock, the direct impact would be closure of 318 miles of river and associated movement of an estimated one million tons of traffic a year upstream of Chattanooga.

Adam Walker, Nashville District project manager, said Chickamauga Lock supports not only commercial traffic, but also the recreating public.

"On the Tennessee River it's the most active lock for recreational vessels," Walker said. "In 2015 they locked over 3,300 at this lock alone. There's a lot of industry up stream that we would cut off in the event the old lock had to be taken out of service prior to the new lock coming online."

Walker had the opportunity to give a project update to industry leaders and to join the commander and congressman on a tour of the project. He said the current work to insert grout into the coffer cells will help make the coffer dam water tight for future excavation.

The Nashville District plans to award a three-year-long contract in September 2016 to begin lock excavation, which will prepare the site for future lock construction.



The Tennessee Valley Authority completed construction of Chickamauga Lock and Dam in 1940. With a single chamber measuring 60-by-360 feet, the lock has since experienced structural problems resulting from alkali aggregate reaction between the alkali in the cement and the rock aggregate, which results in a physical expansion of concrete structures. Even with costly advanced maintenance procedures, the concrete expansion threatens the structural integrity of the lock and limits its life span.

With significant annual maintenance, Chickamauga Lock has frequent and lengthy lock outages as a result of downtime for repairs. Up to now, Corps maintenance crews have kept the lock open as the concrete continues to expand and hinder operations.

The current lock chamber is also incompatible with today's towing equipment resulting in longer than normal tow-processing times. When the new 110-by-600-foot lock is funded and completed, it is expected to speed up the process of locking through, and would process up to nine jumbo barges in one lockage.

(For more news, updates and information please follow the Nashville District on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/nashvillecorps> and Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/nashvillecorps>.)

Adam Walker Chattanooga Chickamauga Chickamauga Dam Chickamauga Lock Chuck Fleischmann coffer dam Commander congressman Congressman Chuck Fleischmann construction corps Corps of Engineers district engineer Fleischmann lock locks Lt. Col. Stephen Murphy

Murphy  Nashville District  navigation  project manager  stabilization  Stephen Murphy  Tennessee 
Tennessee River  U.S. Army  Walker

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