



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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First Coal Cargo Comes Up Way Short

CLEVELAND—If the first coal cargo of the 2007 shipping season is any indication of the months ahead, the dredging crisis and low water levels will take a major toll on the trade. The 2007 season commenced on March 15 with a 1,000-foot-long U.S.-Flag Laker loading 55,106 net tons of coal in Superior, Wisconsin, for delivery to Presque Isle, Michigan. In August of 2006, the same vessel carried nearly 60,000 tons of coal between the two ports. However, concerns that shoaling in the discharge port might have worsened over the winter prompted the vessel's owner to take extra precautions on the first trip. As a result, in just nine months, the dredging crisis and low water levels slashed the vessel's already-reduced carrying capacity by another 8 percent.

Lakes-wide, coal shipments totaled 1.2 million net tons in March, a decrease of 28 percent compared to a year ago. Loadings were, however, slightly above the month's 5-year average. Year-to-date, the trade stands at 2.5 million tons, a decrease of 33 percent compared to the same point in 2006, but on par with the 5-year average for the January-March timeframe.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 18 American corporations that operate 63 U.S.-Flag vessels on the Great Lakes. These vessels carry the raw materials that drive the nation's economy: Iron ore and fluxstone for the steel industry, limestone, and cement for the construction industry, coal for power generation.... Collectively, these vessels can transport as much as 125 million tons of cargo a year when high water levels offset the lack of adequate dredging of Great Lakes ports and waterways. More information is available at www.lcships.com.

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Information based on data from knowledgeable sources. However, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Lake Carriers' Association assumes no legal responsibility for the outcome of decisions or commitments made on the basis of this information. This report represents the views of Lake Carriers' Association and may not necessarily represent the views of its individual members.

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The Association Representing Operators of U.S.-Flag Vessels on the Great Lakes

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