



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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Ice Didn't Loosen Its Stranglehold on U.S.-Flag Lakers in April

CLEVELAND—U.S.-flag Great Lakes freighters (“lakers”) moved only 3.8 million tons of cargo in April, a decrease of nearly 50 percent compared to a year ago. Heavy ice, especially on Lake Superior, slowed transits to not much more than crawl at times. In fact, the ice on Lake Superior was so challenging that it was not until May 2 that the U.S. Coast Guard stopping convoying vessels and allowed lakers to operate on those waters without escort.

Iron ore cargos totaled less than 2 million tons in April, a decrease of 52 percent compared to a year ago. With all but one of the U.S. iron ore loading ports located on Lake Superior, ice was again the reason for the plunge in shipments.

Coal shipments in U.S.-flag lakers totaled just 630,000 tons in April, a decrease of nearly 60 percent compared to a year ago. Again, the biggest drop came in loadings at a Lake Superior port.

Limestone cargos totaled 875,000 tons, a decrease of 36 percent compared to a year ago. While no stone originates on Lake Superior, the trade was still impacted by the ice as some of the lower horsepower vessels that serve stone quarries delayed their sailings rather than become beset in ice on the lower Lakes.

Year-to-date U.S.-flag carriage stands at 6.9 million tons, a decrease of 45 percent compared to the same point in 2013. Iron ore cargos are down 46 percent. Coal shipments are off by 41 percent, and loadings of limestone are 47 percent behind last year's pace.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 17 American companies that operate 57 U.S.-flag vessels on the Great Lakes that 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 115 million tons of cargo per year.

More information is available at www.lcaships.com. Contact: Glen G. Nekvasil, Vice President (440-333-9996).

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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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