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Duluth Seaway Port Authority Earns Pacesetter Award for Increase in International Tonnage During 2009 Navigation Year

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority posted significant increases in international cargo over the 2009 navigation season, earning it the prestigious Robert J. Lewis Pacesetter Award from the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC), an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation. SLSDC Deputy Administrator Craig Middlebrook presented the award today to Adolph Ojard, Executive Director of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority at a ceremony in Duluth.

“This is a strong economic performance by an important member of the Seaway System,” said Middlebrook. “Historically a tonnage leader, the Duluth Port Authority generated the kind of international business that kept its bragging rights intact.”

The Duluth Seaway Port shipped 1.9 million metric tons (mt) of cargo, a 16 percent increase, through the Seaway in the 2009 navigation season earning them their 10th Pacesetter award. Grain shipments to the Port of Duluth totaled 1.6 million short tons, up 32 percent from 2008.

“We are pleased to see the gains made in grain cargoes last year,” said Ojard. “We’re off to a strong start this season, and with an economic recovery under way, we look forward to significant improvement in overall maritime activity in 2010.”

The Duluth Port also expects to expand. The Port Authority Board of Commissioners approved a purchase agreement in January 2010 to acquire a section of the former *Duluth Works* site from U.S. Steel Corporation.

The Pacesetter Award is presented annually to U.S. Great Lakes Seaway ports and terminals that register increases in international overseas cargo tonnage shipped through the Seaway during the navigation season. Originally known simply as the Pacesetter Award, the name change honors long-time Seaway trade analyst Bob Lewis who passed away in 2001.

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