



# Lake Carriers' Association

## For Immediate Release

April 13, 2010

### U.S.-Flag Cargos on Lakes More Than Quadruple in March

CLEVELAND—With America's steel industry on the mend, U.S.-flag lakers charged back to work in March. The fleet hauled 2,551,166 tons of cargo, more than four times the volume moved a year ago when the nation's economic pulse was weak.

Coal loadings showed a marked improvement over a year ago, increasing almost six-fold.

Another factor in the March upturn was the sterling performance of the U.S. Coast Guard's icebreaking resources. All eight vessels stationed on the Great Lakes aided in the resumption of navigation. The U.S. Coast Guard also transferred an East Coast icebreaker, the PENOBSCOT BAY, to the Lakes for the ice season, and that vessel was actively engaged in facilitating commerce in March.

Canada's two icebreakers also made significant contributions to the flow of vital cargoes in March.

The importance of both Coast Guards' icebreaking missions cannot be overstated. Although some freighters have ice-strengthened hulls, icebreakers must open and maintain the shipping lanes. In a strong economy, 15 to 20 percent of all Lakes commerce can move during the December 16 – April 15 ice season.

The 32 U.S.-flag lakers in service on April 1 is another indication of a strengthening economy. Only 17 U.S. hulls were in operation a year ago, and a 1,000-foot-long vessel would be forced to lay-up after carrying only four cargoes and remain idle until September.

Through March U.S.-flag cargoes total 4.9 million tons, more than triple the amount floated a year ago. However, shipments are 15 percent off the 5-year average for the January-March timeframe.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 18 American companies that operate 55 U.S.-Flag vessels on the Great Lakes and 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 more than 115 million tons of cargo a year when high water offsets lack of adequate dredging. More information is available at [www.lcaships.com](http://www.lcaships.com).

Source: Lake Carriers' Association.

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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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