Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

October 19, 2004

The Greatest Ships on the Great Lakes

Year-To-Date Total Still Represents An Increase of 3.1 Percent

Great Lakes Coal Trade Down 6.5 Percent In September

Coal shipments on the Great Lakes totaled 4.1 million net tons in September, a decrease of 6.5 percent compared to a year ago and a drop of 5.9 percent compared to the month's 5-year average. The decrease from last September is somewhat misleading, as shipments from Superior Midwest Energy Terminal in Superior, Wisconsin were exceptionally strong a year ago. On a 5-year average basis, the decrease reflects declines in loadings of eastern coal at Lake Erie ports.

For the year, the Great Lakes coal trade stands at 28.2 million net tons, an increase of 3.1 percent compared to the same point in 2003, but a decrease of 2.4 percent compared to the 5-year average for the January-September timeframe. Shipments of western coal from Lake Superior and Lake Michigan ports continue to outpace both last year and the 5-year average, but loadings at Lake Erie terminals remain sluggish compared to previous years.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 15 American corporations that operate 57 U.S.-Flag vessels on the Great Lakes. These vessels carry the raw materials that drive the nation's economy: Iron ore 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. For more information on Great Lakes shipping, visit LCA's Web site: www.lcaships.com.

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