



Lake Carriers' Association For Immediate Release

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Plunging Water Levels Take Toll on Loads

Better Weather Boosts November Iron Ore Trade on Lakes

Cleveland---Thanks to significantly fewer weather-related delays, the iron ore trade on the Great Lakes in November increased 16.4 percent compared to a year ago. However, the upturn does not reflect market conditions, but rather that high winds and storms kept the U.S.-Flag Great Lakes fleet at anchor for more than 5,000 hours in November 2005.

The precipitous drop in water levels on Lake Superior again severely limited vessel loads in November. A 1,000-foot-long U.S.-Flag Laker that was able to carry nearly 67,600 net tons of iron ore from a Lake Superior port to an Indiana steel mill in one trip in August saw its best load fall to 62,300 net tons in November. If Great Lakes ports and waterways were dredged to allow the vessel to load to its full marks, its cargos would top 71,000 net tons each trip.

Smaller U.S.-Flag Lakers suffered similar fates in November. A vessel delivering iron ore from Lake Superior to an Ohio steelmaker had to trim more than 1,300 net tons off its top loads of just a few months ago.

For the year, the Lakes iron ore trade stands at 54.5 million net tons, an increase of 4.2 percent compared to both the same point in 2005 and the 5-year average for the January-November 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.lcaships.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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