



# Lake Carriers' Association

## For Immediate Release

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### Anemic December Pulls Lakes Shipping Down for 2008

Cleveland — A 40-percent drop in cargo movement in December wiped out earlier gains and produced a 3-percent decrease in U.S.-Flag shipping on the Great Lakes in 2008. The 101 million net tons of dry-bulk cargo transported by U.S.-Flag lakers in 2008 also represented a 4.5 percent decrease from the trade's 5-year average.

The iron ore trade finished in a virtual tie with a year ago – 47.2 million net tons. Yet as late as November, shipments of iron ore in U.S. hulls were up by 2.2 million net tons. The iron ore trade crumbled in December.

At 25 million net tons, coal shipments represent a small decrease from 2007. However, the 18 million net tons of low sulfur coal loaded at Superior Midwest Energy Terminal in Superior, Wisconsin set a new benchmark for the U.S.-Flag Lakes fleet.

Limestone loadings finished the year at 23.6 million net tons, a decrease of 9 percent compared to 2007. However, compared to the fleet's 5-year average for stone, cargos were off more than 14 percent. The trade was sluggish all year, primarily because of the decline in heavy construction and the housing market. Then, in December, with steel mills banking furnaces, the fluxstone market collapsed too.

Of the other dry-bulk commodities carried by the fleet, only salt held even with 2007. Cement, sand, and grain were all down compared to 2007.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 16 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 more than 115 million tons of cargo a year when high water levels offset lack of adequate dredging. More information is available at [www.lcaship.com](http://www.lcaship.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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