



Town Of Star City

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A RESOLUTION TO KEEP UPPER MON WV LOCKS OPEN

Whereas, locks on the Upper Monongahela river in West Virginia are essential to support river commerce, recreation, and economic development of the Monongahela River watershed in West Virginia; and,

Whereas, the leadership of the federal government, through actions by the administration and congress, is essential for funding and enabling the maintenance and operation of the nation's navigable river systems as well as for permitting the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) to work innovatively with States, citizens, local governments, business organizations, river recreational entities, and others to accomplish this need through innovative solutions; and

Whereas, the headwaters of many of our nation's navigable rivers have suffered a decline in river industrial commerce, resulting in severe cutbacks in federal funding for maintenance and operation of locks and dams on these rivers by the COE, including the hours the locks are open for transit by river traffic; and

Whereas, the US Army Corps of Engineers has determined, due to inadequate funding of our nation's navigable river facilities, that as of November 1, 2012 :

(1) the Morgantown lock will operate one shift per day, weekends and holidays only;

(2) the Hildebrand and Opekiska locks will be commercial, by appointment only locks with no recreational access; and

Whereas, the Upper Mon River Association (UMRA) advocates for the federal resources to protect, maintain, and operate safe locks and dams to support local commerce, recreation and economic development:

**Additional Specific Actions as presented by the Upper Mon River
Association and co-sponsored by the Mon River Recreation & Commerce
Committee of the Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce**

(1) Open the upper Mon locks for 45 days during the 1 April through 31 October recreational boating season. It is recommended that three day weekend operations be scheduled for Friday through Sunday, and on holidays. (This would facilitate fishing tournaments which are of great economic benefit to the upper Mon region and would also allow recreational boaters to full access to the upper Mon. This mode of operation also would exercise the locks to ensure they remain operable.)

(2) Authorize the use of contractual, temporary part-time or seasonal employees or even auxiliary volunteer methods to provide lock operators other than permanent Pittsburgh District COE employees. (Evaluate the possibility of a Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District Auxiliary, to provide, train, and certify volunteer lock operators. This auxiliary, perhaps modeled after the successful Coast Guard Auxiliary system, perhaps could undertake other assistance to Pittsburgh District missions.)

(3) Investigate innovative ways to fund operation of the locks. (Consider creating an Upper Mon Port Authority that governments and businesses, others could join and contribute funds for running the locks. This approach would possibly require Congressional action.)

(4) Fully maintain by the Pittsburgh District COE the upper Mon locks and dams upon closure in order to provide public safety as well as protection of the facilities so that in the future these facilities can be quickly returned to service, when political, recreational and/or business factors require that the locks be reopened.

(5) Maintain the nine foot channel depth on the upper Mon so that dams and boat ramps will not be allowed to be silted in.

(6) Provide a public boat ramp access to the Hildebrand pool.

(7) Provide an alternate public boat ramp access to the Morgantown pool which is less susceptible to silting than the Uffington boat ramp.

(8) Dredging or relocate the Prickett's Fort boat public launch ramp. (All boat ramps are important to bass tournaments.)

(9) Provide a means at the upper Mon locks for portage of canoes, kayaks, and other small boats, around the locks.

(10) Establish fishing platform access at the Morgantown lock and dam on the south approach wall to the dam.

(11) Provide a walk path access to the river bank from the rail trail on the Morgantown side of the river from the Morgantown lock and dam down to Decker's Creek.

(12) Classify WV Division of Natural Resources lockages as commercial lockages.

(13) Exercise the operation of locks and dams sufficiently to limit closure impact on fish mobility on the river and to permit survival of mussels.

(14) Explore the possibility of remote control of lockages at three upper Mon locks from the Point Marion lock and dam.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, the Common Council of the Town of Star City, West Virginia calls upon our Congressional Representatives to support:


1) authorization and funding for collaborative Federal, State and Local studies on innovative ways to fund and operate river navigation facilities and services, and

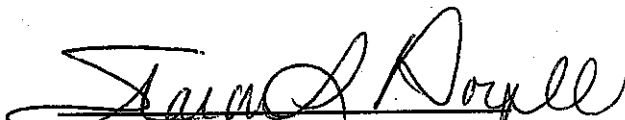
2) the long-standing recommendation of UMRA to add the development of recreational usages and similar economic activities to the mission and duties of the US Army Corps of Engineers in their operation of navigable rivers.

Be It Further Resolved, the Common Council of the Town of Star City, West Virginia supports the fourteen (14) additional specific actions, attached hereto, be undertaken as interim solutions in lieu of the planned closing of upper Mon locks on November 1, 2012.

Introduced in Council: September 18, 2012

Resolved by Council: September 18, 2012


Allen R. Sharp, Mayor


Sharon L. Doyle, Recorder