

Great Lakes Commercial Shipping: A Look Forward.

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In the development of the Great Lakes region, water was not just important; it was the most important factor for guiding settlement and creating a globally-significant industrial base. Nearly everything revolved around rivers, canals and the Great Lakes from exploration to trade and population settlement. It was water transportation that was the foundation of shore-based manufacturing and related activities. In many cases, the waterborne shipment option for raw material delivery and movement of finished goods was a major locational determinant. Over time with major infrastructure investment by Canada and the U.S., a highly efficient maritime system evolved that serves both domestic and overseas markets. Regional vessel and marine terminal technology led the world for many years. A maturing maritime system is facing increasing challenges ranging from maintaining adequate dredging for the long-term to responding to a dynamic world trading environment.