



The St. Lawrence  
Seaway Management  
Corporation

Corporation de Gestion  
de la Voie Maritime  
du Saint-Laurent

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## MEDIA RELEASE

# The St. Lawrence Seaway Opens 68th Navigation Season, Celebrating Bi-national Leadership and a Vital Trade Corridor

**St. Lambert, Quebec, [March 23, 2026]** – The St. Lawrence Seaway officially launched its 68th navigation season today at the St. Lambert Lock in Montreal, with the *M/V Blacky* operated by Canfornav, as the season’s ceremonial vessel. The event brought together Canada’s Minister of Transport, representatives of the United States Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, industry, community and government leaders.

For nearly 70 years, Canada and the United States have jointly operated the Seaway as a bi-national system. As part of the larger Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway trade corridor, it serves six Canadian provinces and eight U.S. states, providing an essential domestic and international trade route connecting Canada and the Great Lakes to the world.

Each year, the Seaway moves a wide range of cargoes that support communities and industry, including grain, energy, and project cargo, underscoring its role as a vital link in North America’s supply chain.

“Canada and the United States have built something exceptional in the St. Lawrence Seaway,” said Jim Athanasiou, President and CEO of the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation. “Our tonnage has remained relatively consistent year-over-year, demonstrating steady performance. As we open this season, we are continuing with initiatives to responsibly grow this vital trade corridor, support industry, economic development and communities in both countries.”

“With supply chains facing new pressures, reliable marine corridors like the St. Lawrence Seaway are essential to our economic resilience,” said the Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, the Honourable Steven MacKinnon. “The Government of Canada will continue to support the Seaway’s critical role in our transportation system, ensuring it remains reliable and efficient for the years ahead.”

The Seaway has incrementally extended its navigation season in a responsible and consistent manner, providing greater flexibility for shippers while maintaining its commitment to safety

and operational excellence. These measured extensions reflect strong coordination between Canadian and U.S. partners, and reinforce the long-term strength of this trade corridor.

## **Additional Quotes**

“The St. Lawrence Seaway is an essential corridor for our economy and for the resilience of our supply chains. As North American trade continues to evolve, it is crucial to be able to rely on reliable, high-performing infrastructure to support our businesses and exports. Our government will continue to support the development of the Seaway in order to strengthen Quebec’s competitiveness and its position at the heart of trade.”

- Jean Boulet, Minister of Economy, Innovation, and Energy; Minister of Labour; Minister responsible for the Maritime Strategy; and Minister responsible for the Mauricie region

“Over the last five decades, Canfornav has developed a strong legacy in the global shipping industry, and as global trade has evolved so too has Canfornav: navigating challenging markets, expanding its global presence and diversifying its capabilities. Today, Canfornav presently operates a fleet of 45 vessels. 28 are owned of which, 22 are lake-suitable ice class bulkers and six are 36,000-tonne ice-class extended bulk carriers. It all started in Montreal and the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes remains a big part of Canfornav’s trading area.”

- Knud Jensen, President & CEO, Canfornav

## **About the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC)**

The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, on behalf of the Government of Canada, manages the Canadian portion of the waterway system and its associated lands. The binational St. Lawrence Seaway system serves as a key trade corridor and vital supply chain link - connecting Canada and the Great Lakes region to global markets.

For more information, visit [www.Seaway.ca](http://www.Seaway.ca).

-30-

## **For more information**

Media Contact:

Nicole Giroux (SLSMC)  
Manager, Media Relations and Communications  
613-932-5170, ext. 3296  
[ngiroux@seaway.ca](mailto:ngiroux@seaway.ca)