

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 50th Legislature (2005)

HOUSE
RESOLUTION 1042

By: Rousselot

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution recognizing the importance of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System; expressing support for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed project; memorializing the United States Congress to support the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed project; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System is vital to commerce and industry in Oklahoma and the surrounding region by providing a waterway from the Gulf of Mexico to as far north as the Port of Catoosa; and

WHEREAS, there are over Four Billion Dollars in private investment on port and terminal facilities along the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System; and

WHEREAS, there are over 85 water dependent industries located within, and actively using, the public and private ports along the system; and

WHEREAS, these industries provide 5,000 jobs for Oklahomans with the attendant payroll; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed project of deepening the channel will add to the viability of the system and improve the shipping services for these industries; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposal to deepen portions of the Arkansas River Navigation System to 12 feet up from its minimum of nine feet will make shipping more efficient at Oklahoma and Arkansas ports; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed action will enhance commercial navigation on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, while maintaining the other project purposes of flood control, recreation, hydropower, water supply and fish and wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, 85% of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System is already 12 feet deep, only a portion of the system prevents larger barge loads from entering all Oklahoma ports; and

WHEREAS, the Army Corps of Engineers' proposed plan would save shippers Twenty-two Million Dollars a year; and

WHEREAS, deeper channels in the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System would allow shipping companies to optimize the greater depth to ship larger quantities per barge and achieve the economics of greater volume as well as positive environmental effects; and

WHEREAS, increasing the barge load will reduce the amount of fuel used by more barges with smaller loads; and

WHEREAS, the deeper channel will reduce congestion caused by the load limits on barges in the current shallow channel; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma does not have the highway infrastructure to manage the larger loads that barges would be able to carry in a deeper channel; and

WHEREAS, the larger loads carried by barges in waterways and their fuel use could not compare with the diesel fuel emissions that semitrailers drawn by truck-tractor types would produce carrying the same tonnage on Oklahoma roads; and

WHEREAS, environmental quality of the system is important and the project includes notching over 250 dikes and revetments, opening more than 30 backwater and side channels, and creating over 30 Least Tern islands making it one of the largest aquatic habitat creation projects ever completed in Oklahoma and Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, the dredging of sediments to deepen the channel would be deposited on the banks of tributaries of the backwaters and other waters in the system, enhancing the wildlife habitats in these ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation has done much to deepen the channel; and

WHEREAS, the project is analogous with the vision of the citizens of the City of Tulsa and Rogers County as well as the citizens of Muskogee City and County to develop public ports within their communities; and

WHEREAS, Congress has authorized the deepening of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System; and

WHEREAS, the benefit and cost analysis of the project and the significant contributions to the environment confirm what Congress believed when they authorized the twelve-foot channel; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma State House of Representatives recognizes the significance of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System and its contribution to Oklahoma's economy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 50TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the members of Oklahoma House of Representatives express their support for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed improvements to the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.

THAT the Oklahoma House of Representatives calls upon the United States Congress to assist in the completion of the Army Corps of Engineers' proposed project to deepen the entire McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System to 12 feet.

THAT copies of this resolution be distributed to the members of the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation, the Project Manager of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Little Rock District, the

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Waterways Branch Manager and
the Port of Catoosa Director.

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