



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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Short Loads Reduce Capacity

Only Slight Gain In U.S. Shipping on Lakes In May

CLEVELAND---The major U.S.-Flag vessel operators working the Great Lakes moved 12.2 million net tons of cargo in May, a slight increase over the corresponding period in 2005. The May float also was 4.6 percent ahead of the month's 5-year average. However, the totals for May 2002 and May 2003 reflect depressed market conditions that no longer prevail.

Lack of adequate dredging continued to affect cargo movement on the Great Lakes. The largest coal cargo to transit the locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, in a 1,000-foot-long U.S.-Flag Laker totaled 64,319 net tons, well below the record of 70,903 set in 1997 when high water levels helped mask the effects of inadequate dredging.

Light loading was evident in all trades. The largest iron ore cargo loaded during May in a U.S.-Flag Laker totaled 64,366 net tons, only 92 percent of the vessel's carrying capacity. The largest limestone cargo carried in a U.S. bottom totaled 32,888 net tons. The vessel has hauled as much as 34,557 net tons of limestone in a single trip, so lack of adequate dredging effectively reduced the vessel's carrying capacity by 5 percent.

For the year, U.S.-Flag carriage stands at 30,251,198 net tons, an increase of 2.3 percent compared to the same point in 2005. The increase compared to the 5-year average for the January-May timeframe - 14 percent - is somewhat skewed by very sluggish iron ore totals in 2002 and 2003.

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 transport as much as 125 million tons of cargo a year.

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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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