



## **Barge Digital Transformation (BDT) Project Report to the Board of Directors September 2024**

National Grain and Feed Digital Solutions (NGFDS) – is the separate corporation formed to develop and administer the Barge Digital Transformation (BDT) platform – a massive undertaking to provide the industry a digital alternative to the time-consuming, inefficient, and costly delays inherent in the paperwork-intensive processes formerly common in the barge trade.

It was nearly four years ago that BDT officially launched for southbound corn on the Mississippi in November 2020 – after two years of prototyping, testing and development with the tech provider, ICE Digital Trade (formerly essDOCS). BDT now provides for trading in all the target commodities including corn, wheat, soybeans, DDGS and soybean meal. Approximately 90% of all bills of lading for southbound Mississippi River flows are digitized on the BDT platform.

### **Ongoing and future activities**

- In addition to providing to NGFA member companies the services of the BDT platform, NGFDS expects in December 2024 – for the fourth consecutive year – to pay to NGFA an annual administrative fee of \$50,000.
- NGFDS has a current balance of \$232,154. Transactional volumes are steady and financial projections are positive.
- Since the previous report to the NGFA Board, NGFDS conducted its second in-person meeting of directors and officers in conjunction with the 2024 NGFA Annual Convention in Orlando, Florida. NGFDS directors and officers also continue to meet remotely on a quarterly basis.
- General promotion, education, and outreach efforts continue in full swing, particularly including recruiting efforts. BDT has largely come to dominate its marketplace with the significant participating companies signed on, yet companies continue to join, and it's recognized that other sectors (e.g., DDGS) could also benefit from employment of the BDT system.
- NGFDS continues to explore areas for additional efficiencies, such as activities by FGIS involving certificates and inspection data and the potential for integrating this digitally with the BDT system.
- Extensive work is underway on platform improvements and enhancements, involving the specially assigned task force, ICE and the NGFDS directors and officers toward a consensus moving through the identified priority tasks. After a thorough review of NGFDS's current financials and projections, the NGFDS Board has allocated funds for these efforts. The first round of improvements and enhancements were released late in 2023. NGFDS has identified a second round of improvements and enhancements, and it expects to complete testing and development on those toward the end of 2024.

- NGFDS is near to completion of extensive discussions with ICE regarding the terms of the contract that governs administration of the platform, which is due for renewal in October 2024.

- Currently serving on the NGFDS Board are Julie Bradford (ADM); Steve Burbrink (CGB); Charlie Delacruz (NGFA); Jordan Garcia (Zen-Noh); John Kopina (Louis Dreyfus); Andrew Luttrell (Ingram Barge); Rich McCarty (ACBL); Steve Oberlander (CHS); Tyler Rongitsch (Cargill) and Jessica Stephan (Bunge). Currently serving as NGFDS's officers are Steve Oberlander, Chairman; John Kopina, Vice Chairman; Brittany Batz, Project Manager; Charlie Delacruz, Executive Director; and Mary Hitchcock, Secretary-Treasurer.

- We have 70 companies signed up for the BDT platform (53 shippers, 17 barge Lines). Although approximately 90% of the trade is already digitized on the BDT platform – NGFDS continues to enlist new participants. Three new companies (2 shippers, 1 barge line) signed up this year *[in bold print below]*.

Shippers: Agrex, Inc | AGRIServices of Brunswick LLC | Alabama Farmers Cooperative, Inc. | Alto Nutrients | Archer Daniels Midland Company | Avere Commodities Corp. | Benson Hill Inc. | Bunge North America, Inc | Cargill, Inc. | Central Missouri AGRIService LLC | CHS Inc. | **Clarkson Grain Co.** | COFCO International Grains US LLC | COFCO Growmark LLC | Consolidated Grain and Barge Co. | ETG Trading Inc. | Farmers Grain Terminal, Inc. | Grain Processing Corporation | Greenfield Commodities | Hansen-Mueller Co. | Hawkeye Gold LLC | Heartland Co-op | Heritage Cooperative | Hopkinsville Elevator Company | J.D. Heiskell & Company, Inc. | Livestock Nutrition Center | Leland Farmers Company | Louis Dreyfus Company | Marquis Trading, LLC | Oakley Grain, Inc. | Obion Grain Co. Inc. | Olam Americas, Inc. | Owensboro Grain Co. | Perdue AgriBusiness Grain LLC | Pilgrims Pride Corporation | Poinsett Rice and Grain Company, Inc. | Prairie Creek Grain Company | Red Wing Grain LLC | StoneX Commodity Solutions, LLC | The Andersons Inc. | **The DeLong Co., Inc.** | The Scoular Company | Toyota Tsusho America, Inc. | Tyson Shared Services, Inc. | Ursa Farmers Cooperative Company | Valero Marketing and Supply Company | Valley Park Elevator, Inc. | Viserion Grain LLC | Viterra USA Ag Holdings, LLC | Viterra USA LLC | Western Milling LLC | Woodall Grain Company | Zen-Noh Grain Corporation

Carriers: American Commercial Barge Line LLC | American River Transportation Company | Campbell Transportation, Inc. | Cargo Carriers, a business of Cargill, Inc. | Ceres Consulting LLC | Cooper Marine & Timberlands | Eastside River Transportation | **Florida Marine Transporters, LLC** | Heartland Barge Management LLC | Ingram Barge Company LLC | LMR Freight, LLC | Oakley Barge Line | Parker Towing Company, Inc. | Robert B. Miller and Associates, Inc. | ROI Logistics & Marine Services LLC | RTI Barge Management, Inc. | SCF Marine Inc.