



Barge Digital Transformation (BDT) Project Report to the Board of Directors March 2024

National Grain and Feed Digital Solutions (NGFDS) – the separate corporation formed to administer the Barge Digital Transformation (BDT) platform – continues to serve the industry in this massive effort to provide a digital alternative to the time-consuming, inefficient, and costly delays inherent in the paperwork-intensive processes formerly common in the barge trade. The BDT platform officially launched for southbound corn on the Mississippi in November 2020 – after two years of prototyping, testing, and development with the tech provider essDOCS. The platform started with corn in 2020 and expanded to include all target commodities in 2021. The platform further expanded to include non-GMO soybeans and corn in January 2022.

Select activities since the last report to the NGFA Board

- NGFDS is planning its second in-person meeting of directors and officers in conjunction with the March 2024 NGFA Annual Convention in Orlando, Florida. It's first such in-person meeting was in conjunction with last year's NGFA Annual Convention. NGFDS directors and officers also meet remotely on a quarterly basis, including most recently on January 16, 2024.
- Amendments to NGFDS Bylaws: The NGFDS Board had voted to amend the NGFDS bylaws: 1) to extend the terms of the chair and vice chair to two years to align them with the terms for directors and other officers; and 2) to allow for a quorum of 1/3 for meetings of directors (at the recommendation of outside legal counsel to address continuing challenges in securing a quorum for meetings). Pursuant to the NGFDS Bylaws, the NGFA Board also approves amendments to NGFDS Bylaws. Therefore, the amendments were proposed to and approved by the NGFA Board in September 2023.

Ongoing and future activities

- General promotion, education, and outreach efforts continue in full swing, particularly including recruiting efforts heavily targeting the DDGS sector to facilitate the movement of DDGS through the system.
- NGFDS is discussing and coordinating with NGFA's Grain Grades and Weights Committee about what FGIS is currently doing with 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, essDOCS 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 in October 2023. The NGFDS Board has identified a second round of improvements and enhancements and expects work to begin on those this spring.

- NGFDS is in discussions with essDOCS regarding the terms of the contract that governs administration of the platform, which is due for renewal in October 2024.
- NGFDS has a current balance of \$148,647.06. Transactional volumes are steady and financial projections are positive. In addition to continuing to serve the industry by providing the BDT platform, NGFDS in December 2023 (for the third year in a row) paid to NGFA the annual administrative fee of \$50,000.
- 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 69 companies signed up for the BDT platform (52 shippers, 17 barge Lines). Five companies (4 shippers, 1 barge line) are newly signed up since our last report to the Board *[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. | 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 | Viterro USA Ag Holdings, LLC | Viterro 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.