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News

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St. Lawrence Seaway Opens 59th Navigation Season

Washington - (March 20, 2017) The U.S. Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC) joined with the Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation to mark the opening of the Seaway's 59th navigation season today. The official opening ceremony of the binational waterway took place at the St. Lambert Lock in Montreal with Canadian Transport Minister Marc Garneau attending as honored guest and SLSMC President and CEO Terence Bowles and SLSDC Deputy Administrator Craig H. Middlebrook addressing the gathering.

“The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System is a tremendous asset that provides a safe and efficient means of moving cargo worldwide,” said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao. “As the 59th Seaway navigation season gets underway, we recognize the importance of commercial maritime navigation to our nation’s economy.”

SLSDC Deputy Administrator Middlebrook said, “The ability of the Seaway to accommodate and encourage increases in maritime cargo rests first and foremost on its ability to move ships safely and reliably. By that standard, the Seaway’s record is remarkable as evidenced by a steady reduction in vessel incidents over the last 20 years. Last year was one of the safest navigation seasons on record. Combined with a lock availability rate of nearly 100 percent over the last 10 years, the safety, reliability, and performance record of the Seaway System is second to none and gives our customers the confidence to know that we can meet their transportation needs.”

The season’s first ship to transit, the *CSL St-Laurent*, is upbound into the Seaway System, on its way to pick up a load of grain. Over 227,000 jobs and \$35 billion in economic activity are supported by movement of various cargoes on the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System.

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