The Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association (GICA) represents a broad spectrum of over 200 members who do business on, and have interests in, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). The GIWW is a 1300 mile inland system of channels and tributaries spanning the U.S. Gulf from St. Marks, FL to Brownsville, TX. It provides a safe, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation route for the movement of goods between Gulf Coast ports and major industrial center, both coastal and inland.

GICA is focused on ensuring the GIWW is protected, operated, maintained and improved to provide the safest, most efficient and environmentally sound water transportation route possible. GICA acts as the voice of the industry, speaking on behalf of waterway users to the USACE and USCG on issues related to GIWW operations.

The GIWW is a key part of the nation’s maritime transportation system. Its continued operation is necessary to ensure that critical cargoes flow to and from Gulf coast ports, chemical plants, refineries, power producers and manufacturers. The GIWW offers distinct economic and environmental benefits and contributes to the health of the U.S. economy and our country’s viability in the competitive global marketplace.

**Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) Lock Replacement Project**

- The IHNC lock is a key link in the GIWW. Through this lock flow approximately one third of the entire cargoes transiting the GIWW. This translates to about 30 million tons of petroleum products, chemicals, crude materials (rock sand aggregate), machinery, manufactured goods and coal.
- Cargoes flowing through the lock travel the inland waterways system to all Gulf Coast states as well as inland ports in Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Pennsylvania and West Virginia and Iowa. Closures for mechanical breakdowns, storm damages and preventative maintenance force shippers to other transportation modes – primarily trucks and rail. Unfortunately, these modes are less efficient, add traffic to our already congested and overtaxed interstate roadways, and significantly increase CO2 emissions. For example:
  - One 15-barge tow’s carrying capacity equals 216 rail cars and 6 locomotives or 1,050 tractor trailer trucks.
  - Barges can move one ton of cargo 576 miles per gallon of fuel. A rail car would move the same ton of cargo 413 miles, and a truck only 155 miles.
  - In terms of CO2 produced per ton of cargo moved, inland barges have a significant advantage over trains and trucks. Barges produce 19.3 tons CO2/million ton-miles; rail produces 26.9; and trucks produce 71.6.

- This 86-year old lock, narrow, outdated, and a bottle neck to commerce is long overdue for replacement. The replacement project was authorized in WRDAs 1976, 1986, 1996. The current remaining costs to complete a replacement project are $892M. Recent efforts by the Inland Waterways Users Board (IWUB) to accelerate and improve the Inland Maritime Transportation System (IMTS) Capital Investment Strategy recommended prioritizing capital projects, outlined an improved cost sharing and revenue plan (including a 30%-45% fuel tax increase on the towing industry) and implementing USACE process improvements for managing the inland waterways system.
- If adopted, these changes would result in the IHNC replacement project being funded sooner, and the project actively resumed in 2021 instead of being pushed out to 2029. Additionally, key structures in the Mississippi River and Ohio River systems would be renovated / replaced in a timelier manner. Unfortunately, current politics have resulted in the recommendations being rejected by the Administration and presently there is no clear way ahead for replacement of the structure.

GICA fully supports the recommendations presented by the IWUB and continues to work with other trade organizations involved in the waterways industries to advocate for this much needed overhaul, and ultimately, for the replacement of this key GIWW structure.