

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
OFFICE OF INFORMATION  
ROOM 605, LAFAYETTE BLDG.  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

SLSDC-130

PM RELEASE

Monday, February 10, 1958

EX 3-3111 - 5568-69

"WILEY-DONDERO CANAL" AND  
"BERTRAND H. SNELL LOCK"  
HONOR SPONSORS OF SEAWAY

Members of the United States Congress who sponsored the first St. Lawrence Seaway bill in 1917 and the legislation which was enacted into law in 1954 will have their names perpetuated in Seaway history for all time.

Administrator Lewis G. Castle has announced that hereafter the Long Sault Canal, 10 miles long with a bottom width of 442 feet and a minimum depth of 27 feet, will be called the "Wiley-Dondero Canal," while the Grasse River Lock will be known as "Bertrand H. Snell Lock."

The Long Sault Canal was renamed to honor Senator Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin and Former Congressman George A. Dondero of Michigan, staunch Seaway advocates for many years, who successfully steered the Seaway Act (Public Law 358, 83rd Congress, 2nd Session) to its final passage. More than 20 million cubic yards of material were excavated for the lock sites and canal, which was completed December 31, 1957.

Snell Lock honors Bertrand H. Snell of Potsdam, N. Y., Republican minority leader in the House from 1931 until his retirement in 1938, who introduced the initial Seaway - Power development bill on April 24, 1917. Mr. Snell died on February 2 at the age of 87 in Potsdam, N. Y., Hospital after an illness of two months.

Administrator Castle announced that the Seaway Corporation's five-man Advisory Board unanimously concurred in the decision to honor the Congressional "Fathers of the Seaway" by the new canal and lock designations.

Comprising the Advisory Board are: Edward J. Noble, a native of Gouverneur, N. Y., who is Board Chairman of Beechnut-Life Savers, Director and Chairman of the Finance Committee of American Broadcasting Co., and owner of the Thousand Islands Club on Wellesley Island, near Alexandria Bay, N. Y.; John C. Beukema, Muskegon, Mich., President of the Great Lakes Harbors Association; Harry C. Brockel, Municipal Port Director of Milwaukee, Wisc.; Hugh Moore, Easton, Penn., founder of Dixie Cup Co., and Kenneth M. Lloyd, Youngstown, Ohio, Secretary of the Mahoning Valley Industrial Council.

Snell Lock is the easterly lock in the Wiley-Dondero Canal. It is located  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles downstream from Dwight D. Eisenhower Lock, near the mouth of the Grasse River.

The official naming of the Eisenhower Lock, in honor of the Chief Executive who signed the Wiley-Dondero Seaway Act on May 13, 1954, occurred on May 10, 1956. On the latter date, Seaway officials and Congressional leaders called at the White House to present to President Eisenhower a bronze medallion commemorating the second anniversary of the passage of the Seaway legislation.

Administrator Castle today made the following statement: "In the naming of the Eisenhower and Snell Locks and the Wiley-Dondero Canal, the nation is honoring our great President who signed the Seaway Act, the courageous legislative leaders from the Great Lakes area who sponsored it, as well as the far-sighted New York State legislative leader who introduced the original bill 41 years ago."

Senator Wiley, born in Chippewa Falls, Wisc., in 1884, came to the United States Senate in 1938, and was re-elected in 1944, 1950 and 1956. He was Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during the 83rd Congress, in which the Seaway Act was passed after 37 years of debate. He is presently ranking minority member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

George A. Dondero, of Royal Oak, Mich., served in Congress from 1932 until his retirement in 1956. He was the House's first Public Works Committee Chairman, and served in that capacity in the 83rd Congress in which his ambitions for the authorization of Seaway construction were realized. Last year he served the Seaway Corporation for several months as a consultant.

Elected to Congress in 1914, Mr. Snell was the Republican Minority Leader until his retirement in 1938, when he was succeeded by Congressman Joseph W. Martin, Jr., of Massachusetts. Mr. Martin, current House Minority Leader, came out publicly on January 10 in favor of the naming of Snell Lock in a letter to Representative Clarence E. Kilburn, Malone, N. Y. Successor to Mr. Snell in the Congress, Congressman Kilburn was a vigorous advocate of designating a Seaway lock in honor of his life-time friend and neighbor in the Northern New York district where the U. S. Seaway is located.

On January 29, New York's 26-member Republican delegation in the U. S. House of Representatives, proposed unanimously that the Grasse River Lock be named for Mr. Snell. Congressional support for the proposal thereafter gained momentum, and House Minority Leader Martin, at Mr. Kilburn's request, importuned the President on behalf of Bert Snell.

In July 1957, the Ogdensburg, N. Y., Journal came out editorially in favor of naming the Grasse River Lock after Mr. Snell, and the Massena, N. Y., Observer followed suit.

The Journal editorial said, in part, "If the name of anyone is to be put on various projects of the St. Lawrence Power and Seaway development, former Congressman Bertrand H. Snell is far more entitled to the honor than some of the many who climbed on the band wagon when it became popular. When Congressman Snell introduced his first Seaway bill on April 24, 1917, and made the first speech ever heard in the halls of Congress in favor of the Seaway and Power developments, not a member of the New York delegation in the House of Representatives or the Senate gave him a pleasant smile except Congressman Frank Culin of Oswego. For years Mr. Snell stood alone in Congress as the only member from the Great Eastern United States who supported the Seaway legislation, or who spoke for it."

Also in July 1957, W. Allan Newall, influential Ogdensburg industrialist and banker, wrote Edward J. Noble, member of the Seaway Corporation Advisory Board, urging that the Grasse River Lock on the Seaway be named the Bertrand H. Snell Lock.

Ever since July 24, 1957, when Senator Charles E. Potter of Michigan introduced the bill, S. 2624, to designate the Grasse River Lock as the Wiley-Dondero Lock, Seaway Administrator Castle has seen his file of letters and resolutions relating to Seaway designations growing. Mr. Snell's death brought the issue to a head.

On the day following the President's transmittal of the Seaway Corporation's Annual Report 1957 to the Congress, Administrator Castle and the Advisory Board of the Corporation decided on the most logical and popular solution possible.

In all quarters, the new nomenclature for the Seaway---Wiley-Dondero Canal and Bertrand H. Snell Lock---was hailed enthusiastically.

Senator Wiley and Congressman Dondero were principals in the ceremonies dedicating the Eisenhower Lock on June 3, 1956, the same day that the Seaway and St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes ports were featured on Dave Garroway's 90-minute "Wide Wide World" telecast over U. S. and Canadian TV Networks.

No date has been set for their return visit for the dedication of the canal which henceforth will bear their names.

Mr. Snell's death occurred less than a week prior to the designation of Grasse River Lock as the Snell Lock to perpetuate his memory.

Mr. Snell last visited the Seaway construction site on September 23, 1957, when he joined an old friend, Former President Herbert Hoover, on a Seaway and Power Project inspection tour arranged by Robert Moses, Chairman of the New York Power Authority. As Permanent Chairman of the 1932 Republican National Convention, Mr. Snell had eulogized Hoover as a great leader. In later years they worked together in advocating the Seaway project so close to Bert Snell's heart.

Both massive U. S. Seaway locks are nearing completion. They are 860 feet long, gate hinge to gate hinge, 80 feet wide and 30 feet deep over the sills. A million cubic yards of concrete went into the locks. Perini Corporation of Framingham, Mass., headed a combine of construction firms which built the Snell Lock, whose total cost is \$30.6 million. Another Perini accomplishment in 1957 was bringing the World Baseball Championship to Milwaukee.

Other firms in the joint venture were Walsh Construction Co., New York, N. Y.; Morrison-Knudsen Co., Boise, Idaho; Utah Construction Co. of San Francisco, Cal.; and Peter Kiewit and Sons' Co., Omaha, Nebr.

One-half million cubic yards of concrete went into the walls of Snell Lock, which will raise and lower ships 45 feet in their transit of the lower Wiley-Dondero Canal, bypassing the power structures. Eisenhower Lock has a similar lift capacity, and is unique in the United States in that it is provided with a tunnel under the upper gate to accommodate uninterrupted vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Four months hence, in early July, Wiley-Dondero Canal with its Eisenhower and Snell Locks will be opened on a toll-free basis for the remainder of the 1958 navigation season to serve 14-foot draft shipping due to the raising of the power pool and resultant flooding of the existing Canadian 14-foot canals at and above Cornwall, Ontario.

Opening date for the completed 27-foot draft international Seaway, Montreal to Lake Erie, will be in the Spring of 1959.

\* \* \* \* \*

Following is the language of Mr. Snell's 1917 bill "authorizing a preliminary examination of the Saint Lawrence River."

65th Congress  
1st Session

H. R. 3778

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
April 24, 1917

MR. SNELL introduced the following bill: which was referred to the Committee on Rivers and Harbors and ordered to be printed.

A BILL

Authorizing a preliminary examination of the Saint Lawrence River.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of War is authorized and directed to make such preliminary examinations as can be made from available data, without making field surveys, touching the creation of conditions

in or paralleling the Saint Lawrence River from Lake Ontario to the Canadian border, suitable in all respects for navigation by ocean-going ships, including such approximate estimate of cost of improvement as can be predicated on such available data, and an approximation of the amount of power, if any, that would be incident thereto.

oooOooo