

Upcoming Barge Tour Will Interest Area Farmers

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Most of the grain that moves out of the Heartland goes by water. That is always evident when there is a disruption like the flooding that occurred this summer. Few producers realize that most of the river infrastructure was built in the 1930s, and it is starting to wear out. The Water Resources Development Act was finally passed in 2007, but Congress didn't authorize any funds to do the repairs. So after eight years of heavy pressure from farmers, still more needs to be done to obtain funding.

If you have never been on the river, the Illinois Corn Growers Association is giving you an opportunity to see it first hand. A 3-hour barge tour of the Ohio River will include the locks, some river scenery and speakers who will explain the importance of the river for transportation. The tours are offered on August 14

from Olmstead, Illinois, both morning and afternoon, and again on August 18 from Newburgh, Indiana (near Evansville), morning and afternoon. More details about the tour and departure times are provided upon registration.

There is no charge for the barge ride, but seating is limited to 150 people. To register, contact the Illinois Corn Growers Association, 309-557-3257. You can also register by fax, 309-827-0916, or email jtarmann@ilcorn.org. In your fax or email include your name, postal address, email address, desired location (Olmstead or Newburgh), and preferred tour time (morning or afternoon).

You can also contact me at plumerm@illinois.edu for more details.

On the subject of rivers, the USDA has designated 91 Illinois counties, 15 Missouri counties and 5 Kentucky counties as disaster areas, which makes loans available. Contact your local Farm Service Agency office for information. Δ

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