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**Contact: Laura M. Blades
202-558-5123**

Bi-national study highlights green advantages of Great Lakes-Seaway shipping

Washington, D.C. (February 5, 2013) – A comprehensive report released today has defined the modal and environmental advantages of using marine shipping to transport goods in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway region.

A study titled *The Environmental and Social Impacts of Marine Transport in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway Region* was conducted by Ontario transportation consultants Research and Traffic Group, and peer reviewed by independent experts in the U.S. and Canada. The study found that Great Lakes ships are more fuel-efficient and emit fewer greenhouse gases per thousand cargo-ton miles than land-based alternatives.

The study also calculated that the shift from marine to road and/or rail modes of transport would lead to increased societal impacts including additional traffic congestion, higher infrastructure maintenance costs, and significantly greater levels of noise.

This bi-national research project is the first time a study has examined the external impacts of the U.S., Canadian, and international fleets operating on the navigation system, using actual data from all three categories of shipowners. Previous studies of the three modes of transport drew comparisons based on the average performance of each mode, rather than making a like-for-like comparison based on each mode carrying the same cargo mix.

According to marine industry stakeholders, the study's results underscore the importance of investing in the infrastructure and technology required to foster growth in Great Lakes-Seaway transportation.

Steven A. Fisher, Executive Director of the American Great Lakes Ports Association, said: "The study findings present a more complete picture of shipping in the Great Lakes in terms of the benefits of this mode of transportation. Data from the study will help inform future decisions on subjects ranging from investments in new technologies, budget allocations for infrastructure projects, and appropriate levels of regulation, to name just a few. The marine industry now has the information it needs to address questions by federal and state governments on the value of shipping to its constituents."

Mark W. Barker, President, The Interlake Steamship Company, added that this study provides additional foundational data that will help the Great Lakes marine industry continue to reduce its environmental footprint. He said, "Interlake was pleased to be part of this groundbreaking study. As a company, we are committed to minimizing the impact our fleet has on the environment. Our vessels carry more than 20 million gross tons annually, and do so using significantly less fuel per ton than it would take to move the same cargo by land-based modes. With continual improvement



programs, new technologies, and regulatory changes we see the benefits of marine shipping increase in the future.”

In terms of energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions, the study finds that:

- The Great Lakes-Seaway fleet is nearly 7 times more fuel-efficient than trucks and 1.14 times more fuel-efficient than rail.
- Rail and trucks would emit 19 percent and 533 percent more greenhouse gas emissions respectively if these modes carried the same cargo the same distance as the Great Lakes-Seaway fleet.

The study also emphasizes the significant role that marine shipping plays in reducing congestion on roads and railways:

- It would take 3 million train trips to carry the total cargo transported by the Great Lakes-Seaway fleet in 2010, as much as double the existing traffic on some rail lines in Canada and at least a 50 percent increase in traffic on some of the busiest lines in the U.S.
- It would take 7.1 million truck trips to carry the total cargo transported by the Great Lakes-Seaway fleet in 2010. That would increase existing truck traffic by between 35 to 100 percent depending on the highway.
- If Great Lakes-Seaway marine shipping cargo shifted permanently to trucks, it would lead to \$4.6 billion in additional highway maintenance costs over a 60-year period.

An additional assessment gauged the long term efficiency and emissions performance of Great Lakes vessels **after** meeting new regulatory standards and achieving improvements with new technology and the use of low sulphur fuels between 2012 to 2025. The Great Lakes-Seaway fleet would record significant decreases in emissions as follows:

- GHG emission reductions of 32 percent
- NOx emission reductions of 86 percent
- SOx emission reductions of 99.9 percent
- Particulate Matter emission reductions of 85 percent

-30-

Note: An Executive Summary of the study is attached and is also available at www.marinedelivers.com. Photos and B-roll video can be found at www.marinedelivers.com/media-center.

The Great Lakes-Seaway marine shipping industry supports 227,000 jobs in the U.S. and Canada, generates \$35 billion in business revenue, and moves 164 million metric tons of cargo annually on the system. This vital trade corridor saves companies \$3.6 billion per year in transportation costs compared to the next least-costly land-based alternative. **Follow Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway shipping news on www.marinedelivers.com and on Twitter @MarineDelivers.**

Marine Delivers is a bi-national, industry collaboration that aims to demonstrate the positive economic and environmental benefits, safety, energy efficiency, and sustainability of the shipping industry throughout the Great Lakes-Seaway System. The Marine Delivers initiative is administered by the American Great Lakes Ports Association in the United States, and the Chamber of Marine Commerce in Canada.