

## 2024 Cruise Season in Review



At CLIA Cruise Week Europe in Genoa, Italy, (L-R): Rebecca Spruill Yackley, GLS Director, Trade and Economic Development; Kelly Craighead, President and CEO, CLIA - Cruise Lines International Association; GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht; Jazmine Jurkiewicz, GLS International Trade Specialist; and Sylvonica Madlock, GLS Executive Officer.

For this year, six cruise lines sailed a total of eight vessels providing approximately 140,000 passenger visits to Great Lakes ports. Despite the reduction in the number of vessels compared to last year, passenger counts were not as severely affected as initially feared and the continued interest in the Great Lakes destinations remains strong.

This is demonstrated by the anticipated return of Victory Cruise Lines for the 2025 season. With previous experience on the Great Lakes and the knowledgeable team being reassembled, the strides Victory has made are assured and moving swiftly. Welcome news, indeed!

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### ADMINISTRATOR'S COLUMN

#### Reflections on My Time as GLS Administrator: A Journey of Growth, Stewardship, and Accomplishment



Adam Tindall-Schlicht  
GLS Administrator

As I have approached my final days serving as Administrator of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS), it is with deep gratitude, humility, and a sense of fulfillment that I reflect on the journey we have traveled together. This role has not only been an incredible honor but also a profound personal and professional growth experience. As this chapter closes, I want to take a moment to share what the Seaway has meant to me and highlight some of the incredible milestones we've achieved together over the past two years.

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### GUEST COLUMN

#### New Leadership at the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation



Jim Athanasiou,  
President and CEO,  
The St. Lawrence Seaway  
Management Corporation

In June 2024, I was honoured to be named President and CEO of the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC), succeeding Terence Bowles. This role marks a significant milestone in my 16-year Seaway career, during which I have had the privilege of working alongside a team of dedicated professionals committed to advancing the marine industry. Since stepping into this position, I've been meeting stakeholders on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border, gaining a deeper understanding of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway system's crucial economic impact on our two countries.

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**2024 CRUISE SEASON IN REVIEW**  
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Much of these successes can be tied to the continued marketing efforts spearheaded by various organizations throughout the Great Lakes. For the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS), the continued partnership with Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) has been catalytic.

It has provided access to cruise line executives through participation at events like CLIA's Ports & Destinations Dialogue (Hamburg, Germany – September 2023), CLIA Cruise Week (Genoa, Italy – March 2024), CLIA's Business on the Beach at Seatrade (Miami, Fla. – April 2024), and CLIA's Cruise Forward Summit (Miami, Fla. – November 2024).

As is tradition, the GLS exhibited at Seatrade Cruise Global, Miami, Fla., the world's largest cruising exhibition. This year the GLS hosted a 16-member delegation that all

worked hand in hand to raise the awareness of the Great Lakes as a destination of choice. A new venture for promoting Great Lakes cruising was also spearheaded by the GLS through exhibiting at Seatrade Europe (Hamburg, Germany – September 2023). It was a smaller audience than Seatrade Global, but as the only North American exhibitor, the GLS delegation saw the caliber and quality of the conversations expand. And lastly, representatives from the GLS Office of Trade & Economic Development met with cruise line and trade publications at Cruise Canada New England (CCNE) Symposium (New York, N.Y. - June 2024). The one-on-one conversations focused on the Great Lakes as a growing destination for passengers.

An additional initiative fostered by GLS to facilitate Great Lakes cruising included coordination and site visits with U.S. Customs and Border Protection Headquarters staff to understand the unique assets and challenges of clearing passengers at Great Lakes ports. With visits to Sault Ste Marie, Cleveland, Detroit, and Duluth, GLS staff were provided the opportunity to view the passenger clearance process at the only four compliant U.S. ports of arrival in the Great Lakes. The intent with this outreach was to open communication between the headquarters Officers and the local ports to collaborate on options for creating a smoother clearance process and continue promoting the growth of Great Lakes cruising. ●●●



At Seatrade Cruise Global in Miami, Fla., (L-R): Maria Cartier, Matt Grimes, and Kate Ferguson.



At Seatrade Cruise Global in Miami, Fla., (L-R): Paul Pepe, Aaron Bensinger, Stef Scourtellis, Theresa Nemetz, Korey Garceau, Rebecca Yackley, Ryan Inman, Adam Tindall-Schlicht, Mary Glad, Alex Lasry, Jazmine Jurkiewicz, Amanda Reitz, John Dunn. Not pictured: Cindy Larsen, DaveGutheil, John Jamian, Travis Jackson.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S COLUMN: MY TIME AS GLS ADMINSTRATOR**  
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When I first joined the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) as a young, career employee in 2008, I never imagined that I would one day hold the position of Administrator at the GLS. The road here was not linear, and it was filled with learning opportunities, challenges, and the chance to grow—not just as a professional, but as a person. Looking back on the experience, I can confidently say that the GLS, DOT and Massena will always feel like home. The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway maritime community too welcomed me with open arms, and I am deeply grateful for the trust you placed in me to lead the GLS and to represent the industry as one of its leaders.

One of the achievements I am most proud of during my time as Administrator is the realization of the Green Shipping Corridor Network (GSCN). Environmental stewardship has always been at the heart of our work at the GLS and of my passion, and this initiative is a testament to our commitment to reducing the maritime industry's carbon footprint and fostering a sustainable future for the Great Lakes. The collaborative spirit that fueled the GSCN, particularly through several working groups and the two Collaborative Forums, has been an inspiring example of how we can come together to address climate adaptation, coastal resiliency, and environmental preservation.

The GSCN is more than just a plan; it is a framework for action, one that is already beginning to reshape how we approach maritime transportation in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System. This effort is not just about ensuring that our waterway remains viable for future generations; it is about making it a model for the world. I have seen firsthand how the Seaway's commitment to green shipping is not just good for the environment but also for the economy. The partnerships we've forged with stakeholders at every level—from local communities to international allies—will continue to drive these efforts forward long after my departure.

Another defining aspect of my tenure has been the strengthening of the binational relationship between the U.S. and Canada. Working alongside our Canadian counterparts, we have fostered closer ties across all levels of government—local, state, provincial, federal, and international. The whole-of-government response to the Canadian Seaway strike in October 2024 stands as a testament to the resilience and collaboration between our two nations. The successful resolution of that challenge required coordination at every level, and I am immensely proud of how we came together to ensure that the Seaway remains operational going forward and that the binational Seaway workforce is supported.

In addition, the Seaway's growth in international trade routes, including the signing of Memoranda of Cooperation (MOCs) with Niedersachsen (Germany), Bilbao (Spain), and Genoa (Italy), has expanded our reach and deepened our engagement with global partners. These agreements are not just symbolic; they represent a commitment to growing the Seaway's role as a critical global trade artery. The future of the Seaway depends on these relationships, and we are in an even stronger position today thanks to the hard work of so many.

I have been fortunate to work alongside some truly exceptional people during my time as Administrator. I want to take a moment to acknowledge the contributions of a few individuals whose leadership and support have been instrumental in our success. Jim Athanasiou, SLSMC President and CEO, Anthony (Tony) Fisher, GLS Deputy Administrator, and Jeff Scharf, GLS Associate Administrator, have all been invaluable partners in navigating the challenges we've faced and helping the Seaway continue to grow and thrive. Their insights, commitment, and hard work will continue to have a lasting impact on the Seaway's operations and our mission.

Our GLS Advisory Board, including David McMillan, Bill Mielke, and Art Sulzer, and many other GLS leaders, supervisors, and managers have been an incredible resource for expertise, guidance and leadership. The strategic vision and dedication to the success of the Seaway of so many have helped chart the course for our continued growth.

I also want to extend my personal thanks to the GLS workforce. We've had many accomplishments together, from maximizing the Seaway shipping season in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 to advancing key infrastructure projects like the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) and Seaway Infrastructure Program (SIP). The construction and activation of the new Seaway Visitor Center in Massena is one example of how we have invested in our future, while also securing the highest level of bipartisan funding in the history of the GLS budget. This Visitor Center is not just a building; it is a symbol of our dedication to education, history, and the community that surrounds us.

The signing of a new, multi-year Collective Bargaining Agreement with the unionized workforce of the GLS has also been a major milestone during this time. It represents our commitment to ensuring that the Seaway workforce is supported, respected, and empowered. This agreement is a testament to the strong partnership between management and labor, and it will continue to provide a foundation for the GLS workforce for years to come.



(L-R): Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht, Consul General of Canada in Chicago Aaron Annable, and then-SLSMC President/CEO Terence Bowles during the first-ever Collaborative Forum in Chicago, Ill. to establish a Green Shipping Corridor Network (GSCN) on the Great Lakes.



Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht (right) was proud to sign a MOC with Bilbao Port's director of Operations, Commercial, Logistics and Strategy, Andima Ormaetxe (left). The MOC aims to improve mutual collaboration, explore the development of commercial relations between both territories, and exchange information.

**ADMINISTRATORS COLUMN: MY TIME AS GLS ADMINSTRATOR**  
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Equally important is our continued support of the North Country community overall, which has long been the heart of the GLS workforce. I have had the privilege of partnering with local and state officials to ensure that the economic benefits of the Seaway are felt in these communities, and I am particularly proud of our efforts in developing new partnerships, with a focus on truth and reconciliation, with the Akwesasne people.

I would be remiss if I didn't extend my deepest gratitude to President Biden, Vice President Harris, Transportation Secretary Buttigieg, and Deputy Transportation Secretary Polly Trottenberg for their unwavering support during my time as Administrator. Their leadership and commitment to the Seaway and to broader transportation infrastructure revitalization have been essential in securing the resources and opportunities we need to succeed at the GLS and across the Great Lakes region. I want to also thank the Seaway's customers and our many partners across the maritime and trade sectors. Your collaboration has been critical in advancing our shared goals. I also want to thank the countless organizations invested in the future of the Great Lakes economy as the work we've done together has been truly transformative.

Most importantly, I extend my deepest gratitude to my family, whose unwavering support and sacrifices have made it possible for me to serve as Administrator. The constant travel—from across the Great Lakes to Massena, D.C., and around the world—has been a significant challenge, but I have always been able to rely on the love and encouragement of those closest to me. To my husband, Aaron, thank you for being my rock, for your patience, and for standing by me through every long day and every trip. To my parents and parents-in-law, your love, guidance, and belief in me have been invaluable. And to our daughter, who we were fortunate enough to welcome during my time as Administrator—your presence has been a daily reminder of the importance of family and of why we work to build a better future.

As the youngest and first openly gay Administrator in GLS history, I have often reflected on the extraordinary path that brought me here. This role was never something I envisioned for myself when I started my career, but I am forever grateful for the trust and support of my colleagues and partners who helped me grow both professionally and personally. The Seaway has shaped who I am today, and the friendships and relationships I've built here will last a lifetime. Thank you to all who have been part of this journey. Thank you for investing in me, for challenging me, and for allowing me to grow. The Seaway will always have a special place in my heart, and I look forward to seeing the continued success of this vital waterway in the years to come.

It has been an honor to serve as the Administrator of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. ●●●



*Cutting the ribbon on a new visitor center at U.S. Eisenhower Lock in Massena, N.Y., on May 13, 2024 (L-R): Ross Levi, Vice President/ Executive Director of Tourism, Empire State Development; David McMillan, Chairman, GLS Advisory Board; Ben Dixon, Executive Director, St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce; Town Supervisor Susan Bellor, Village of Massena, N.Y.; Deputy Secretary of Transportation Polly Trottenberg; William Mielke, Member, GLS Advisory Board; Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht, Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS); and Amy Stark, Visitor Center and Community Relations Manager, Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.*



*Administrator Tindall-Schlicht, U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, and Administrator Tindall-Schlicht's husband Aaron (A.J.) and their daughter, Camille during the Secretary's tour of Great Lakes ports, including Menominee, Manitowoc, and Milwaukee in July 2024.*



*New Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock in Massena, New York*

**GUEST COLUMN: NAVIGATING SUCCESS**  
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Today, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System is recognized as a vital artery for global trade. It connects North American ports to destinations around the world, offering a transportation solution that aligns with green initiatives, economic viability, and reliable operations.

As we look to the future, the Seaway's potential for growth is immense, with opportunities to significantly increase throughput. Maximizing this capacity and implementing sustainable practices will require collaboration and innovation from stakeholders across the marine industry. This focus is important because marine shipping remains the greenest mode of transportation, offering a significant advantage in reducing emissions and alleviating road congestion. While there is still work to be done in terms of sustainability, both countries are making progress on initiatives related to port electrification, low-carbon fuel implementation, shore power infrastructure, and clean vessel development.

It's a powerful fact worth repeating: moving 30,000 tonnes of cargo requires just one ship, compared to 964 trucks or 301 rail cars. Over the course of a year, this equates to removing over 1.2 million trucks from the road, reducing congestion and contributing to a cleaner, more sustainable supply chain.

Our organizations also have a strong track record of implementing innovative technologies. Our next significant initiative, the Voyage Information System, will further enhance the operational efficiency of the Seaway and Great Lakes, reinforcing our commitment to sustainable marine shipping and optimizing the navigation season.

To conclude, I am committed to advancing the work of my predecessors and ensuring that the SLSMC continues to play a pivotal role in the future of Great Lakes shipping, the North American economy, and its supply chain network. I want to highlight that the strength—and the 'shine'—of the Seaway lies in its role as a model of bi-national collaboration. The two Seaway Corporations have long enjoyed a strong working relationship, and I look forward to enhancing this partnership as we focus on our shared commitments to economic growth, environmental stewardship, and community engagement. ●●●

## Fireside Chat with the GLS Administrator: Departing Reflections from William Scriber, Executive Director and CEO, Port of Oswego Authority



William (Bill) Scriber, the Director at the [Port of Oswego Authority](#), has been a dedicated leader in the maritime industry, playing a key role in advancing the Great Lakes Seaway System. As Director Scriber prepares for retirement at the end of 2024, Adam Tindall-Schlicht, Administrator of the U.S. Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, sat down with Bill for a reflective conversation. They discussed his career

journey, the growth of the Port of Oswego, green shipping, infrastructure investment, and what the future holds for the Seaway System.

Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mizKuwlwqfY>

## International Trade Engagement



The fall of 2024 continued to see the GLS Office of Trade & Economic Development (OTED) effectively utilize the increased Trade Development Funding that Congress has furnished them. OTED's efforts continue to focus on raising the visibility and awareness of the Great Lakes St Lawrence Seaway system throughout the international maritime community. There were two high-profile opportunities to support that core mission this quarter, one held on each side of the Atlantic Ocean.

From October 8-10, the GLS joined over 100 other exhibitors at the Antwerp XL Exhibition & Conference in Antwerp, Belgium. As an exhibitor, the GLS leveraged their presence to amplify the Great Lakes St Lawrence Seaway system using a booth highlighting the entire region on a full wall-size map. The GLS engaged visitors ranging from shippers who use who system, those wholly unfamiliar with it, and those who know it exists but have never used it. In all cases, the OTED staff assisted them to better understand the Seaway's operations, international maritime connectivity, and cargo opportunities it presents.

The GLS was joined at this year's conference by Great Lakes St Lawrence Seaway stakeholders including representatives of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority, the Duluth terminal operator Lake Superior Warehousing, and Cleveland based World Group Logistics.

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**INTERNATIONAL TRADE ENGAGEMENT**  
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Hosted at the heart of the European breakbulk market, Antwerp XL provided a platform for participation from the breakbulk, roro, heavy lift, and project cargo industries. With 40 percent of attendees coming from outside of Europe, this year's conference provided valuable networking connections with maritime professionals. For GLS and attending stakeholders, the conference afforded them an opportunity to meet with a key Great Lakes partner the Port of Antwerp-Bruges. The Port not only is the origin for both of the liner services into the Great Lakes but host to a chemical industry cluster and a leader in the energy transition.

Also exhibiting this year were the two ocean carriers providing scheduled service from the Port of Antwerp-Bruges into the Lakes; Montreal-based Fednav represented by their Falline office staff in Antwerp, and Dutch carrier Spliethoff whose Great Lakes service and Mediterranean staffs were both present. Adding even more Seaway synergy to the exhibit floor was Ultrabulk, the Danish ocean carrier who has regular vessel transits into the Great Lakes originating from the Baltic Sea.

Overall, this year's show was attended by over 3800 industry professionals from 58 countries. Of note, the prestigious AXL "40 Under 40" Awards, which shine a spotlight on the industry's emerging talent, recognized the GLS' own International Trade Specialist Jazmine Jurkiewicz for her maritime contributions.

From Antwerp, the GLS trade team travelled to Houston, Texas and participated in the Breakbulk Americas Conference from October 15-17. The GLS joined with their Canadian partners at the SLSMC to promote the Seaway system in the HWY H2O booth. The bi-national Seaway contingent at this year's conference included over 20 Great Lakes Saint Lawrence seaway stakeholders including the ports of Hamilton-Oshawa (HOPA), Thunder Bay, Valleyfield, Milwaukee, Duluth, Toledo, Cleveland, Monroe, Ashtabula, Windsor, and Oswego. Mckeil Marine represented system carriers in attendance and logistics provider World Shipping, like the GLS staff, came to Houston directly from Antwerp XL.

Breakbulk Americas presented stakeholders an opportunity to engage with a variety of ocean carriers who operate in the Great Lakes including multi-purpose Spliethoff and heavy lift vessel operators BBC, Big Lift, Jumbo-SAL-Intermarine, and dShips.

One of the highlights during this year's conference was a visit to the HWY H2O booth by a delegation from the Port of Wilhelmshaven, a member of the Ports of Niedersachsen in Germany. A Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ports of Niedersachsen and HWY H2O was renewed in 2023 during a trade mission to Germany. Great Lakes stakeholders used the Port's visit to the HWY H2O booth to discuss ways to strengthen the trade lane between these two economically powerful regions of the world.



U.S. delegation during the Breakbulk Americas Conference in Houston, Texas.

In terms of scope, this year's conference hosted over 300 exhibitors with attendance from over 6000 maritime and transportation, logistics professionals involved in global trade with the Americas, including over 450 global shippers.

Crossing the Atlantic Ocean to exhibit in Antwerp and Houston back-to-back weeks highlights the commitment of the GLS Office of Trade and Economic Development to effectively educate the global maritime industry on the value of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System and the maritime supply chain it provides to the world's third-largest economy. ●●●



U.S. delegation during the international Antwerp XL Conference in Belgium.



At the international Antwerp XL Conference in Belgium, Jazmine Jurkiewicz, career International Trade Specialist at the GLS, was named a "40 Under 40" Honoree. This award is a prestigious recognition celebrating young professionals who have made significant contributions to the global breakbulk, maritime, and logistics industries.

## Highway H2O 2024 Conference Recap



Over 150 Seaway stakeholders gathered in Toronto from November 12-14, 2024 for the 19th Annual Highway H2O Conference. True to the theme, "Unlocking Potential: Journey to Great Lakes Success," the conference sessions explored strengths and successes of the System and how those successes were achieved. Equally, if not more, important, the sessions also explored opportunities for improvement as we looked towards the future.

SLSMC President and CEO Jim Athanasiou kicked off the conference with a warm welcome, reflections on the Seaway's strengths and opportunities, and an announcement that SLSMC's long-time Director of Market Development, Bruce Hodgson, would be retiring in January 2025. GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht echoed Mr. Athanasiou's pride of accomplishments from the past year, while also challenging Seaway stakeholders to rise to the challenges of the present and future, saying, "Don't just adapt to change. Lead the change."



(L-R): SLSMC President and CEO Jim Athanasiou and Administrator Tindall-Schlicht during the 19th Annual Hwy H2O Conference in Toronto.

With those opening salvos, the stage was set for honest but optimistic panel presentations, question-and-answer sessions, and networking time.

The first module, moderated by GLS's Peter Hirthe, explored Emerging Commodities & The Marine Mode. Sam Hankinson from the Port of Monroe, Darryl Markle from Parrish & Heimbecker, Ben Doornekamp from Picton Terminals, and Matthew Kendrick from McKeil Marine Limited presented their experiences with cargo diversification and their perspectives on how to grow the system. With the announcement this summer of two additional US ports ramping up to receive containers in the next two shipping seasons – Port of Monroe in 2025 and Ports of Indiana Burns Harbor in 2026 – much of the discussion gravitated to impacts that increased containerization could have on the Seaway System, especially if Canadian ports in the Great Lakes could add this capability.



Administrator Tindall-Schlicht delivered remarks during the 19th Annual Hwy H2O Conference in Toronto.

The second module, moderated by Brent Kinnaird of Inspire Marketing, was titled, "More Carriers, More Activity." This panel featured Dan McCarthy from McAsphalt Industries, Chad Allen from CanfoNav, Sten Konst from The Spliethoff Group, and Jack Meloche from the SLSMC. Like the first module, each presenter discussed wins they have experienced in the Lakes, but also laid out the challenges they see with suggestions on how to move forward. Perhaps most striking was Mr. Konst's calculation that a vessel sailing from Amsterdam to Thunder Bay is \$350,000 more expensive than the same vessel sailing from Amsterdam to Houston, even though the wdistance is roughly the same.

The third module, moderated by Dr. Robert Moorcroft of Tunley Environmental, addressed Moving Towards a Sustainable Seaway. Panelists Andreas Bullwinkel from the Seaports of Niedersachsen, Shayann Thomas from Warner Petroleum Company, Claudine Couture-Trudel from QSL, and Gregg Ruhl from Algoma Central Corporation, presented examples of work they are doing to drive sustainability, laying out potential paths that could be emulated by others in the system.

In addition to the three panels, the conference featured a session on the Ontario Marine Strategy and a keynote. Ashley Lawrence from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Steve Salmons from the Port of Windsor and Ontario Marine Council provided a comprehensive explanation of the Ontario Marine Strategy, its implementation, plans, and the impact it will have on the sector. Mr. Salmons noted, "Marine moves Ontario forward, but Ontario is also moving marine forward."

The keynote featured Jill Heinerth, Explorer in Residence at the Royal Canadian Geographic Society. Her experiences as a cave diver astounded and inspired the audience, providing a perspective that even the longest-serving employees in the marine industry rarely consider.

An underlying, unprompted theme that emerged from the conference was that of cooperation to move the System forward as a whole. Only through this holistic awareness and cooperation can we reach the full potential of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System. ●●●

Discover more about Highway H2O and the annual conference at <https://hwyh2o.com/>.



Peter Hirthe (far right), International Trade Specialist at the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation moderated a panel on Emerging Commodities and the Marine Mode discussing how the confluence of traditional staple cargoes with new emerging commodities feeds the continued vibrancy of the Seaway System.

Included in the panel: Darryl Markle, VP Terminal and Global Execution, Parrish & Heimbecker; Ben Doornekamp, President & CEO, Picton Terminals by Doornekamp; Matthew Kendrick, Senior Director, Commercial, McKeil Marine Limited; and Sam Hankinson, Port Development Coordinator, Port of Monroe.

## Agricultural Focus

Agricultural exports remain a strength of the Seaway. As of November 1, 2024, grain exports have increased 11.24 percent year-to-date over 2023. Even with this positive trend, there is still more room for growth.

The GLS Office of Trade and Economic Development (OTED) is making a focused effort to capitalize on this Seaway strength through strategic partnerships and key trade shows and conferences. Since August 2024, GLS has participated in five agriculture sector events designed to educate international buyers and connect them to US agricultural producers and shippers along the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System. All of these events have been undertaken in collaboration with agriculture partners, like the Soya and Specialty Grain Alliance (SSGA), U.S. Grains Council (USGC), U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), and Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS).

- **Soy Connex International Conference – San Francisco, CA (August 19-21, 2024)** GLS met with American soy exporters and international soy buyers at the U.S. Soy Export Coalition’s annual conference, which drew attendance from 700 industry leaders from 60+ countries. GLS participation provided opportunities to educate international buyers and sellers on the advantages of utilizing the Seaway.
- **USSEC Northern European Trade Team Visit** – Following Soy Connex, a group of 17 representatives from Northern Europe visited Port Milwaukee where they toured DeLong Company’s agriculture export facility, learned about the port’s capabilities, and learned about the advantages of using the Seaway for soy exports. The delegation included purchasing directors, traders, and CEOs from 14 European companies.
- **Trade Mission to Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp (September 1-7, 2024)** A GLS-led delegation, including Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht and other GLS staff, visited strategic partners in Europe to promote exports, particularly for U.S.-grown soybeans and specialty grains. The delegation’s meetings with the U.S. Soya and Specialty Grains Alliance aimed to enhance the export potential of U.S. agricultural products through the Seaway System, further strengthening North America’s trade connections with Europe.
- **Export Exchange Trade Show – Fort Worth, Texas (October 7-9, 2024)** The GLS team, along with stakeholders, exhibited at the U.S. Grains Council’s annual show designed to connect international grains buyers with U.S. suppliers. GLS participation will reinforce opportunities to export U.S. agricultural products through the Seaway System.
- **USDA Foreign Agriculture Service Trade Mission – Morocco (December 2-6, 2024)** With Morocco’s growing demand for U.S. agricultural products, this trade mission represents an opportunity to strengthen the Seaway’s role in agricultural exports. Meetings with importers from Morocco and West Africa will position the Seaway as a critical trade route for agricultural commodities.



DeLong Terminal at Port Milwaukee.



U.S. Delegation at the Export Exchange Trade Show in Fort Worth, Texas in October 2024.

This fiscal year will see GLS continue its mission of fostering global trade and enhancing the utilization of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System. By building on established relationships and pursuing new opportunities, GLS will drive growth in cargo volumes, support sustainable practices, and strengthen its position as a critical trade route for North America.

Through its past and upcoming activities, GLS is firmly aligned with its mission to increase the efficiency, utilization, and global recognition of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System, ensuring its sustained economic contribution to the region and beyond. GLS will continue the focus on agriculture exports in 2025 by continuing membership in SSGA, USSEC, NGFA, and US Grains Council, and with three more agriculture events in March:

- **Commodity Classic** – Commodity Classic, an annual conference and trade show presented by the American Soybean Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Sorghum Producers, and the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, will be held in Denver, Colo. from March 2-4, 2025.
- **NGFA Annual Conference** – National Grain and Feed Association’s Annual Convention will be held March 9-11, 2025 in Carlsbad, Calif.
- **Transportation Go!** – Transportation Go!, presented annually by SSGA, will be held March 12-13, 2025 in Minneapolis, Minn.

If you are interested in attending an agriculture export event with GLS, contact Danielle Pierson at the GLS OTED office at [danielle.pierson@dot.gov](mailto:danielle.pierson@dot.gov).

## Project Cargo Summit

The GLS Trade and Economic Development (OTED) Team returned to Bilbao, Spain on September 17-18, 2024 to educate approximately 150 cargo owners, freight forwarders, carriers, and project cargo service providers on utilizing the Seaway at the Project Cargo Summit. This conference and exhibition, traditionally held in Rotterdam, found a new home in Bilbao in 2024 to capitalize on the extensive wind energy project cargo consistently being produced in or transiting through the region for export.

GLS hosted an exhibition booth, and Deputy Administrator Anthony Fisher served as a panelist for the “The Future of Ports, Ensuring Sustainable Growth” session. Deputy Administrator Fisher touted the Seaway’s accomplishments and path forward in sustainability and explained the Seaway’s ability to be a relief valve for congestion on the East Coast. He also emphasized the win-win nature of European partners shipping into the Great Lakes with steady supply of backhaul opportunities available.

The conference sessions provided insight on the offshore wind industry, heavy-lift operations, and initiatives at the Port of Bilbao. Between sessions and at networking events, OTED engaged with current users of the Seaway System like Erhardt Logistics and Onego, while also educating potential new users.

GLS saw wind energy project cargo exports in action with a tour of the Haizea Wind Group’s facilities at the Port of Bilbao, where monopiles are manufactured onsite. Additional wind turbine components, such as blades and motors, are also stored at the facility for export.

To conclude the summit, Deputy Administrator Fisher presented a plaque of appreciation to Andima Ormaetxe Bengoa, Director of Operations of the Port Authority of Bilbao, in appreciation of the partnership between HWY H2O and the Port Authority of Bilbao. This partnership, formalized in May 2024 through the signing of Memorandum of Cooperation, includes commitments to facilitate and expand trade; exchange data, information, and best practices; establish joint marketing and promotion; develop training and research programs; and recognize the importance of environmental stability. GLS’s attendance at the Project Cargo Summit is one outcome of the commitment but will not be the last as both sides explore additional, tangible ways to realize benefits from the partnership. A YouTube video featuring the plaque presentation at the Project Cargo Summit can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xqf1ekkKq0E>.

Project Cargo Summit 2025 will be held in Bilbao, Spain, September 17-18, 2025. If you are interested in joining HWY H2O at the event, please contact Danielle Pierson at [danielle.pierson@dot.gov](mailto:danielle.pierson@dot.gov).



Crane and Turbine Shafts at Bilbao Port.



Joint delegation toured Bilbao Port.

## Robinson Bay Update

Following much interest amongst the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System shipping community and enthusiasts alike, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS) proudly completed the formal transfer of the *Robinson Bay* tugboat to the Great Lakes Maritime Academy during a ceremony at Snell Lock during a ceremony held on Friday, November 22, 2024. This celebrated vessel, originally built in 1958, will now serve as a training platform for the Academy’s maritime students, fostering the education of future mariners. At the ceremony, GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht, Great Lakes Maritime Academy Superintendent Jerry Achenbach, and U.S. Coast Guard Rear Admiral Jon Hickey made remarks.

GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht highlighted the importance of this donation, stating, “By placing this iconic tugboat in the hands of an institution dedicated to maritime excellence, we are ensuring that the *Robinson Bay* remains an active part of the Great Lakes maritime community, contributing to both its legacy and its future. We look forward to witnessing how the Academy utilizes this vessel to promote stewardship and education on the Great Lakes.”



(L-R): Jim Houmiel, Rear Admiral Jon Hickey, U.S. Coast Guard, Ninth District (Great Lakes); Danny Brabon, Superintendent Jerry Achenbach, Great Lakes Maritime Academy; Leo Murphy, Andy Cook, Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht, Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation on the *Robinson Bay*. GLS employees who have served aboard the *Robinson Bay*: Jim Houmiel, Danny Brabon, Leo Murphy, and Andy Cook.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

## Robinson Bay Update CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

The Great Lakes Maritime Academy, based in Traverse City, Michigan, is committed to using the *Robinson Bay* to provide hands-on training that prepares students for real-world careers in maritime. Superintendent Jerry Achenbach expressed the Academy's excitement: "This generous contribution from the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation provides our students with an invaluable tool for real-world learning. The *Robinson Bay* will be a cornerstone of our training program, and we are honored to uphold its legacy."

Rear Admiral Jon P. Hickey, U.S. Coast Guard stated, "Today's transfer of the *Robinson Bay* tugboat represents a remarkable investment in the future of our maritime workforce and the legacy of the Great Lakes. This vessel has served with distinction for over six decades, and now, in the hands of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy, it will continue to shape and inspire the next generation of mariners. The Coast Guard is proud to support initiatives like these that strengthen our maritime heritage, bolster workforce readiness, and foster a deep respect for the unique waterways we are all dedicated to preserving."

Today's donation underscores GLS's dedication to advancing maritime education and supporting the region's economy through the preservation of Great Lakes resources and history. The tugboat, *Robinson Bay*, will transition to a new role with the Northwestern Michigan College Great Lakes Maritime Academy serving as one of the academy's training vessels. The vessel has served six decades as an illustrious tugboat for the U.S. Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS), demonstrating its resilience in ice management, buoy commissioning/decommissioning, barge handling, and ship casualty assist.

In early fall 2024, it was officially announced that the GLS was preparing to donate its historic tugboat, the *Robinson Bay* (circa 1958). The donation of the GLS tugboat *Robinson Bay* has been a top priority for the current GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht. Since GLS has successfully transitioned their vessel fleet to the operation of the new tugboats Seaway Trident and Seaway Guardian, the *Robinson Bay* was earmarked for a new, honorable role within the Great Lakes.

In establishing the goals of preserving the vessel's legacy, ensuring public value, and enhancing the GLS's impact on the Great Lakes region, the GLS sought proposals from all interested parties who had a vision for the *Robinson Bay*'s future use, whether that be in an operational capacity, as a training vessel, or as part of a museum or historic exhibit. GLS's objective in the donation was to ensure that the heritage of the vessel would be respected. To ensure a fair and objective selection process, the GLS established a series of criteria that would guide the evaluation of proposals. The main considerations were the alignment of an organization's proposal with the public interest, the intended use of the *Robinson Bay*, the capacity of an organization to maintain it, its potential community and historical impact going forward, and a demonstration of clear public benefit (e.g., education, public service, environmental stewardship).

Fitting that overall selective criterion was the Northwestern Michigan College Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City, Mich., led by G. P. Achenbach (Jerry), Ed.D. Rear Admiral, U.S. Maritime Service Superintendent. The Academy will officially welcome the vessel into its fleet early next year to be utilized as a training vessel for cadets on the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System.

GLS Associate Administrator Jeff Scharf shared the following sentiment: "This moment marks not just the continuation of the *Robinson Bay*'s legacy, but also a new chapter as it becomes a vital training platform for aspiring mariners at the Academy. Built in 1958, the *Robinson Bay* has played an important role in the Seaway's operations, and now it will carry its proud tradition forward by inspiring and educating the next generation of Great Lakes mariners." ●●●



The Robinson Bay tug.



The Robinson Bay tug breaking ice.

## Green Corner: A Sustainable Seaway

### Analysis on Green Marine Certification Results

GLS has continued to support and participate in the U.S.-Canadian "Green Marine" initiative, a marine industry partnership program aimed at demonstrating and communicating the maritime industry's commitment to addressing key environmental issues.

The objective of the [Green Marine](#) program, which was launched in October 2007, is to build and maintain strong relations with key stakeholders and to develop greater awareness of the maritime industry's activities, benefits, and challenges.

## GREEN CORNER: A SUSTAINABLE SEAWAY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

To accomplish this, Green Marine activities are directed towards strengthening the industry's environmental standards and performance through a process of continuous improvement. The program focuses on helping the maritime industry represent itself uniformly, strengthening industry involvement in regulatory processes, and improving regulatory outcomes.

All Green Marine participants must complete a yearly self-evaluation to demonstrate environmental performance based on numerous criteria and undergo an independent third-party verification every two years to confirm the results while providing input and guidance on reaching the highest level. The performance indicators range on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing regulatory compliance and 5 reflecting leadership and excellence.

In its 2023 performance report, Green Marine validated and published the efforts made by the shipping community, including shipowners, ports, shipyards, and terminals, in addressing key environmental issues. Beginning in 2015, the GLS and Canadian SLSMC have published their results as a single entry to reflect the binational nature of the Seaway and the collaborative work by both entities in pursuing environmental excellence. The GLS and SLSMC were measured on efforts to address six environmental/ sustainability performance areas (each on a five-point scale): Greenhouse Gases and Air Pollutants (4.1); Community Impacts (5.0); Community Relations (4.9); Environmental Leadership (4.9); Spill Prevention and Stormwater Management (4.9); and Waste Management (4.0).

The full 2023 performance report can be found online at: [https://green-marine.org/media/1xkpzcui/gm\\_perfo\\_report2023\\_web.pdf](https://green-marine.org/media/1xkpzcui/gm_perfo_report2023_web.pdf) ●●●



## Green Shipping Corridor Network (GSCN) Update: The Work Continues



### The Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Seaway System *Le réseau Grands Lacs - Voie maritime du Saint-Laurent*

As we come to the end of the year, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude for your ongoing support and engagement with the Green Shipping Corridor Network (GSCN) initiative. Your valuable feedback during our collaborative forums and working group meetings has been instrumental in shaping our path forward, and we want to reassure you that we are diligently working behind the scenes to implement your insights.

Our teams are currently analyzing the feedback we've received and are focused on refining our strategies to ensure they align with your expectations and the needs of our community. We are committed to transparency and collaboration, and we want to keep you informed every step of the way.

Looking ahead, we have some exciting developments in the pipeline! We are gearing up to unveil new projects and improvements that we believe will elevate our efforts and bring us closer to our vision. Stay tuned for updates that we will share in the coming weeks, as we are eager to showcase the progress we've made together.

Thank you once again for your confidence in the GSCN initiative. Together, we are building a greener future, and we couldn't do it without your unwavering support.

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## Empowering Women and Advancing Inclusion in the Workforce: GLS Leads the Way



At the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS), we are proud to highlight our commitment to building a more inclusive and equitable workforce. A recent example of this dedication was the participation of Sylvonica Madlock, GLS Executive Officer, in the esteemed 7th International Conference on Women and Gender in Transportation, organized by the National Academies of Sciences' Transportation Research Board.

Held in Irvine, Calif., this conference brought together thought leaders and industry innovators to explore solutions for addressing gender disparities in transportation. Sylvonica joined a panel featuring representatives from the U.S. Department of Transportation to share GLS's progress in bridging workforce gaps and championing gender equity in the maritime sector.

In her address, Sylvonica emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for women in federal transportation roles and across the maritime industry. She detailed GLS's proactive strategies, including mentorship programs, professional development opportunities, and flexible work arrangements, which are fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

"I'm excited to share the incredible work we're doing in the realm of women and gender equity alongside my talented colleagues! Together, we're driving meaningful change and fostering an inclusive environment. Stay tuned!" she shared during the event.

The conference provided a platform for GLS to showcase its achievements and underscored the critical role inclusivity plays in driving innovation and resilience within the transportation sector. It also served as a reminder of the collective impact we can have when we work together to create lasting change.

### By the Numbers: Women and Inclusion at GLS

- Women represent 17% of the GLS workforce, far exceeding the global maritime industry average of 2%.
- GLS has developed an inclusive recruitment plan that will target potential candidates in underrepresented demographics.
- Insights from a recent cultural assessment are helping GLS refine workplace policies to foster inclusion and equity for all employees.



As we look to the future, GLS remains steadfast in its mission to empower women and foster a culture of inclusion. These efforts are not just about meeting benchmarks; they're about creating a workplace where everyone can thrive and contribute to our shared success.

Together, we're shaping a workforce that reflects the diversity, strength, and innovation of the communities we serve. ●●●

## GLS Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht offers keynote at Ports Canada Conference



In a keynote address titled, A Binational Partnership for Success: The Great Lakes Region as a Model of Trade and Sustainability, the Administrator emphasized growth through maritime innovation, the importance of near-port community outreach, and the imperative of vessel safety on the Seaway through binational partnership. The address also highlighted the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law as a historic opportunity for North America, extending benefits to both Canadian and U.S. ports.

The Administrator's keynote also underscored the importance of maritime decarbonization and green shipping initiatives, outlining how these shared objectives enhance supply chain fluidity and resiliency across the U.S. and Canadian border. The Administrator's remarks complemented conference panels that explored Canada's forthcoming National Supply Chain Strategy, port digitalization, indigenous partnership, and emerging maritime clusters in aquaculture, forestry, and cru. The Administrator's keynote also underscored the importance of maritime decarbonization and green shipping initiatives, outlining how these shared objectives enhance supply chain fluidity and resiliency across the U.S. and Canadian border. The conference also addressed the future-focused topics of community engagement and accessing skilled maritime labor at Canadian ports.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

## GLS ADMINISTRATOR ADAMS TINDALL-SCHLICHT OFFERS KEYNOTE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

By participating in collaborative forums like Ports Canada, the GLS has sought to grow new binational partnerships between U.S. and Canadian maritime stakeholders while serving as a model for sustainable growth, innovation, and community-focused progress, reinforcing shared economic and environmental goals across the Great Lakes/Seaway region. ●●●



## Honoring Steve Fisher: A Legacy of Leadership in Great Lakes Maritime Trade

The transportation community has much to celebrate as we honor the remarkable career of Steve Fisher, who is retiring after decades of dedicated service in both the public and private sectors. Throughout his tenure, Steve has been a steadfast advocate for the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System, working tirelessly to enhance the economic strength and global competitiveness of the region's ports.

One of Steve's most notable achievements has been his ability to champion investments that modernize and sustain port operations. Through his advocacy, he secured resources to improve multimodal connectivity, strengthen supply chain resilience, and enhance environmental stewardship across the region. His efforts benefited communities across the region, along with the manufactures and farmers who depend on the ports for access to international markets.

Steve's influence transcends politics. His ability to build coalitions by bringing together diverse stakeholders has left a lasting impact on the maritime industry. Whether working with government leaders, private sector partners, or local communities, Steve's collaborative spirit and visionary leadership have inspired countless others to work toward a shared future of growth and innovation.

As Steve transitions to this next chapter, we extend our deepest appreciation for his unwavering commitment to the Great Lakes and his significant contributions to the maritime industry. While his leadership will be greatly missed, we are confident that the foundation he has laid will continue to strengthen the Great Lakes ports for years to come.

Congratulations, Steve, and best wishes for your retirement! Your legacy will serve as a guiding light for all of us dedicated to advancing the Great Lakes as a world-class trade region and making the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System even stronger and more resilient for the future. ●●●



# Port Infrastructure Development Program Awards: Strengthening the North American Supply Chain Through Great Lakes Investments



The recent announcement of nearly \$580 million in Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) awards by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration underscores a crucial commitment to enhancing the resilience, efficiency, and sustainability of America's maritime and port infrastructure. Of this significant investment, \$77.5 million—or 13.4 percent—is allocated to projects in the Great Lakes region. These funds will play a transformative role in strengthening North America's supply chain and enhancing the region's position in global trade.

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway System seamlessly links North America's industrial heartland to the global marketplace. These latest project awards address essential infrastructure needs and advancements towards continual improvement, strengthening this vital economic corridor and unlocking significant benefits for both domestic and international trade.

## Investing in Critical Great Lakes Projects

The allocation of PIDP funding to the Great Lakes includes five transformative projects across:

### 1. Port of Chicago, Illinois - \$34,508,933



This project focuses on rehabilitating 3,000 feet of dock wall, constructing three heavy-lift crane pads, and adding a 1,700-foot rail spur. These enhancements will improve the efficiency of cargo handling at an active Seaway port, reduce bottlenecks, and bolster multimodal connectivity. The modernization of this infrastructure addresses critical needs, enabling the Port of Chicago to handle larger cargo volumes and seize opportunities in global trade.

### 2. Drummond Island, Michigan - \$10,154,024

Funding here supports the installation of a new ship loader for dolomite, a key aggregate commodity, which facilitates domestic movements within the Great Lakes. By improving terminal efficiency, this project ensures the seamless flow of materials that are foundational to construction and industrial processes.

### 3. Oswego, New York - \$11,250,000



The creation of a climate-controlled warehouse at the Port of Oswego expands storage capacity and capability. This investment directly supports an active Seaway port by enabling year-round operations and accommodating diverse cargo types. With increased resilience against extreme weather, Oswego is poised to play a larger role in international trade.

### 4. Put-In-Bay, Ohio - \$10,371,073

Enhancements include constructing a stone breakwall to protect the ferry dock and adding a berth to ensure operational redundancy during inclement weather. These improvements secure reliable passenger and freight movement, which is essential for both economic and community connectivity.

### 5. Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port, Pennsylvania - \$11,250,000

Similar in scope to the Put-In-Bay project, this funding focuses on ferry dock improvements, ensuring safer, more reliable maritime operations that support regional transportation and trade needs.

## Boosting the North American Supply Chain

Investments in these Great Lakes projects will create a ripple effect across the broader North American supply chain. Modernized port infrastructure ensures the seamless movement of goods, reduces transportation costs, and enhances the competitiveness of U.S. exports in global markets. These projects also improve supply chain resilience, mitigating disruptions caused by aging infrastructure, extreme weather events, or shifts in global trade patterns.

In the context of global trade, the Great Lakes serve as a critical gateway, enabling the movement of bulk goods, containerized cargo, and raw materials between North America and international markets. Upgraded facilities, such as the Port of Chicago's heavy-lift crane pads or Oswego's climate-controlled warehouse, enhance the region's ability to compete on the global stage by accommodating larger ships, improving cargo handling times, and diversifying the types of goods that can be stored and transported.



## PORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AWARDS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

### Advancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience

The PIDP awards also reflect a commitment to sustainable development and climate resilience. Projects like the breakwalls at Put-In-Bay and Erie-Western Pennsylvania ports directly address the impacts of severe weather, safeguarding infrastructure and ensuring continuity of operations. Meanwhile, investments in modern equipment and facilities reduce emissions, energy consumption, and environmental impact.

The funding allocated to Drummond Island, for instance, improves the efficiency of aggregate handling, reducing transport emissions. Similarly, the climate-controlled warehouse in Oswego enhances operational sustainability by minimizing spoilage and waste of temperature-sensitive goods.

### A Vision for the Future of Great Lakes Trade

These investments are not just infrastructure upgrades; they are strategic enhancements that position the Great Lakes region as a competitive player in the evolving landscape of global trade. By ensuring efficient, reliable, and sustainable port operations, the PIDP-funded projects create new opportunities for economic growth, job creation, and international commerce.

Moreover, these projects align with the broader goals of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway System to expand containerized cargo movement and diversify trade. As global trade routes shift and demand for environmentally sustainable transport solutions grows, the Great Lakes region is well-placed to capitalize on its geographic and economic advantages.

### Conclusion

The nearly \$580 million in PIDP awards represent an investment in the future of American infrastructure, trade, and economic resilience. The \$77.5 million allocated to the Great Lakes demonstrates the critical role this region plays in driving North American and global commerce.

As these projects come to fruition, they will ensure that the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System remains a vital, thriving hub for trade and transportation. By continually modernizing infrastructure, enhancing sustainability, and improving supply chain connectivity, these investments pave the way for a stronger, more competitive future. The Great Lakes, long a beacon of economic opportunity, will continue to shine brightly as a vital link in the global supply chain. ●●●

## U.S. EPA Clean Ports Program Awards \$217.29 Million to Great Lakes Region Projects

### EPA Awards \$3B for Port Projects Targeting Zero Emissions



On October 29, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced 55 selected applications for nearly \$3 billion in [Clean Ports Program](#) grants funded through the Inflation Reduction Act. The selected applications will fund zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure as well as climate and air quality planning at U.S. ports located in 27 states and territories.

This new funding program was built on EPA's Ports Initiative, which helps our nation's ports, a critical part of our infrastructure and supply chain, address public health and environmental impacts on surrounding communities.

The goals of the Clean Ports Program are to:

- Build a foundation for the port sector to transition over time to fully zero-emissions operations, positioning ports to serve as a catalyst for transformational change across the freight sector.
- Reduce diesel pollution (including criteria pollutants, GHGs, and air toxics) in near-port communities, especially those with environmental justice concerns.
- Help ensure that meaningful community engagement and emissions reduction planning become a part of port industry standard practices.

EPA anticipates making awards once all legal and administrative requirements are satisfied. Selectees will work with EPA over the coming months to finalize project plans before receiving final awards and moving into the implementation phase. Project implementation will occur over the next three to four years depending on the scope of each project.

**Projects funded at Great Lakes ports, or related to Great Lakes ports – are listed below:**



### Climate and Air Quality Planning Grants

**Illinois Environmental Protection Agency** - \$2.99 million for Illinois waterway ports

- emission inventories, set emission reduction goals, strategies for resiliency, community development and workforce development

**Detroit Wayne County Port Authority** - \$3 million for the Port of Detroit

- develop an emission reduction roadmap, community engagement plan, and workforce engagement

**Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy** - \$3 million for Michigan ports

- create a competitive grant program for Michigan ports to fund emission reduction activities

### Zero-Emission Technology Deployment Grants

**Illinois Environmental Protection Agency** - \$92.1 million for the Port of Chicago

- purchase of electric drayage trucks, cargo handling equipment, vessels and locomotives, charging infrastructure and shore power

**Detroit Wayne County Port Authority** - \$21.9 million for the Port of Detroit

- purchase of cargo handling equipment, vessels and railcar movers, charging infrastructure

**Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority** - \$94.3 million for the Port of Cleveland

- electric cargo handling equipment and vessels, charging infrastructure, shore power

**Great Lakes regional funding total** = \$217.29 million

[Clean Ports Program Selections | US EPA](#)

### Clean Ports Program Drives Transformational Change at Great Lakes Ports

In an exciting advancement for sustainability, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded \$3 billion in Clean Ports Program grants on October 29, 2024, targeting zero-emission projects across U.S. ports. This initiative, funded through the Inflation Reduction Act, promises significant benefits for the Great Lakes region, with \$217.29 million allocated to local projects alone.

The Clean Ports Program focuses on advancing zero-emission technology and climate planning, addressing both environmental justice and air quality issues. By funding projects that reduce diesel emissions and support sustainable infrastructure, the EPA is helping ports become hubs of environmental and economic resilience. Notably, the Great Lakes region will witness the transformation of port facilities to cleaner, zero-emission operations, directly benefiting port communities.

### Key Program Goals and Benefits for the Great Lakes Region

The Clean Ports Program is structured around three core goals:

- 1. Zero-Emission Port Operations:** Projects will develop the infrastructure needed for zero-emission equipment, setting ports on a pathway to fully zero-emission operations. This transition fosters wider change across the freight sector, ultimately reducing greenhouse gas emissions at national and local levels.
- 2. Improved Air Quality and Health Outcomes:** A primary objective is reducing diesel pollutants, especially in near-port communities where health conditions like asthma and heart disease are prevalent. By limiting diesel exhaust, the program addresses both immediate air quality concerns and the long-term health impacts of pollution on vulnerable populations.
- 3. Community Engagement and Inclusivity:** The EPA has mandated community engagement and emissions planning as industry standards. This directive not only ensures that local voices shape these projects but also empowers communities to prioritize health and sustainability goals.

### Local Impact: Transformational Funding for Great Lakes Ports

The Clean Ports Program's funding for the Great Lakes region spans both zero-emission technology projects and climate and air quality planning:

### • Zero-Emission Technology Deployment Grants:

Several ports in the Great Lakes are receiving substantial funding for zero-emission technology and climate planning:

- o Port of Chicago: The Illinois EPA was awarded \$92.1 million to acquire electric drayage trucks, cargo handling equipment, vessels, and locomotives, along with the necessary charging infrastructure and shore power solutions.
- o Port of Detroit: The Detroit Wayne County Port Authority received \$21.9 million for equipment upgrades, including electric cargo handling vehicles, vessels, railcar movers, and charging infrastructure.
- o Port of Cleveland: The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority secured \$94.3 million for new electric cargo handling equipment and shore power infrastructure, helping to reduce diesel dependency and lower emissions locally.

### • Climate and Air Quality Planning Grants:

Planning grants were also awarded to several local projects that support community engagement and create jobs including:

- o Illinois Waterway Ports: Illinois EPA received \$2.99 million to create an emissions inventory, set reduction targets, and implement workforce development initiatives.
- o Port of Detroit: The Detroit Wayne County Port Authority gained \$3 million to develop a roadmap for emission reduction, alongside community and workforce engagement efforts.
- o Michigan Ports: With \$3 million, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy will establish a competitive grant program to fund emissions reduction efforts across the state.

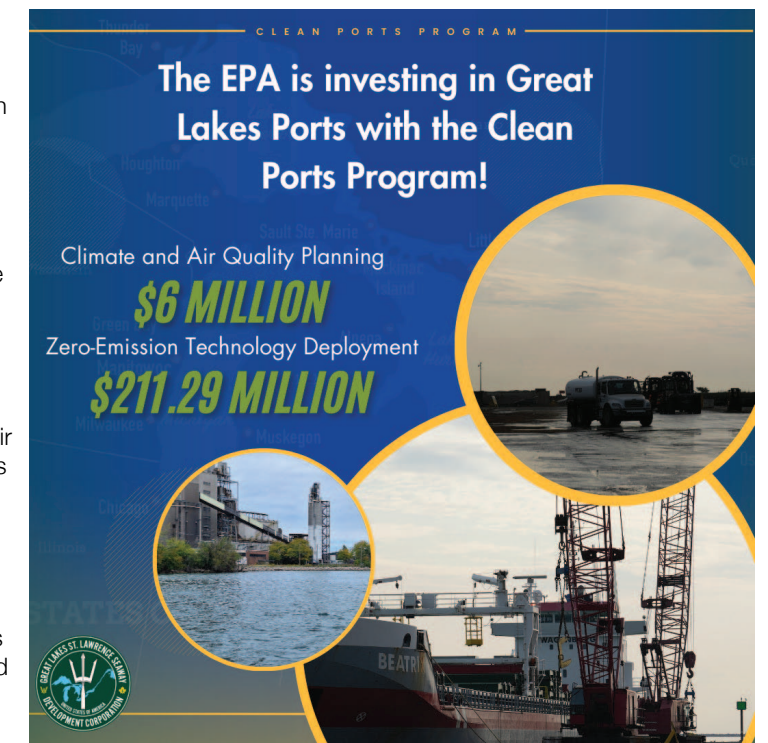
### Fast Facts: The Great Lakes' Role in a Greener Economy

- **Economic Impact:** U.S. ports support 31 million jobs and contribute 26% to the national economy. In the Great Lakes, these ports are crucial gateways for moving goods and passengers.
- **Pollution Reduction:** Diesel exhaust is linked to severe health issues, including asthma and heart disease, particularly affecting children and the elderly. Transitioning to zero-emission equipment in Great Lakes ports will improve air quality, contributing to healthier communities.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** By deploying zero-emission technology, Great Lakes ports will lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, supporting local and national climate targets.

### Why This Matters: Long-Term Benefits and a Brighter Future

The Clean Ports Program will benefit the Great Lakes region by establishing a cleaner, more resilient port infrastructure. Reducing air pollutants in high-traffic port areas will lead to healthier communities and decreased healthcare costs. As Great Lakes ports implement zero-emission technologies, they not only address urgent environmental issues but also attract sustainable industry growth, positioning the region as a leader in green maritime operations. The Clean Ports Program is more than a funding initiative; it's a transformative step toward a future where the Great Lakes serve as an exemplary model of clean, sustainable, and community-centered port operations.

For further details on the Clean Ports Program and to stay updated on upcoming projects, visit the [EPA's Clean Ports Program](#). ●●●



## Seaway Closing 2024/2025

On October 15, 2024, the U.S. and Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Corporations announced the official closing dates for the binational waterway.

- Montreal-Lake Ontario (MOLO) Section: January 5, 2024
- Welland Canal Section: January 10, 2024

Up-to-date information about the annual closing of the St. Lawrence Seaway can be found online at [https://greatlakes-seaway.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/notice20241015\\_en.pdf](https://greatlakes-seaway.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/notice20241015_en.pdf). ●●●

## Seaway Visitor Center Update

The new state-of-the-art Seaway Visitor Center has welcomed nearly 35,000 visitors from all 50 states and up to 20 countries around the world. Hundreds of students have explored the Seaway's rich history and its role in national and international commerce. The center has also served as a meeting venue for key groups, including the Great Lakes Pilotage Advisory Committee, the North Country Alliance, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The Visitor Center remains open year-round and is currently welcoming visitors Wednesday to Sunday 9:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. ●●●



In October 2024, Administrator Adam Tindall-Schlicht participated in the 2024 North Country Alliance Fall Forum hosted at the Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock. During the Forum, Administrator Tindall-Schlicht met with community leaders and delivered remarks highlighting the Seaway System's economic impact on the North Country region and ways the GLS will continue to invest in the North Country by driving economic growth, protecting the environment, and providing quality jobs for its residents.



A group of local students tour the new Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock in Massena, N.Y.

## Personnel News



In August 2024, **William (Bill) Scriber**, executive director and CEO, Port of Oswego Authority (POA), announced that he will retire from his position, effective December 31, 2024.

In December 2017, Scriber was asked by the POA board to serve as acting director. At that time, Scriber said, the Port had lost customers and there was an overall decrease in business. Scriber said he immediately went to work engaging former and existing customers to secure both their return and expanded business respectively.

As a result, over the past five years, the Port has made a dramatic comeback. Among the milestones were the first GLS Robert J. Lewis Pacesetter Award the Port had received in many years. The award recognized increases in international cargo tonnage shipped through the port during the 2018 navigation season. Since then, the Port has won a Pacesetter award for four of the past five years.

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## PERSONNEL NEWS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

Scriber also started a major expansion program to increase capabilities. This led to his securing funds for planning and construction of the 22,000 metric ton, \$15 million New York State Grain Export Center that affords more than 100 local farmers the opportunity to ship their grain from Oswego, rather than having to "long haul" it to ports like Baltimore. In addition to bringing in new customers to export grain, Scriber's efforts also resulted in new soybean shipments to international markets.

During this time, Scriber also acquired funding to add eight slips to the Oswego Marina and secure an additional \$2.1 million to construct the Goble deep-water marina on the Port's West Pier.

Scriber, a U.S. Army veteran, served in the U.S. Army Special Operations Command during Desert Shield – Desert Storm and is a graduate of the Army's logistics school. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA) from SUNY Oswego and has earned the CPE, Certified Port Executive™ credential. He has also worked at a logistics company in Syracuse, served as the Oswego County Commissioner of Elections, and joined the Port of Oswego staff in 2010. He served as Manager of Port Logistics from 2010 to 2017 and served as executive director since 2018.

The Port of Oswego's strategic location at the crossroads of the Northeastern North American shipping market, puts them less than 350 miles from 60 million people.



After 25 years at the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce, the organization's president, **Cindy Larsen**, retired on October 4, 2024.

Larsen started as the Chamber President in 1999 becoming one of the first women in the country to lead a chamber with 1,000 or more members. She is proud of the recognition the Chamber has earned since then, including multiple "Chamber of the Year" recognitions from state and national associations, as well as the board's decisions to take a leadership role in community development. The Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber has been the champion for many community projects including the reinvention of Downtown Muskegon, the relocation of the Farmers Market, Silent Observer, the Lakeshore Art Festival, the Watch Us Go Image Campaign, the Social District, and Great Lakes Cruise Ship attraction.



Chamber Board of Director Chair Jonathan Wilson says, "We are pleased to announce that **Rachel Gorman**, the Chamber's Chief Operating Officer, has accepted the offer to take over the role of Chamber President effective October 4, 2024."

Gorman grew up in Muskegon County and has been very active in the public and private sectors throughout her career. She completed an undergraduate degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Grand Valley State University and is a graduate of the Executive MBA Program from the Broad College of Business at Michigan State University. Immediately following college, she spent four years working at the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber managing Government Affairs and Events. According to Larsen, "Rachel is well connected in

the community and the state. She brings energy and enthusiasm to the role. Her experience in managing government affairs and member events will ensure the Chamber will continue as a premier business leadership organization along the lakeshore."

Larsen plans to stay in the community, work part-time on special projects for the Chamber and volunteer for fun community projects.



On October 28, 2024, **Will Friedman** announced his decision to step down from his role as President and CEO of the Port of Cleveland at the end of the year, following the expiration of his contract.

Friedman said he is committed to facilitating a smooth leadership transition over the coming months.

Friedman's departure marks the end of a successful 14-year tenure during which the Port expanded its impact on regional economic development, environmental stewardship, and infrastructure investment.

"Will's vision and expertise in maritime operations and finance have enabled the Port of Cleveland to positively impact the regional economy," J. Stefan Holmes, chair of the Port board said. "His outstanding service has been vital to the economic vitality of the region, and we sincerely thank him for his dedication."

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On November 19, 2024, David Gutheil was appointed as the interim leader for the Port of Cleveland, set to take over in January following the departure of Will Friedman who is stepping down from his role at the end of this year.

“We are fortunate to have someone as experienced and trusted as Dave ready to step in,” said J. Stefan Holmes, Port board chair. “As we announced when Will shared his decision to move on, the board is committed to finding a successor with experience in maritime transportation, development finance and economic development. As we look for a permanent successor, we are fully confident in the guiding hands of Dave.”

Gutheil has been with the Port of Cleveland more than 14 years, most recently as Chief Commercial Officer, a position he was named to in March 2018. In this role, he has led all operational and business development functions of the Port’s maritime division, including management of tenant and client relationships, overseeing strategic planning and driving cargo development initiatives.

He has played an integral role in various high-profile projects, including securing over \$90 million of infrastructure upgrades at the general cargo and bulk terminals, which have increased efficiency of cargo movements in and out of the Port by more than 35 percent. He has also developed new cruise vessel business for the Port and developed strategic alliances with partners such as OmniTrax, which has increased rail activity and efficiencies at the general cargo terminal, and Logistec USA, which operates the Port’s bulk and general cargo terminals.

Gutheil previously was the Port’s Vice President, Maritime and Logistics. He led development of the Cleveland-Europe Express, the first container service at the Port and a Great Lakes game changer.

Holmes said the board will be engaging a search committee for the permanent successor. ●●●

## In Memoriam: Aaron Bensinger



The maritime community mourns the loss of Aaron Bensinger, Vice President of Central Marine Logistics, whose passing leaves a profound void in our industry and our hearts. Aaron was not only a trusted expert in all things maritime but also a valued colleague, a proud family man, and a dedicated supporter of the Great Lakes community.

Throughout his career, Aaron exemplified professionalism, passion, and an unwavering commitment to the maritime industry. His expertise, coupled with his approachable demeanor, made him a trusted voice and respected leader. Whether navigating complex industry challenges or sharing a laugh with colleagues, Aaron brought a sense of integrity and humanity to all he did.

Those who knew Aaron remember him as much for his remarkable talents as for his extraordinary character. He was described as “a fine culinarian, an excellent leader, a talented businessman, a trusting friend, a family man, but most importantly, a wonderful soul.” His ability to inspire trust, foster collaboration, and uplift those around him was unparalleled.

Aaron’s contributions to the industry and the relationships he cultivated will not be forgotten. Over the many years, Aaron was by our side on every initiative developed and executed to grow Great Lakes cruising. The overall success can be attributed to his support. As we celebrate his life, we also honor the indelible mark he left on the maritime community and the many lives he touched.

Our thoughts are with Michelle, Aaron’s wife, as well as his family, friends, and colleagues as we remember him with gratitude and affection. His legacy will continue to inspire us all. ●●●

## Careers | Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS)

The following job postings can be found on [USAJOBS \(www.usajobs.gov\)](https://www.usajobs.gov):

### Marine Transportation Supervisor (Deputy Vessel Master) (Open to both U.S. Citizens and Federal Employees)

Location: Massena, N.Y.

Close Date: February 4, 2025

Vacancy Announcement (GLS.LO-2025-0001): <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/817516400>

### Safety and Occupational Health Specialist GS-0018-7/9/11

Location: Massena, N.Y.

Close Date: March 3, 2025

Vacancy Announcement (GLS.A-2025-0004): <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/821868700>

### Financial Technician GS-0503-05/06/07

Location: Massena, N.Y.

Close Date: March 4, 2025

Vacancy Announcement (GLS.FMA-2025-0002): <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/822059900>

### Program Coordinator GS-0301-07/09

Location: Massena, N.Y.

Close Date: March 11, 2025

Vacancy Announcement (GLS.FMA-2025-0003): <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/823378700/preview>

### Trades Helper/Linehandler WG-5426-05 (Open Register)

Location: Massena, N.Y.

Close Date: December 12, 2025

Vacancy Announcement (GLS.LO-2025-0002): <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/823761600/preview>



# Save the Date

## 2025 GREAT LAKES - ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY SYSTEM TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS

| <u>DATE</u>          | <u>EVENT</u>  | <u>LOCATION</u>          |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
| FEBRUARY 10-11, 2025 | <b>BREAKBULK MIDDLE EAST</b>                          | DUBAI, UAE               |
| MARCH 2-4, 2025      | COMMODITY CLASSIC                                     | DENVER, CO, USA          |
| MARCH 9-11, 2025     | NATIONAL GRAIN AND FEED ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE | CARLSBAD, CA, USA        |
| Mar 11-14, 2025      | CLIA CRUISE WEEK EUROPE                               | ROTTERDAM, NETHERLANDS   |
| MAR 12-13, 2025      | SSGA TRANSPORTATION GO! CONFERENCE                    | MINNEAPOLIS, MN, USA     |
| APR 1-3, 2025        | PORT OF THE FUTURE CONFERENCE                         | HOUSTON, TX, USA         |
| APR 7-9, 2025        | TRADE WINDS   | SAO PAULO, BRAZIL        |
| APR 7-10, 2025       | SEATRADE CRUISE GLOBAL*                               | MIAMI, FL, USA           |
| APR 22-27, 2025      | CLIA CRUISE360  | FORT LAUDERDALE, FL, USA |
| APR 23-25, 2025      | JOC BREAKBULK AND PROJECT CARGO CONFERENCE            | NEW ORLEANS, LA, USA     |
| MAY 12-14, 2025      | SELECTUSA*  | WASHINGTON, DC, USA      |
| MAY 13-15, 2025      | <b>BREAKBULK EUROPE*</b>                              | ROTTERDAM, NETHERLANDS   |
| MAY 19-22, 2025      | CLEANPOWER CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION                    | PHOENIX, AZ, USA         |
| JUNE 9-11, 2025      | CANADA/NEW ENGLAND CRUISE SYMPOSIUM                   | HALIFAX, NS, CANADA      |
| SEPT 10-12, 2025     | SEATRADE CRUISE EUROPE                                | HAMBURG, GERMANY         |
| SEPT 15-19, 2025     | LONDON INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING WEEK                    | LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM   |
| SEPT 17-18, 2025     | PROJECT CARGO SUMMIT                                  | BILBAO, SPAIN            |
| SEPT 30-OCT 2, 2025  | <b>BREAKBULK AMERICAS*</b>                            | HOUSTON, TX, USA         |
| NOV 4-6, 2025        | ANTWERP XL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION*                   | ANTWERP, BELGIUM         |
| NOV 2025             | <b>HWY H2O ANNUAL CONFERENCE</b>                      | TORONTO, ON, CANADA      |

NOTE: THIS LIST IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

\*EXHIBITING

\***HWY H2O EVENT**

**ACCESS THE LIST ON  
THE HWY H2O WEBSITE**

