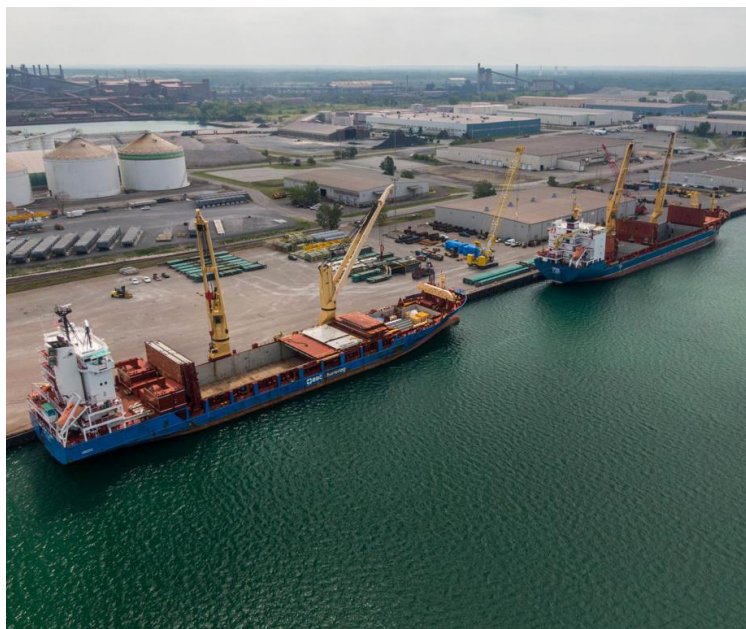


Great Lakes Ports Buoyed by Infrastructure Investments



JOSEPH S. PETE, THE TIMES OF NORTHWEST INDIANA

The Port of Indiana-Burns Harbor unloads ships delivering parts for a \$1 billion power plant in Michigan.

In October, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao, announced the awarding of over \$220 million in grants for U.S. ports. This funding to improve port facilities is being made available through the Port Infrastructure Development Program administered by the Maritime Administration (MARAD). The purpose of this program is to support efforts by ports and industry stakeholders to improve facility and freight infrastructure. In turn, this helps ensure the nation's freight transportation needs are met.

This program is designed to provide planning, operational, and capital financing, as well as assistance for project management to improve port capacity and efficiency.

Significantly, of the 18 projects awarded grants nationally, two Great Lakes ports, Burns Harbor (Ind.) and Conneaut (Ohio), were recipients of this round of funding from the program. The Port of Burns Harbor was awarded \$4 million to convert a vacant gravel yard into a multimodal bulk storage facility. The project will create supply chain improvements in the safe, reliable, and efficient transportation of bulk cargoes.

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DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR'S COLUMN

The Resiliency of the Seaway



Craig Middlebrook
Deputy Administrator

Resiliency: An ability to recover from or adjust easily to change.

— Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

In a year marked by unforeseen, constant, and unprecedented change, resiliency

has never been more important. The national health emergency due to the COVID-19 virus disrupted the normal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

GUEST COLUMN

Ian Hirt

Port Director, Ports of Indiana

Building on Momentum to Prepare for the Future



The mandate is clear.

The Port of Indiana-Burns Harbor (POI-BH) needs to have best in class infrastructure and minimize the environmental footprint. Anything less is unacceptable as the United

States' ports are essential to the nation's competitiveness, serving as the gateway to U.S. domestic and international trade.

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**GREAT LAKES PORTS BUOYED BY
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Conneaut, Ohio, was awarded over \$19.5 million to help connect truck and rail freight to the Port of Conneaut. The project entails construction of a dredged-material facility to maintain shipping access to the Port along the Conneaut Creek channel, a new roadway to the Port, and a new rail spur infrastructure connecting the city's industrial park to the Port.

The connector will provide critical infrastructure needed to facilitate commercial development in an area that currently lacks "last mile" truck freight connectivity to the Port.

Other Great Lakes ports that received the Department of Transportation's



The Port of Conneaut Connector project in Ohio involves the construction of a rail spur.

infrastructure grants earlier this year include Duluth, (Minn.), Cleveland, (Ohio), Toledo, (Ohio), and Milwaukee, (Wisc.). Collectively, U.S. Great Lakes ports have been awarded nearly \$77 million in DOT

grant funding this year. This investment in port infrastructure is critical to keeping the maritime industry a strong component in the domestic and international trade supply chain. ■■■

**GUEST COLUMNIST IAN HIRT
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

The challenge many ports face is the costly price tag of the infrastructure improvements.

In 2019, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) had the foresight to implement the Port Infrastructure Development Program to support efforts by ports to improve port and freight infrastructure.



POI-BH will be the beneficiary of a \$4 million grant — of the \$220 million allocated by MARAD in 2020 — to help fund construction of an 84,000-square-foot warehouse and a 1.65-acre storage pad in the east harbor arm. The improvements are scheduled for construction in 2022.

The MARAD grant follows on the heels of a \$9.85 million 2017 FASTLANE grant award. The project results are coming to fruition with various parts of the project underway. In October, we completed our East Rail Storage Yard and handled our first unit train of grain through the new yard. Our West Rail Storage Yard was completed in November. Construction on the next three phases of this \$19.7 million project will begin in the spring 2021. These additional improvements include 1200 feet of new dock in our west harbor arm with three acres of storage space and 600 feet of new dock in our north harbor arm with 2.5 acres of accompanying storage space. The fifth project, which some would say the most important, is the construction of a seven-acre truck marshalling yard. Commonly referred to as a "cellphone lot for trucks" drivers can turn off the trucks and rest in an enclosed reception area while waiting to unload/load freight, helping alleviate truck congestion and the accompanying safety and emission concerns.

The marshalling yard is one of several projects geared toward minimizing the POI-BH environmental footprint. POI-BH,

along with five tenant companies, recently completed planting over 300 trees and shrubs in conjunction with the Wildlife Habitat Council. Our security team will purchase an electric vehicle this month with future plans to install two electric vehicle charging stations. POI-BH is not doing this alone. With the help of South Shore Clean Cities, a local non-profit tasked with reducing carbon emissions, several port companies have recently received grant awards toward the purchase of equipment such as electric railcar movers and drayage trucks with newer engines that have significantly lower emissions. POI-BH will not stop here. Our new docks will be constructed to minimize stormwater run-off and have stormwater flow through a filtering system, an improvement acknowledged in the Green Marine Environmental Certification process.

As our team continues to build on the momentum to improve the port's capacity and efficiency, we seek to remain competitive by having the best in class infrastructure while minimizing our environmental footprint. Anything less is unacceptable. ■■■

activities of every institution, family, and individual around the world. Over the last 10 months, it has become apparent that those entities that continued to function and perform without interruption are those that demonstrated a high degree of resiliency in the face of these tremendous pressures and uncertainty. This has been true at the Seaway, which opened its navigation season in the early days of the pandemic in the spring and has continued to operate smoothly through the subsequent summer, fall, and winter seasons.

While overall Seaway traffic is down this year (through the end of November, total cargo tonnage is down approximately 6.5 percent), by any other metric, the Seaway's performance has been equal to, or even better than, what would be considered an "average" year. In late March, the SLSDC was able to deploy its navigation buoys to allow the Seaway to open on schedule on April 1. Since then the SLSDC's lock availability rate has been 99.9 percent, which is consistent with last year. The total number of commercial transits year-to-date is almost even with last year (1,773 v. 1,879, or .05 percent). Delays in the U.S. Sector of the Seaway through October are down 51 percent compared to last year. For certain commodities, like wind-energy components, it has been a record-breaking year. Finally, there has



The *Keith* maneuvers to dock at the Clure Public Marine Terminal with a load of wind turbine components Aug. 29. In the foreground, more wind power components sit on land awaiting transportation to wind energy fields in Minnesota and the Dakotas.

been a tremendous surge in traffic in the last six weeks of the navigation season, and while this increase in traffic will likely not result in meeting last year's cargo totals, it won't be that far off from last year's overall tonnage. These results are nothing short of remarkable for how utterly "normal" they are in light of the pandemic and its wide-spread effects.

And it's not by sheer luck that the Seaway has been able to perform so well during a pandemic. The Seaway has been able to remain so constant and reassuringly average because the organizations and the people who staff them at both the SLSDC and the Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation are so resilient in the face of adversity. By that I mean that all the planning we do ahead

of time for emergency contingencies ultimately proves crucial in a moment like this. The long-term partnerships we've developed over years are essential to meeting operational goals. For example, at the beginning of the navigation season, the Canadian Coast Guard answered our request without hesitation to help place navigation buoys to allow the Seaway to open on time. The Canadian and U.S. Seaway Corporations continually communicate, plan, and adapt to ensure that Seaway users encounter the same reliable and consistent transit experience they've come to rely on. Prior to the opening of the navigation season, the two Seaway Corporations established new procedures for inspecting vessels prior to entry to minimize travel and the risk of exposure to our inspectors. Because of the high degree of collaboration between us, we could modify this program quickly without logistical complications or any delay to users. While it has been a year like no other, thanks to the competence, flexibility, dedication, and planning — in a word, the **resiliency** — of the Seaway Corporations and their staff, the stakeholder community, and the people who manage this diverse industry, this year's navigation season has been marked by consistency, reliability, and, dare I say it, normalcy. As the navigation season and the calendar year come to a welcome close, that's an achievement we should all be proud of. ■ ■ ■



The tanker *Lee A. Tregurtha* is seen piloting under the Blue Water Bridge on the Saint Clair River in Port Huron, October 20, 2020.

Seaway Guardian Training



In November, the SLSDC Marine crew, utilizing the new tug *Seaway Guardian*, participated in vessel operator training. This week-long training, from November 3 through November 13, was conducted by Fincantieri Marine Group and Captain Kenny Collins and provided SLSDC vessel operators the first chance to get underway on the new tug, become familiar with the vessel, and adjust to the way the tug handles. The course was designed to introduce the trainees to Z-Drive propulsion systems and basic tug-handling techniques through classroom theory and hands-on learning. While underway on November 6, the *Seaway Guardian* responded to her first search

and rescue case. She was dispatched and steamed to Morrisburg, Ontario from the Wilson Hill anchorage; to assist the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to look for a missing diver. Before the *Seaway Guardian* could arrive on scene, the RCMP founded the diver, exhausted, but in otherwise good shape and took him aboard the vessel.

On November 12, the *M/V Oberishte* lost her engines while exiting IKE. SLSDC Inspector Bryan Wood conducted engine checks, six ahead bell/six astern bell, and could not replicate or identify the cause of the engine failure. With the *Oberishte* sitting in Eisenhower, a system delay was

started due to IKE not being available. It was decided to let the *M/V Oberishte* transit Eastbound to Snell Lock upper wall so vessel traffic could resume. Out of an abundance of caution, the *Seaway Guardian* was asked to escort the *Oberishte*.

When the *M/V Oberishte* was making her approach to Snell's upper wall, she lost her engines once again. The Pilot immediately requested assistance from the *Seaway Guardian*. With Captain Kenny at the controls, the *Guardian* responded quickly and eased the *M/V Oberishte* to Snell's upper wall. The quick response prevented the *Oberishte* from grounding or hitting Snell's wall, avoiding potential damage to the vessel or lock. The operation was a success and was an excellent opportunity for the trainees to view firsthand the capabilities of the *Guardian*!

The SLSDC Tug Captain trainees, in order of appearance in the *Seaway Guardian* Training video are as follows: Survey Technician Tucker Stutzman, Small Craft Operator Randy Gilmer, Small Craft Operator Jamie Currier, Chief of Lock Operations Ryan Chatland, and Marine Transportation Specialist (Ship Inspector) Derek Dostie.

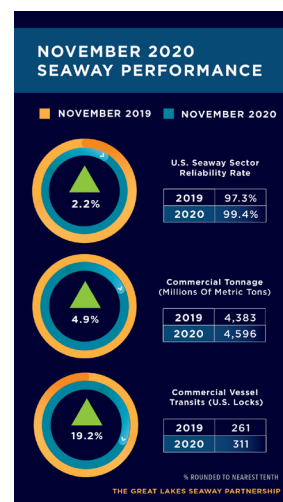
Watch the *Seaway Guardian* in action at bit.ly/37aDOWW. ■■■

Seaway Performance Metrics Now Posted on SLSDC Social Media Platforms

Beginning in July, the SLSDC began posting monthly U.S. Seaway operational performance metrics on all SLSDC social media channels. An infographic is posted that includes three key performance measurements for the month, compared to the same month last year. The information includes the U.S. Seaway sector reliability rate, the monthly commercial cargo tonnage number, and the number of commercial vessel transits of the U.S. locks.

This information is both useful and interesting to know and is yet another important way to help educate the public on the important work that is performed at the SLSDC.

Follow us for monthly operational performance updates and more news on the Great Lakes Seaway System @SeawayUSDOT on Twitter, @seawayusdot on Instagram, and @USDOTSLSDC on Facebook. ■■■



SLSDC Announces New Executive Officer



SLSDC Executive Officer Martin Welles

For nearly three decades, I have been involved in the transportation and logistics industries. My initial foray into the field was at United Parcel Service (UPS) where I learned a great deal about the

movement of small packages by truck, train, and plane. After nearly a decade with UPS, I entered government service and joined the United States Postal Service (USPS) — helping to manage one of the largest workforces and operations in the United States.

Following more than a decade with USPS, I onboarded with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and supported those who make it safe to fly. Through the FAA, I gained my first experience with the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC).

While working for the FAA for nearly 8 years, I had an opportunity to assist

SLSDC on a special project, while currently performing my duties at the FAA — both modes fall under the Department of Transportation (DOT). As a result, I visited the operations in Massena, NY for 40 days during a two-year span. I am excited to learn more about how ships safely transit the Great Lakes and the Seaway through the Eisenhower and Snell locks — transporting goods around the world. I must also confess that I have worked for some of the largest employers in the world, two had more than 500,000 employees (one had 1.5 million employees). Despite its relatively small size, I find the breadth of issues that arise at SLSDC fascinating — whether it is cross-border collaboration with the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC) in Canada, the construction and delivery of our new tug — the *Seaway Guardian*, or the closing and opening schedules. It is refreshing to work at the SLSDC where I can meet and know everyone.

While I attended college in La Crosse, Wisconsin and graduate and law school in New Orleans, Louisiana, I was never

far from the Mississippi River. I would marvel as barges carrying grain, ore and coal were pushed or pulled up and down the upper Mississippi River. In New Orleans, I watched the chemical tanker ships straining against the current of the Mississippi to deliver their goods to the plants upriver. When a fully-laden ship was gliding down river, it was out of sight in a matter of minutes, as the full force of the river carried the ship out to sea. For the past 20 years, I have lived within 100 yards of the Potomac River in Washington, DC. So for the better part of my life, I have been close to some great rivers.

My hobbies include alpine skiing in the winter and boating in the summer. My wife and I have three teenagers who, like their parents, are waiting for the day they can return to in-person learning. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we acquired our first pet — a rescue cat.

I look forward to learning more about the Seaway and the maritime industry and working with the Great Lakes Seaway System stakeholder community. ■■■

16th Annual Hwy H₂O Conference



The U.S. Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC) and Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC) hosted the virtual 16th Annual Conference from November 18–19, 2020. This year's event focused on expanding and maximizing infrastructure and the view of the system from a shipper's perspective.

Highlights are available online at <http://hwyh2o-conferences.com>.

The conference included presentations from SLSDC Deputy Administrator Craig Middlebrook, and the CEO of The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, Terence Bowles. The conference remains an important event for Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway (GLSLS) stakeholders that utilize Hwy H₂O for international trade development. Attendees provided positive feedback that the conference remains an excellent opportunity for networking and for understanding current trade dynamics across the GLSLS.

The 17th Annual Hwy H₂O Conference will be held November 16–18, 2021 in Toronto. Individuals interested in joining the 2021 Conference Planning Committee are welcome to email hwyh2o@seaway.ca for more information. ■■■

Seaway Employees Receive U.S. Dept. of Transportation Secretary's Award



In November, U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Elaine L. Chao, honored employees from the Saint Lawrence Seaway

Development Corporation (SLSDC) at the 53rd Annual Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary's Awards Ceremony. At the virtual event, the Secretary recognized individuals and teams across DOT who performed their duties in an exemplary manner to meet the Department's strategic goals and accomplish its mission.



Nate Jarvis received the Gold Medal.

The SLSDC was privileged to have one of its employees, Nate Jarvis, Marine Services Chief Engineer, receive the Department's highest award, the Gold Medal. Nate was honored with this award for his outstanding efforts to ensure the completion and delivery of the SLSDC's new tug, the Seaway Guardian, in spite

of the challenges posed by the ongoing public health emergency. This award is granted by the Secretary in recognition of exceptionally outstanding leadership or service that is distinguished by achievements of marked national or international significance that reflect great credit on the Department of Transportation and the federal government.



Anthony (Tony) Curley received the Meritorious Achievement Award.

Secretary Chao awarded a Meritorious Achievement Award to Anthony (Tony) Curley, Chief of the Engineering Division at the SLSDC's Massena, NY office, for exhibiting excellence and leadership in the accomplishment of a critical infrastructure project that resulted in the continued safe and reliable operation of the SLSDC's locks. This is the third highest award bestowed by the Secretary in recognition of exceptionally meritorious service to the Department or Federal government.



Jon-Paul Faucher received the Excellence Award.

Jon-Paul Faucher, IT Specialist in the SLSDC's Massena, NY office, was presented the Secretary's Excellence Award, which is granted to employees who have achieved outstanding performance in all aspects of their work and deserve special commendation. Jon-Paul is receiving this award for consistent excellence in his management of all SLSDC IT systems, including SLSDC operational and mission-critical systems for facility and property security, lock controls, hands-free mooring (HFM), vessel tracking, weather conditions, and water levels.

SLSDC Deputy Administrator Craig H. Middlebrook said, "I am pleased that the Department of Transportation is recognizing the superior performance of these SLSDC employees, and all of us at the SLSDC are so proud of their achievements. The SLSDC's workforce is comprised of professional and dedicated civil servants, and the Secretary's awards recognizing their exceptional accomplishments are well-deserved." ■■■

DID YOU KNOW?

2020 Navigation Season: Enduring Benefits of Hands Free Mooring (HFM)

Increased safety

- HFM increases safety with fewer “snap backs” of mooring cables or mooring lines. There are also fewer lock crew and onboard ship crew injuries due to muscle strains, etc.
- 99.2 percent of the fleet that transits the U.S. Seaway locks are found to be HFM compatible.

Lower costs

- Due to HFM, captains and crews have additional time to dedicate to other ship-board responsibilities.
- HFM is much faster overall than traditional tie-up methods, and that greater efficiency translates into cost savings.

Reduced transit times

- Vessels using HFM can reduce transit times by approximately 7 minutes as compared to traditional methods, which will save over 3 hours on a round trip transit through the Seaway.



Personnel News



In November, the Montreal Port Authority (MPA) announced the appointment of **Martin Imbleau** to the position of President and CEO. In senior management positions for

some fifteen years and having developed extensive experience in strategy, operations, business development and managing major infrastructure projects, he will succeed **Sylvie Vachon**. Mr. Imbleau will begin his new position on January 1, 2021.



Ms. Vachon, who is retiring on December 31, 2020, after a thirty-year career at the MPA, including eleven years as CEO, will assist Mr. Imbleau over the coming months to

ensure a seamless transition.

A lawyer by training, holder of a Master's in International Law and author of works on human rights, Mr. Imbleau brings hands-on experience in the utilities sector serving communities. He has held various management and vice-presidential posi-

tions for close to twenty years at Energir, and since last April was Vice President—Corporate Strategies and Business Development at Hydro-Québec.

Operated by the Montreal Port Authority (MPA), the Port of Montreal is the second largest port in Canada and a diversified transshipment centre that handles all types of goods: containerized and non-containerized cargo, liquid bulk and dry bulk. The only container port in Quebec, it is a destination port served by the largest shipping lines in the world. It is also an intermodal hub with a service offering that is unique in North America, featuring its own rail network directly dock-side connected to Canada's two national rail networks. The MPA also operates a Cruise Terminal and a Port Centre.



In December, the United States Great Lakes Shipping Association (USGLSA) announced that after 14 years of service, **Mr. Stuart H. Theis** is retiring

as Executive Director.



Effective January 1, 2021, **U.S. Coast Guard Rear Admiral (Ret.) John E. Crowley, Jr.**, will succeed Mr. Theis and assume responsibilities of Executive

Director of USGLSA. USGLSA is a trade Association consisting of vessel agents located throughout the U.S. Great Lakes who serve international flag vessels calling at U.S. Great Lakes Ports.

Mr. Crowley is a U.S. Coast Guard Academy graduate and holder of a law degree (JD) from American University, Washington, DC. He is a member of the Bar in Minnesota and before the U.S. Supreme Court. During his distinguished USCG career of 33 years, Mr. Crowley's duties consisted of numerous operational assignments as well as policy formation leadership serving as Judge Advocate General (General Counsel) for USCG and service as District 9 Commander for the U.S. Great Lakes. Since his retirement from USCG in 2008, he has served as General Counsel for APM Terminals, NA, Inc., and Executive Director of the National Association of Waterfront Employers. ■■■