

The Newsletter of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission



2024 Vol 3 (issue #18)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



I hope everyone has been enjoying their summer. Quite a lot has been happening since our last issue of The Newsflow. One important topic is the removal of the Elizabeth Dam on the Monongahela River. We will be providing an update on that. Our guest for 3 Rivers, 3 Questions is Commander Justin Jolley of the US Coast Guard MSU Pittsburgh.

We will also have an update on WRDA 2024 which recently passed in the Senate. And you will read about our participation and testimony at the Pennsylvania State Transportation Committee Hearing which was held in Pittsburgh in June. That event also featured an infrastructure tour for members of the committee.

Also in this issue, we announce the awardees of the 2024 round of our Senator James Ferlo Memorial Small Grants Program, and as usual, our cybersecurity expert Nate Turer has some important information to help you stay safe in cyberspace. Finally, the Pittsburgh Business Times named 20 People to Know in Transportation & Infrastructure, and we've highlighted one of them here. 😊

As always, stay safe out on the water!

Mary Ann Bucci Executive Director, Port of Pittsburgh Commission

Elizabeth Dam Removal Update

On July 10, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District breached the fixed-crest dam at the Monongahela River Locks and Dam 3 using controlled explosives. The lock reopened on July 16 but with restrictions to commercial traffic due to the height of the existing sills of the Elizabeth locks creating a less-than-optimal clearance with a draft of seven feet. Under this restriction, only vessels with a seven-foot draft or less can lock through the land wall chamber, thus requiring shippers to load barges at less than capacity. The river chamber is open to recreational traffic.

To minimize the navigation delays to commercial industry, the district is working to open a 100-foot-wide section of the dam to create an adequate navigation channel and reestablish unrestricted navigation in a safe, rapid fashion ahead of the previous December schedule. Intermittent lock closures will continue as USACE works to complete the demolition work, with plans to remove the rest of the dam in 50-foot sections. The contractor has been using excavators on barges to remove rubble from the river. USACE is committed to completing the 100-foot channel work by Aug. 28.

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3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS

with *CDR. Justin Jolley*



Justin Jolley is the Commanding Officer of the U.S. Coast Guard MSU Pittsburgh.

1. Commander Jolley, congratulations on your new post! Usually, a commanding officer is coming in from a different area of the country, but we're fortunate that you've already worked in the Pittsburgh District. How important is that experience, and does that continuity benefit your position?

It is my privilege to fleet-up to the commanding officer position and stay in Pittsburgh for two additional years. Not only do I love this job, I have also enjoyed my time in Western Pennsylvania. Having spent the previous two years here as the executive officer, I feel well-prepared for this role. My experience as executive officer has provided me with critical familiarity with our geographic area-of-responsibility and pre-established relationships with critical stakeholders such as

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Elizabeth Dam Removal (continued)



The Lower Monongahela River Project has invested approximately \$1.1 billion in the region through its construction. Once the Lower Mon project is complete, the commercial navigation industry will save at least one hour of transit between Braddock and Charleroi. The project will also favor recreational boaters by providing more than 30 miles of unimpeded river.

USACE is asking for patience from the public and various Lower Mon stakeholders during the temporary navigation restriction on the Monongahela River. Nothing is more important than safeguarding the lives and wellbeing of everyone involved or impacted by our work on the river.

“This issue is their #1 priority and ours as well.” says Mary Ann Bucci. “Although this has been a difficult situation, we appreciate the actions that the Pittsburgh District took to ensure that the river can be open to 9-foot draft, as quickly as possible.”



\$50,000 gift creates scholarships for rail transportation engineering students



Penn State Altoona has received a \$50,000 commitment from CSX Transportation to create the CSX Rail Transportation Engineering Scholarship, which will support students in the field of rail engineering. [Click here to read full article.](#)



3 Rivers, 3 Questions with CDR. Justin Jolley (cont.)

the Port of Pittsburgh; a significant advantage given the high turnover this transfer season for many of our key leadership positions within the unit.

2. You bring an interesting background and resume to the job. In addition to serving in the Coast Guard, you’ve also worked in the industry, and also have a legal background? Tell us a bit about your work history?

While I have served 18 years total in the Coast Guard, I have a 14-year break in service between my time as an enlisted member and my current officer career. In fact, returning to the Coast Guard was not planned. When I exited the Coast Guard in 1997, I spent the next several years going to college on the GI Bill while working full-time in the maritime industry. I started out as a Superintendent supervising longshoreman, but the bulk of the time, I worked for NYK Line managing their hazmat/dangerous goods compliance program for North America. After finishing law school, I was an attorney in solo practice in Idaho when the Coast Guard offered me a direct commission. Since then, I have been able to alternate assignments between operational and staff tours within CGJAG. My legal specialty is Admiralty Law which compliments my operational specialty as a Prevention officer for assignments like this one.

3. 2024 has brought some challenges to USCG MSU Pittsburgh’s team, in terms of staffing and patrolling. What would you like our readers to know about your unit’s role and duties going forward?

MSU Pittsburgh is still here, and except for some reserve staff tasked with supporting the now destaffed small boat station, we remain fully committed to our primary missions of enforcing federal regulations, conducting safety and security inspections, and bolstering port security while safeguarding the economically vital marine transportation system. With a staff of just 20 people, we oversee 328 river miles of the Monongahela, Allegheny, and Ohio Rivers covering a large geographic area that includes Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio, and Northern West Virginia. The recent loss of the small boat station has presented many unprecedented challenges in conjunction with the USACE’s Elizabeth Lock and Dam removal project; however, we are doing the absolute best we can with the limited resources that we have to ensure that the public receives the greatest return on investment possible from MSU Pittsburgh.



DC Legislation Update

Congress continues to work on two particular pieces of legislation of importance to the inland waterways.

Both the House and Senate have passed their individual Water Resources Development Act of 2024 bills and it is hopeful that the two bodies will work out their differences when they go to conference on the bills this Fall. The Senate bill is more favorable to the inland waterways and the Port of Pittsburgh Commission's interests, including permanently adjusting the inland waterways cost-share for construction and major rehabilitation projects to 75% general revenues/25% Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF) (from the current 65%/35%) and also providing 100% full Federal funding for the Montgomery Locks & Dam project, as well as six other projects across the country, that were funded in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

Additionally, the annual appropriations process continues to move forward in Congress with both the Senate and House Appropriations Committees passing within the last month their respective FY25 funding bills that cover lock & dam infrastructure. Included in the Senate bill is an additional \$205 million for the Montgomery Locks & Dam modernization project and the Port of Pittsburgh Commission is thankful to both Senator Bob Casey and Senator John Fetterman for their support of this important project.

We will continue to advocate in the coming months for final passage of both WRDA 2024 and the FY25 appropriations bill.



Joseph Spanik (former PPC Commissioner), Harry Kunselman, Ron Brown (PPC Commissioner), and Katie Brown on board The Duchess for the Beaver County Chamber Legislative Cruise, July 17. PortPitt is a major sponsor of this event.



PA Senate Transportation Committee – River Infrastructure Tour and Hearing in Pgh



The Pennsylvania Senate Transportation Committee hearing was held in Pittsburgh on June 17-18. Executive Director Mary Ann Bucci and PPC staff members led members of the Committee, their staffers, and select media representatives on a river tour to see first-hand the commercial and recreation uses of our rivers, as well as the important infrastructure like the Emsworth Locks & Dams that create the Pittsburgh Pool.



The following day, Bucci delivered testimony at the Pittsburgh International Airport, the site of the hearing, on behalf of the Port of Pittsburgh to the Committee regarding the value that our rivers offer, the ongoing need for funding for maintenance, as well as how managing all of these factors will shape the future of our river system.



Data Breaches and Protecting Your Identity by Nate Turer

Happy summer everyone! I hope everyone is enjoying the good weather and is wearing plenty of sunscreen. But even with all the sunlight, it can still be the blue light of a computer screen that draws your attention. But, before we dive into this edition's cybersecurity article, a bit of technology news. As of July 22nd Google has back-tracked their decision to depreciate the use of third party cookies. In place they will add greater user control to limit how these third-party cookies function. A third-party cookie is data placed within your browser and computer by advertisements on a webpage as well as tracking programs. These third-party cookies are then used to track your browsing habits across other sites. Mozilla Firefox has third-party cookies blocked by default, and when this function fully comes to Google Chrome, it is my recommendation that all business and personal users fully block third-party cookies.

Now onto data breaches and other people's computers. While it can feel like our business networks and machines are our own fiefdom, this is far from the case. We rely on software that others produce and update, and we use websites and databases managed by others. Our data, our personal information, and banking information isn't just our own. This can be a scary concept to confront as it deals with things fully outside our control. You can be as secure as you can, follow every practice, every plan, and yet if your financial institution is compromised, you are as well regardless of how careful you are. So, what are we to do? The first thing is to check to see if your information has been exposed in a data breach. Several companies offer this service. Malwarebytes allows you to do a basic check for free. If you've been exposed, the steps are to immediately change passwords; check banking and card information; and then make sure you are no longer exposed. Several companies offer active monitoring as a subscription service in which you will be notified if you have been exposed.

In the event of larger breaches there may be a remediation process, so it is good to look up any statements issued by the affected company or vendor. Sometimes you will hear of people's Social Security numbers being found on the dark web. The dark web is the unindexed section of the internet, usually only accessible via TOR (an overlay network for enabling anonymous communication) or a direct connection. The overwhelming majority of users have no need to access the dark web, I can tell you that there isn't much there that you would want to see. It is however where a lot of illegal activity and commerce takes place. Including the sale or leaking of personal data.

What information is for sale or is exposed in these leaks, and what do I do to mitigate this?

- Your passwords: this is the easiest to remedy. Avoid using common passwords across multiple accounts, this will prevent one compromise from overflowing into your other accounts. Change passwords that have been found to be compromised.
- Social Security Number: It is said in jest by some researchers that every SSN in existence is already on the dark web somewhere. If your SSN is compromised, be sure to check your credit report, and consider retaining a credit monitoring service. Some such as Creditwise offer monitoring of lists of compromised SSNs. You cannot request a new SSN unless you have been a victim of identity theft and have otherwise been unable to remedy the situation.
- Your credit card information or other financials: check your card statement every month, and report to your issuing institution any unauthorized charges and have those remedied. Consider requesting a new card from your issuing institution.
- Your home address, your job, name, or other information identifying you: This can be a scary thing to experience. The exact situation will determine how to respond. If your information has been leaked as part of a large batch, such as the compromise of a major retailer chain, take caution with your social media accounts, and take the usual safety measures that you take for personal and home security. Targeted release of personal information is more dangerous. If you find at any point you believe your safety to be compromised, or your personal information is leaked in a targeted manner, contact law enforcement, and report the matter to the FBI via the internet complaint center.

Our modern digital infrastructure is so interconnected it is not a question of if your information may be breached, but when. The path is to be prepared.

- Consider retaining an identity monitoring service. Check to see if your financial institutions or insurance offer this.
- Ensure that your passwords are not the same, that they are secure, and be ready to change them at a moment's notice.
- Know all the accounts you possess that connect to your financials or have your personal identity attached to them.
- Limit the number of accounts you have that are connected to your personal information or financial information.
- Periodically check your email via services such as Malwarebytes.



Port of Pittsburgh Commission Announces 2024 Small Grants Program Awards

July 23, 2024 – The Port of Pittsburgh Commission (PPC) announced today that nine applicants will receive a total of \$75,000 in grant awards as part of the Senator James Ferlo Memorial Small Grants Program, which promotes our region’s three rivers, education and advocacy, water safety, with a focus toward the future of our waterways.

“We continue to seek projects that promote stewardship, advocacy, safety and increase awareness of our rivers and their impacts, with the use of new concepts and ideas.” said Mary Ann Bucci, Executive Director of the PPC. “This is our third year of the program, and while \$75,000 isn’t a huge sum of money, we are very pleased with the quality of project applications we receive. Since 2022, we’ve increased the program’s funding from \$50,000 to \$75,000, and we will continue to pursue additional funding and look for these types of beneficial projects within the port district.”

Twelve applications were received, totaling more than \$170,000 in requests. Nine local applicants were awarded funding ranging from \$4,000 - \$10,000:

- Allegheny Clean Ways
- Allegheny River Dev. Corp.
- PA Fish & Boat Commission
- Point of Pgh Sailing League
- Sewickley Creek Watershed
- Synthomer/Jefferson Hills
- Three Rivers Rowing Assoc.
- Three Rivers Waterkeeper
- Watersmith Guild/First Waves



OUR PORTPITT TEAM

MARY ANN BUCCI
Executive Director

SCOTT HARSHMAN
Marketing & Program Manager

MATT PAVLOSKY
Public Relations Manager

MIKE BRINZA
Operations Manager

NATE TURER
Logistics & Cybersecurity

MICHA
PortPitt Mascot



GOOD THINGS FLOW FROM HERE



Mary Ann Bucci named as one of 20 people to know in transportation and industry



Port of Pittsburgh Commission Executive Director Mary Ann Bucci was named by the Pittsburgh Business Times as one of 20 people to know in transportation and industry. The PBT identified her as being “at the forefront of initiatives regarding infrastructure, grant funding, business development and legislation on the local, state and federal levels, as well as organizing tours and programs to educate elected officials, public stakeholders and the recreational boating community about federal funding issues for lock and dam projects.”

When asked how the USACE wrapping up the Lower Mon Project and starting the Upper Ohio River lock and dam work affects her work at the Port, Ms. Bucci said, “The funding every year. We are off to a good start with \$858 million for the Montgomery Locks and Dam. Those monies were awarded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act specifically for this project. However, the USACE certified the cost of the project at \$1.698 billion. The next step is to fund the Emsworth Locks & Dams as well as the Dashields Locks & Dam project, which will be our number one goal. We need to ensure that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers receives full and efficient funding each year.”