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The Valley Independent

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Editorial

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John Murtha is bringing home something a heck of a lot more important than bacon.

The Johnstown Democrat, whose sprawling congressional district embraces much of the Mid-Mon Valley, already had helped secure some \$488 million for the vitally important Lower Monongahela River Project.

And last week Murtha, who chairs the subcommittee, convinced his colleagues to approve an additional \$40.8 million for the project in fiscal 2009.

"Our region's vast network of locks and dams are absolutely essential for commerce, recreation and attracting future economic growth to our region," Murtha said in announcing the latest round of funding approval.

Yes, they are.

But convincing congressmen from other states and regions to earmark the kind of money that has been set aside for the ongoing \$1.2 billion Mon River project is not an easy task.

While Murtha's efforts obviously had the support of other congressional representatives from southwestern Pennsylvania, it takes somebody with his clout -- and 30 years worth of congressional seniority -- to get the job done.

Due largely to Murtha, work will continue on building a new gated dam at Braddock, constructing two 84- by 729-foot locks at North Charleroi, removing existing locks and dams at Elizabeth and dredging the channel.

Thanks, Rep. Murtha, for a job well done.