



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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Iron Ore Slowdown Offsets Strong Demand for Coal

U.S.-Flag Great Lakes Fleet Cargo Total Slips in July

Cleveland---The U.S.-Flag Great Lakes fleet moved 11.9 million net tons of dry-bulk cargo in July, a decrease of 3.6 percent compared to a year ago. However, the July float still represents an increase of 1.3 percent compared to the month's 5-year average.

The hot weather that gripped the region in July boosted utilities' demand for coal in July. Shipments of coal in U.S.-Flag Lakers totaled 3.1 million net tons, a significant increase both over a year ago and the month's 5-year average. The 2.1 million net tons of western coal loaded at Superior Midwest Energy Terminal in Superior, Wisconsin, are the most the fleet has ever taken on at the facility in one month since its opening in the mid-1970s.

Iron ore shipments in U.S. bottoms slipped noticeably in July as a result of the slowdown in steel production. Iron ore cargos totaled 4.8 million net tons, a decrease of 5.8 percent compared to the corresponding period last year and even more, 10.2 percent, weighed against the month's 5-year average.

With about 40 percent of the limestone moved on the Lakes used in the steelmaking process, that trade also declined in July. Shipments in U.S.-Flag Lakers fell 11.1 percent compared to a year ago, but remained slightly ahead of the 5-year average. The decline also reflects some sluggishness in the construction market.

Through July, the U.S.-Flag Great Lakes fleet has moved 53.5 million net tons of dry-bulk cargo. Compared to a year, the U.S.-Flag float is down 1.9 percent. However, shipments remain well ahead of the 5-year average. Coal is the bright spot at this point in the year. The 13.1 million net tons carried to date represent an increase of 13.5 percent compared to a year ago. The growth in coal is even greater -- 20 percent -- when measured against the 5-year average.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 12 American corporations that operate 55 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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The Association Representing Operators of U.S.-Flag Vessels on the Great Lakes

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