



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **St. Lawrence Seaway cargo shipments up 3 percent U.S. grain makes a comeback**

**Washington, D.C. (September 4, 2014)** – The St. Lawrence Seaway reported that year-to-date cargo shipments of more than 20 million metric tons moved through the system for the period March 28 to August 31 – an increase of 3 percent over August 2013. U.S. grain was up for the first time this shipping season posting 13.3 percent in the positive number column.

“The USDA’s forecast for near historic yields of wheat, corn, and soybeans is being proven accurate as nearly four times as much U.S. grain (162,000 million tons) moved through Seaway locks this August compared to a year ago,” said Rebecca Spruill, SLSDC Director of Trade Development. “With total transits increasing monthly following a sluggish opening, the potential for the Seaway to out-do last year is on the horizon.”

Grain was the story at the Port of Oswego with a record breaking soybean crop. “We are scrambling to get warehouses ready for crop loading and our systems optimized,” said Zelko Kirincich, Executive Director and CEO of the Port. “We are anticipating doubling our grain shipments to Asia and Europe this year with Perdue Agribusiness as our partner. Given the infrastructure improvements made to the rail and intermodal yard, we will have an economic shipping edge out of central New York.” The Port is also projecting a modest increase in corn shipments as local ethanol production has grown dramatically.

The Port of Indiana-Burns Harbor posted overall shipment increases of 25 percent through August, led by significant surges in steel and grain, which were both more than double the year-to-date totals for 2013. “We’ve seen significant increases in steel shipments from Europe for the automotive and appliance industries,” said Port Director Rick Heimann. “This has included coils, rods, plate, slabs and other semi-finished products for steel processors and distributors in the Midwest from ports throughout the world, including Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, and Brazil. We’ve also had increases in grain exports as local farmers prepare for what is projected to be another large harvest.”

The Port of Monroe shipped two loads of synthetic gypsum – the first export in the Port’s history. The synthetic gypsum is produced as a byproduct of the scrubbing process at DTE Energy’s Monroe Power Plant. The first shipment of 4,916 tons was loaded on August 8, followed two days later with a shipment of 5,265 tons headed to Port Colborne, Ontario by Pere Marquette shipping. Port Director Paul LaMarre stated that the Port will be the primary distribution point for this cargo beginning in

2015 across all modes. He added that an investment of \$500,000 in cargo equipment was recently made by DRM Terminal Management in preparation of this new business opportunity. It is anticipated that the Monroe Power Plant will produce 400,000 to 600,000 tons of synthetic gypsum annually.

The Port of Muskegon received three additional shipments of wind farm components in August. *HR Constitution* and *HR Maria* arrived on August 11 and 29 respectively carrying tower sections for the Beebe Community Wind Project in Gratiot County, Michigan. The tower sections originated in Ciwadan, Indonesia. *HHL Congo* arrived on August 18 with wind turbine blades from Brake, Germany for the Beebe Wind Project, as well as blades and nacelles manufactured by Gamesa in Spain for Big Turtle Wind Farm located in eastern Huron County, Michigan. The West Michigan Dock and Market Corporation teamed with KK Integrated Logistics to handle the stevedoring of the components of all three shipments. Terry Sabo, Chairman of the Port Advisory Committee, stated that the Port continues to market its capability to efficiently handle dimensional cargo and other large-scale projects.

August proved to be another strong month for cargo volume at the Port of Cleveland. General cargo tonnage rose by 11 percent compared to August 2013, and year-to-date our tonnage has increased by more than 25 percent compared to 2013. “This growth can be attributed to strong demand in the manufacturing sector, including the automotive industry, and higher demand for project cargo moves. The Cleveland-Europe Express continues to gain momentum in the market, and we are pleased that customers who have used, and continue to use, this new service provide us with positive feedback that the CEE is indeed a viable alternative to East Coast and Gulf Coast ports,” said David Gutheil, Vice President Maritime and Logistics.

The Port of Detroit welcomed five vessels in August carrying steel shipments including primarily coils and plate arriving from ports in the UK, Canada and Italy destined for steel processors and distributors in the region. “August was a strong month for the Port of Detroit, importing over 17,000 tons of steel that will almost exclusively be used in manufacturing automobiles. In addition to our relationship with the automotive industry, we are constantly looking for new opportunities to assist all businesses with their logistics needs and to move the economy in southeast Michigan forward.”

The St. Lawrence Seaway reported that iron ore and coal remained down by 29 and 14 percent respectively. General Cargo continued its upswing at 67 percent overall with iron and steel, and steel slabs posting increases of 77 and 317 percent respectively over 2013. The liquid bulk category recorded a downturn of 16 percent to 1.8 million metric tons. The dry bulk category was down 1 percent over 2013. However, within that category, stone, salt, cement, ores, and fertilizers were all in the positive column, with ores at a 51 percent hike.