



The Workhorse Commercial Ports of **WISCONSIN**

Wisconsin's ports are economic engines supporting industry. The state is home to a total of 29 commercial ports on Lake Michigan, Lake Superior and the Mississippi River. The Wisconsin marine freight system moves an average of 30 million tons of freight per year, worth more than \$2.4 billion. Wisconsin's marine establishments employ nearly 10,000 workers, and the commerce moving through the ports supports many more jobs. Marine freight movement helps reduce highway congestion, and it supports environmental sustainability by moving more freight with less fuel.

TAKING STOCK OF THE STATE'S PORTS

A new report from the Wisconsin Commercial Ports Development Initiative highlights the strengths of the state's commercial port system. This report—the first of its kind ever undertaken in the Great Lakes region, as well as the first in Wisconsin—includes an inventory of port infrastructure and commerce, as well as a market and commodity assessment, which will serve as a baseline for tracking trends in exports, logistics and marine commerce going forward. The study also includes an analysis of how the state's institutions, programs and policies affect port development.

Adjacent to the busiest multimodal transportation hub in the world (Chicago), Wisconsin is ideally located for doing business and bringing products to market quickly and conveniently. Wisconsin exists in a global economy where transportation—including marine freight and ports—is a comparative advantage for U.S. business and industry. Efforts to enhance Wisconsin ports are necessary to ensure that Wisconsin's business and industry can compete and grow while also supporting local community and economic development efforts.

MOVING GOODS TO SUPPORT INDUSTRY

The findings confirmed that Wisconsin's ports support both agriculture and industry: 96 percent of tonnage moving through the state's Great Lakes ports consists of six commodities (coal, iron ore, limestone, non-metallic minerals, cement and wheat), and 95 percent of tonnage moving through the state's Mississippi River ports consists of four commodities (grains, cement, salt and pig iron). This report is a valuable asset in describing Wisconsin's port system and how it is integrated into the regional transportation network across the Midwest and beyond.

Wisconsin marine freight moves more than 30 million tons of freight worth more than \$2.4 billion each year.



THE FUTURE OF OUR PORTS

Drawing on stakeholder input, the project team used this initial inventory and analysis to devise a strategy for the further development of Wisconsin's port system. The strategy aims to increase freight movement and logistics development via the ports, using a combination of greater awareness and advocacy; increasing the market share of marine-capable commodities; increasing cooperation and collaborative planning; and increased funding support from state and federal sources. The next phase of the project will focus on implementing the recommended strategies.

ABOUT THE WCPDI

The Wisconsin Commercial Ports Development Initiative is a collaboration between the Wisconsin Commercial Ports Association, the National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education, the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, with additional support from the Port of Green Bay, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Wisconsin Transportation Development Association.



For more information about this project, visit wistrans.org/cfire/research/projects/09-02/