

Mississippi River/GIWW Update/Current Issues

MLA Spring 2021

**Inland Waters and
Towing Committee**

Lance Sannino
Partner

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Mississippi River/GIWW

- Winter Storm Uri ... New Experiences?
 - Freezing temperatures and ice on the GIWW, especially West
 - For some ...
 - Conditions covered entire operating areas
 - Conditions impacted crews with little experience
 - Quick education on extreme cold weather operations for crews
 - For many ...
 - Pushing out guidance to ensure crew safety
 - Making rushed arrangements for cold weather necessities
 - The impacts were significant ...
 - Terminal closures
 - Voluntary but recommended traffic stops in South Texas
 - Unique off-hire/demurrage/*force majeure* issues

Mississippi River/GIWW

- High Water Season ...
 - The highest water levels usually occur February to May
 - In 2019, high water lasted until September
 - The USCG will issue orders for enhanced safety measures
 - *Ex.* Carrollton Gauge at 12 ft. and rising ...
 - Passing leeway/safe speed, fleet requirements, traffic controls, mooring and ship anchoring requirements
 - USCG requirements can be found in Waterways Action Plan
 - USCG's Homeport Website: <https://homeport.uscg.mil>
 - In Extreme High Water, and even High Water, operators will supplement the USCG requirements
 - *Ex.* risk assessments, transit/voyage plans, captains committees and transits subject to management approval

Mississippi River/GIWW

- So far this year, the reports seem positive
 - The River was forecast to crest in NOLA in early April
 - Since early April the River has fallen slowly
 - Water levels currently are trending in the right direction
 - USCG has rescinded certain local high water requirements
 - That could all change though ...
- Navigation Issues Persist
 - April 22 – southbound ship tethered to two assist tugs made contact with a northbound tow near MM 111
 - April 25 – light towboat entered path of southbound tow and made contact near MM 101
 - April 26 – ship under assist made contact with tier of barges near MM 86

Mississippi River/GIWW

- High Water = Shoaling = Dredging ... Everywhere!
 - 4 dredges currently working in Southwest Pass (LMR)
 - 4 other dredge projects ongoing on other reaches of River
 - 26 other ongoing dredging projects on GIWW and adjacent waterways, including some beach restoration and harbor deepening
 - More on the USACE project schedules out of Galveston, New Orleans and Mobile
 - Narrow Channels and navigational considerations unique to each project
 - Infrastructure projects causing waterway delays
 - Notices to Mariners Reports – Western Rivers and Gulf
 - USCG Navigation Center: <https://navcen.uscg.gov>

Mississippi River/GIWW

