ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TENNESSEE’S INLAND WATERWAYS

IN 2018, TENNESSEE’S PORTS, INLAND WATERWAYS, AND INLAND WATERWAYS-DEPENDENT INDUSTRIES SUPPORTED

- **81,000 jobs**
- **$3.9 billion** in personal income
- **$6.3 billion** in Gross State Product
- **$13.2 billion** in total output

**Inland Waterways Support Tennessee’s Key Industries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Sub-Category</th>
<th>Percent of Goods Shipped by Water (Tons)</th>
<th>Direct Tennessee Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crop production</td>
<td>34.2% of inbound</td>
<td>1,860*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>12.0% of outbound</td>
<td>3,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation** &amp; Warehousing</td>
<td>8.3% of inbound</td>
<td>38,560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total for Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting sector (NAICS 11)
**Related to water transportation

**TOP INLAND WATERWAYS COMMODITIES BY WEIGHT (comprising 62% of total tonnage)**

- **Sand, gravel, shells, clay, salt, and slag**: 9.4 million tons
- **Coal, lignite, and coal coke**: 6.2 million tons
- **Petroleum products**: 3.4 million tons

**TOP INLAND WATERWAYS COMMODITIES BY VALUE (comprising 65% of total value)**

- **Gasoline**: $1.3 billion
- **Fuel Oils**: $1.2 billion
- **Transportation equipment, including tractors, aircraft, and commercial ships**: $857.7 million

TENNESSEE’S INLAND WATERWAY ASSETS AT A GLANCE

- Tennessee, Mississippi, and Cumberland Rivers
- 5 public ports

In 2018, **30.8M** tons of freight valued at **$5.2 BILLION** moved on Tennessee’s inland waterways, which is equivalent to **770,000 TRUCKS**

Avoided trucks translates into reduced congestion, emissions, and crashes, lessening impacts on highway infrastructure.

Tennessee has **950 MILES** of navigable inland waterways, ranking it **11th in the nation**.
America's inland waterways system is vital to our nation's competitiveness and economic growth. The inland waterways efficiently, sustainably, cost-effectively and safely transport critical commodities like agricultural goods, energy products, building materials and industrial chemicals to destinations within the U.S. and to deep water ports for export. In 2018, 766.3 million tons of goods valued at $507.3 billion moved on the U.S. inland waterways system, and by 2045 it is expected to increase by 23% to 942 million tons valued at $871 billion. Barge transportation is the safest, most environmentally-friendly, economical, and fuel-efficient way to move our nation’s goods for use domestically and for export. On a single gallon of fuel, one barge can move freight more than four times farther than trucks, releasing 10 times fewer emissions.

Called “the backbone of the transportation logistics system,” the inland waterways are a key part of the United States’ transportation supply chain. The system includes a vast network of 12,000 miles of connecting waterways and 218 locks. However, the majority of locks and dams on the Mississippi River system were constructed during the 1930s and are operating well beyond their 50-year design life. Modernizing the nation’s inland waterways system will support and create American jobs, increase U.S. exports, and inject billions of dollars into the U.S. economy to power our growth for the next 50 years.


The National Waterways Foundation estimates overall investment needs of inland waterways at $8 billion over the next 10 years.

Over the next 10 years, constructing all authorized navigation projects and rehabilitating existing locks could have significant national impacts, leading to a 20% increase in jobs, 39% increase in Gross Domestic Product, and 40% increase in output.

The U.S. currently has a $5.35 per metric ton advantage over Brazil when shipping soybeans on the inland waterways system from Davenport, Iowa, to Shanghai, China.

In 2016, 250M recreational visitors of Corps lakes resulted in $10.6B in total trip spending, supporting over 189K jobs nationwide.

Compared to barges, moving an identical amount of cargo by rail generates 30% more emissions, while trucks generate 1,000% more emissions.

The US' inland waterways system saves between $7 billion & $9 billion annually over the cost of other modes due to efficiency and low cost.

Barges have the smallest carbon footprint among freight transportation modes.

One standard 15-barge tow moves the equivalent volume of 216 rail cars or 1,050 trucks.