

GREAT LAKES ST. LAWRENCE MARITIME

FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN (2021-2026)



GREAT LAKES
ST. LAWRENCE
GOVERNORS
& PREMIERS





The Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers (GSGP) unites the chief executives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Québec, and Wisconsin. The Governors and Premiers work as equal partners to grow the region's \$6 trillion economy and protect the world's largest system of surface fresh water. In 2013, the Governors and Premiers launched a maritime initiative aimed to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence maritime transportation system - a backbone of the regional economy and a key to continuing prosperity.

The Governors' and Premiers' leadership has resulted in unprecedented progress.

- **Created the first Regional Maritime Strategy**--designed to double maritime trade, shrink the environmental footprint of the region's transportation network and support the region's industrial core
- **Convened the first Great Lakes St. Lawrence Maritime Days** in Washington, DC, and Ottawa, Ontario, to communicate regional priorities to federal officials and promote coordination
- **Secured Congressional authorization and multi-year federal funding for a new Soo Lock** to increase throughput capacity and ensure lock availability at the Great Lakes St. Lawrence system's primary bottleneck
- **Fueled growth in regional cruising** and successfully attracted new cruise lines to the Great Lakes by launching Cruise the Great Lakes, a regional cruise marketing initiative, and developing a regional solution for passenger customs clearance
- **Built transatlantic partnership with the Port of Antwerp in Belgium—a primary gateway port for our region to western Europe—to increase cargo flows**
- **Developed an innovative Smart Ships Initiative:**
 - Established the Marine Autonomy Research Site, the world's first freshwater smart ships test bed, at Michigan Tech University
 - Launched the Smart Ships Coalition, a broad stakeholder community of academic, government, industry, and international organizations
 - Released a Smart Ships Action Plan to accomplish long-term goals



The Governors and Premiers continue to work together to improve the maritime system for the benefit of the regional and national economies. To accelerate progress toward long-term goals, the following priority areas will guide work for the next five years (2021-2026):



GROWING MARKETS

INTERNATIONAL

Double maritime trade with Western Europe

- Build upon strategic partnership with Port of Antwerp
- Grow traffic for traditional bulk commodities such as steel, grain and breakbulk
 - Coordinate trade missions to Europe to develop markets for regional exports and imports
- Develop new cargoes such as wood products, liquid bulk, and containers
 - Conduct in-depth analysis of one or more potential new cargoes including an action plan for growth



**Port of
Antwerp**



CRUISE
THE GREAT LAKES 

CRUISING

Establish the region as a globally known cruising destination

- Double annual passenger traffic
 - Complete network of Customs clearance facilities in US
 - Continue to grow Cruise the Great Lakes marketing program
- Promote environmentally sustainable cruise vessels and operations
 - Conduct analysis of opportunities to improve sustainability





ADVOCATING FEDERAL PRIORITIES

SOO LOCKS

Continue construction of new Soo Lock

- Secure efficient funding to expedite construction
- Ensure installation of hands-free mooring
- Improve traffic flow management
- Coordinate annual maritime day in Washington, DC



SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Improve regional coordination and capacity to address system needs

- Increase market development, research, information and planning roles of the Seaway agencies
- Harmonize and better integrate maritime data (e.g., cargo flows, vessel traffic) to provide a consistent information base for systemwide decision-making
- Build systemwide digital infrastructure and management systems
- Work toward the long-term goal of a US-Canada maritime treaty by developing a treaty outline including structure for a regional administrative entity





INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

FEDERAL/STATE/PROVINCIAL/LOCAL

Stimulate greater investment in systemically important infrastructure

- Secure needed appropriations for a new US Great Lakes class icebreaking vessel and increased Canadian icebreaking capacity
 - Participate in industry coalition to work toward shared goals
- Continue and, where possible, expand State and Provincial maritime programs
- Support needed local government investment
 - Implement communications strategy to showcase success stories



PRIVATE

Drive more private capital to invest in the regional maritime system

- Take actions to support near-term investment
 - Identify private investment opportunities
 - Identify opportunities for the Great Lakes Impact Investment Platform structure to showcase private investment
 - Support a repeatable pilot project delivering private investment in climate-resilient infrastructure, smart, or green shipping technologies



GREAT LAKES IMPACT
INVESTMENT PLATFORM





STIMULATING INNOVATION

SMART INFRASTRUCTURE

Develop a vision for a regional data sharing system (maritime community system)

- Begin developing smart applications to address near-term opportunities
 - Extend Seaway traffic flow management system with the technological backbone to be owned, operated, and maintained by the Seaway agencies
 - Develop and implement smart shipping pilot projects (e.g., Traffic Flow, Route Optimization, Whale/Wildlife Sensing)
 - Analyze value of data sharing to cargo owners and supply chain partners
- Enhance environmental performance of regional shipping
 - Implement green shipping action plan including one or more pilot projects
- Identify opportunities to use smart technologies to improve delivery of services such as icebreaking
 - Complete analysis of international best practices and explore potential for regional pilot projects



SMART SHIPS

Establish the region as a global hub for smart ship technologies

- Expand research and certification of vessels at the Marine Autonomy Research Site at Michigan Tech University (MTU)
 - With MTU, identify innovative smart ship pilot projects
- Harmonize regulatory approaches
 - Analyze international best practices and collaborate with federal agencies