



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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Light Loading Plagues Industry

Increase In May Coal Cargos Still Falls Short Of Fleet's Capacity

CLEVELAND---Vessels' inability to carry full loads again hampered the coal trade on the Great Lakes. While May shipments totaled 4.6 million tons, an increase of 5.5 percent compared to a year ago, tens of thousands of tons of coal were not carried because decades of inadequate funding for dredging ports and waterways are often forcing vessels to light load.

The port of Green Bay, Wisconsin is a case in point. Vessels serving one of the coal-receiving docks on the Fox River were leaving behind approximately 2,500 tons of coal because of draft limitations. For the vessels in question, 2,500 tons is about 15 percent of their designed carrying capacity when hauling coal.

Wyandotte, Michigan is another port where draft restrictions are reducing coal deliveries. A vessel that has a rated capacity of 19,500 tons of coal per trip could only carry 15,490 tons on a recent delivery to Wyandotte. In this instance, lack of dredging negated nearly 21 percent of the vessel's carrying capacity.

For the year, the Lakes coal trade stands at 12.3 million tons, an increase of 7.5 percent compared to the same point in 2005. The trade is 13.8 percent ahead of its 5-year average for the January-May time frame.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 18 American corporations that operate 62 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.

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

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GLF GREAT LAKES FLEET CORP. • GRAND RIVER NAVIGATION COMPANY, INC. • GREAT LAKES FLEET, INC. / KEY LAKES, INC. • HMC SHIP MANAGEMENT LTD.
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