



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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Light Loads Contribute to 7 Percent Drop In U.S.-Flag Cargo Movement on Lakes in September

Cleveland—Less-than-full cargo holds again cost U.S.-Flag Great Lakes fleets hundreds of thousands of tons in September. With scores of ports not maintained to project dimensions, and a plunging water level on Lake Superior, the major U.S.-Flag operators saw their loadings slip to 11.1 million tons, a decrease of 7 percent compared to a year ago. The September float was also more than 3 percent behind the month's 5-year average.

No trade was immune to the impacts of the dredging crisis and falling water levels. In the iron ore trade, vessels that were designed to carry approximately 70,000 tons per trip often left port with less than 64,000 tons on board.

The coal trade fared no better. In fact, shoaling outside Muskegon, Michigan, produced the worst light load of the month. A vessel capable of hauling more than 68,000 tons of coal per trip was limited to 57,169 tons when she took a load to the power plant at Muskegon at month's end.

The largest limestone cargo loaded in September totaled 49,307 tons. However, had the vessel in question been able to carry a full load, the cargo would have approached 54,000 tons.

Through the third quarter, U.S.-Flag carriage stands at 73.8 million tons, a decrease of 5.4 percent from the same point in 2006, but essentially on par with the 5-year average for the January-September 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 transport as much as 125 million tons of cargo a year when high water levels offset lack of adequate dredging. More information is available at 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.

The Association Representing Operators of U.S.-Flag Vessels on the Great Lakes

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