

Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

April 18, 2018



U.S.-Flag Cargo Movement on Lakes Down 13 Percent in March

CLEVELAND — U.S.-flag Great Lakes freighters (lakers) moved 1.8 million tons of cargo in March, a decrease of 13 percent compared to a year ago. However, the March float topped the month's 5-year average by more than 15 percent.

Iron ore cargos for steel production dominated the month. Cargos totaled 1.4 million tons, a decrease of 17 percent. That no iron ore moved from Escanaba, Michigan, is a factor in the decrease. That port used to resume iron ore shipments in early to mid-March. However, the mine that shipped through Escanaba has been indefinitely idled. Therefore, the iron ore trade to domestic steelmakers could not resume until the locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, reopened on March 25.

March coal shipments dipped by more than half, but limestone cargos nearly quadrupled to 185,000 tons.

Year-to-date U.S.-flag carriage stands at 3.3 million tons, a decrease of 22 percent compared to the first quarter of 2017. (Only one cargo [limestone] moved in February.) Iron ore cargos are down by 20 percent. Coal trails a year ago by 70 percent, but limestone has more than quadrupled.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 13 American companies that operate 45 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, aggregate and cement for the construction industry, coal for power generation, as well as salt, sand and grain. Collectively, these vessels can transport more than 100 million tons of cargo per year. More information is available at www.lcaships.com.

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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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