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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**USACE IWR Briefs OMB on Working Draft Report for  
Port and Inland Waterways Modernization: Options for the Future**

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. On April 12, USACE Institute for Water Resources (IWR) Director Robert Pietrowsky and report study lead Keith Hofseth accompanied staff from USACE Headquarters and Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) to brief the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the status and way forward of the draft report examining options for future modernization for U.S. port and inland waterways. Congress had instructed IWR to report to Congress on how it should address the critical needs to accommodate *post-Panamax* vessels, and IWR released its working draft report on April 2.

During the April 12 briefing to OMB, Mr. Hofseth covered the study purpose and objectives, current schedule and status, and the preliminary findings based on the working draft that was provided for comment. Several questions and comments by OMB focused on their interest in the cost implications associated with the anticipated deployment of future *Post-Panamax* vessels to U.S. destination trade routes and the cascading effects of the displacement of current "mega-ships" by the next generation of future vessels. OMB specified they would review the draft report further and provide feedback to USACE-IWR.

**About the Working Draft Report**

Congress asked that the report consider: costs associated with deepening and widening deep-draft harbors; the ability of the waterways and ports to enhance the nation's export initiatives benefitting the agricultural and manufacturing sectors; the current and projected population trends that distinguish regional ports and ports that are immediately adjacent to population centers; the availability of inland intermodal access; and environmental impacts resulting from the modernization of inland waterways and deep-draft ports.

This early draft of the report has components that are still in progress. It includes a draft executive summary to show stakeholders the direction the report authors are taking based on research to date. It incorporates information from activities and outreach efforts that were already underway and begins to incorporate feedback from discussions held through listening sessions and other venues over the last few weeks. The draft report considers the perspectives of shippers, carriers, ports, environmental interests, state and Federal agencies, and other interested parties as well as taking a national view.

Because of the broad stakeholder interest in these options, IWR is committed to conducting its investigation and communicating the findings in a transparent and accessible manner. IWR collected comments on the draft through April 18 including holding a listening session webinar on April 13. For more information on previous listening sessions and comments, visit the study website at <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/portandwaterways/>.

**Next Steps**

The preliminary report continues development and will ultimately be reviewed by USACE Headquarters and the Executive Branch prior to being transmitted to Congress in June 2012. The study team is headed by Technical Director Keith Hofseth, Study Manager Kevin Knight, and Communications and Public Engagement Lead Hal Cardwell, all of IWR.

**Learn More**

For more information, visit <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/portandwaterways/>.