

Feature Dredging

Obviously, all of these projects will not require dredging, but, just as obviously, many will. (Note: IIJA information in this report is from a Summary released by Sen. Maria Cantwell, Wash.)

Dredging executives are taking a fine-toothed comb to the IIJA to uncover exactly where new opportunities will arise. One person told me that his team is holding their cards very close to avoid tipping-off competitors about new project possibilities.

One area in which new work is very likely is within the Army Corps' Operations and Maintenance funds. IIJA provides \$4 billion, over three years, to pay for dredging Federal navigation projects and repairing damages to Corps projects caused by natural disasters. It's not hard to see, though, that dredging will be a necessary part of many projects in most of the funding categories listed above. Opportunities expand further when one considers the harbor and waterways trust fund requirements established just a year ago by WRDA 2020.

Richard Balzano is CEO & Executive Director of the Dredging Contractors of America, named to that spot in December 2020. Balzano has over 30 years of maritime and government experience, including a stint as MARAD Deputy Administrator.

His comments on new funding. "We do not know what the final numbers are yet and how the Corps plans to implement a strategy," he wrote in response to email questions. He added that "we will not know the real totals until an appropriations bill or BBB ("Build Back Better" HR 5376) gets passed."

With the Corps' budget set to double this year, Balzano said "the Corps and industry must continue to work together and treat the dredging program more as a national program." He said that District coordination is one way to make the best use of all resources. He said "the industry's massive private investment in recent years" means companies are ready to continue "our work with the Corps to increase efficiency and deliver better outcomes for the Corps, industry, America's waterways, and taxpayers."

Maxie McGuire is President, Callan Marine Ltd., based in Galveston. McGuire was asked to comment on how he thought new IIJA funding would impact the dredging industry. Callan's work includes federal navigation, beach restoration and private sector projects for ship/barge dock owners.



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**- Richard Balzano,
CEO & Executive Director,
Dredging Contractors of America**