



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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August Another Strong Month for U.S.-Flag Lakes Fleet

CLEVELAND — U.S.-flag Great Lakes freighters (lakers) moved 11 million tons of cargo in August, their second-highest monthly total in two years. The August float, while down 3.2 percent from July, also represents an increase of 5 percent compared to a year ago.

Iron ore for steel production totaled 5.5 million tons, an increase of 23 percent compared to a year ago. Higher water levels again allowed some cargos to approach 70,000 tons, but with 18 million cubic yards of sediment clogging ports and waterways, the industry continues to surrender carrying capacity to the dredging crisis. The top ore loads in August were still about 3,000 tons short of what vessels were carrying in 1997, a period of near record-high water levels.

Coal cargos totaled 2 million tons, a decrease of 19 percent compared to a year ago. Loadings at Lake Michigan and Lake Erie ports were largely unchanged from a year ago, but shipments from Lake Superior ports fell by 25 percent.

Shipments of limestone totaled 2.8 million tons, a decrease of 7 percent compared to last year.

Year-to-date, U.S.-flag cargo movement stands at 49.4 million tons, a decrease of 7.7 percent compared to a year ago. Higher water levels and increased vessel utilization rates are allowing the fleet to narrow the gap between this year and last caused by the brutal winter of 2013/2014. At the end of April, for example, U.S.-flag cargo movement was 45 percent off the previous year's pace. However, Great Lakes water levels normally begin their seasonal decline in the fall, so going forward, loads will likely be smaller.

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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