

# Regional Maritime Priorities



The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River maritime transportation system is one of our region's competitive advantages and a key to continued prosperity. Regional collaboration is required to protect it and coordinate needed investment.

The Governors and Premiers recognize that there is a great need to reinvest in the maintenance and rehabilitation of this regional infrastructure network that connects the Great Lakes States, Ontario and Québec with one another and with the world.



- **Ensure** the region's prosperity by growing the economy and creating jobs through the efficient use of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River maritime system.
- **Maintain** and continuously improve a world-class regional transportation network with an integrated maritime system.
- **Establish** a regional framework for achieving shared objectives, launching collaborative initiatives and leveraging funding opportunities for the maritime transportation system.
- **Improve** the efficiency, competitiveness and resiliency of maritime transportation and the region's multimodal transportation system by improving dynamic connections with other forms of transportation such as waterways, highways and railways.
- **Facilitate** regional collaboration in sectors related to maritime transportation including commerce, tourism, ports, natural resources, environment, energy, agriculture and other issues.
- **Leverage** the maritime transportation system as a sustainable, socially responsible and cost-effective enterprise to stimulate regional and international trade.
- **Protect** the ecosystems of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River region through the socially responsible development and utilization of the maritime transportation system.
- **Encourage** the development of a modern and efficient Great Lakes shipping fleet.
- **Maintain** and improve the maritime system so as to help mitigate surface transportation congestion and negative environmental and social impacts.
- **Expand** maritime tourism and cruising opportunities on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system.

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River maritime transportation system is the foundation of a \$5 trillion regional economy. The region's industrial core depends on high-volume, low-cost transportation options.

The maritime transportation system generates more than

**220,000 jobs,**

producing **\$14 billion** in wages

and more than **\$30 billion** in business revenue each year.

An additional

**447,000 jobs**

in industries that use the system account for

**\$115 billion** in business revenue

and more than **\$7 billion** in taxes.



“ Just as the States and Provinces have improved the management of our waters, we must also better manage our transportation and trade. Unfortunately, our funding system for supporting ports has proven inadequate to meet the needs of a global marketplace. Twenty-first century problems require twenty-first century solutions, and the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Maritime Initiative will lead to just that.”

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder,  
Chair of the Council of  
Great Lakes Governors

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River maritime portfolio includes more than 100 commercial ports in the bi-national Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Basin maritime system. By tonnage, this includes 23 of the United States' top 100 ports and in Ontario 12 of Canada's top 50 ports. The system is designed as a continuous waterway extending more than 2,400 miles from Duluth, Minnesota to the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the Atlantic Ocean.

More than 40 provincial and interstate highways and nearly 30 rail lines link the 15 major ports of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin maritime system and 50 regional ports with consumers, products and industries all over North America. These ports serve as a critical connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the Ohio, Illinois and Mississippi River transportation systems, and integrate the region with global supply chains.

