

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WISCONSIN'S COMMERCIAL PORTS

- AN ECONOMIC SURVEY -



PHOTO CREDIT: SAM LAPINSKI

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CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	1
ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY AND UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER SYSTEMS	2
ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PORTS	3
2022 COMMERCIAL PORT ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS	3
PORT PROFILES	5
BAYFIELD	5
DULUTH-SUPERIOR	6
GREEN BAY	7
LA CROSSE	8
MANITOWOC	9
MARINETTE	10
MILWAUKEE	11-12
PORT WASHINGTON	13
PRAIRIE DU CHIEN	14
STURGEON BAY	15
WASHBURN	16
WISCONSIN'S ISLAND FERRIES	17
MADELINE ISLAND FERRY	17
WASHINGTON ISLAND FERRY	17
GREAT LAKES TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM	18
MISSISSIPPI RIVER PORTS	19
HARBOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	19
APPENDIX	20
TABLES	
TABLE 1: TRANSPORTATION MODE EFFICIENCY	1
TABLE 2: SHIP AND BOAT BUILDING ECONOMIC IMPACT	4
TABLE 3: OTHER PRIVATE BUSINESSES ECONOMIC IMPACT	4
TABLE 4: TRANSPORTATION, PORT ADMINISTRATION, AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES ECONOMIC IMPACT	4



INTRODUCTION

Moving bulk commodities by water is efficient, environmentally friendly, and safe.

Jean Nicolet was likely the first European to explore Wisconsin and he did so via water. French explorers and fur traders settled at Lake Superior's Chequamegon Bay which led to further economic use of Wisconsin's waterways. Today, water transportation remains the most efficient method for moving bulk commodities (see Table 1). Goods such as coal, iron ore, broken stone, chemicals, heavy machinery, renewable energy equipment, agricultural commodities, cement, road salt and many others are transported on Wisconsin's waterways.

Access to the Upper Mississippi River System, Lake Superior, and Lake Michigan enables Wisconsin's economy to benefit from these important water transportation systems. Wisconsin's ports serve as centers for the efficient transport of bulk goods, ship building, commercial fishing, recreation, and ferrying services. In 2019, Wisconsin ports handled over 27 million tons of cargo¹.

Wisconsin's commercial ports are major economic hubs, generating thousands of family-supporting jobs while playing an increasingly important role in the state's tourism industry and adding greatly to the state's quality of life. Through research, interviews, and economic modeling, this study illustrates the economic importance of Wisconsin's port facilities to guide future port infrastructure improvements and help potential shippers understand the unique capabilities and advantages of water transportation.

Moving bulk commodities by water is efficient, environmentally friendly, and safe. As depicted in the table below, moving freight via inland barge is over four times more fuel efficient than via truck, with significantly fewer greenhouse gas emissions released².

TABLE 1: TRANSPORTATION MODE EFFICIENCY

TRANSPORTATION MODE	TON-MILES PER GALLON	METRIC TONS OF GHG PER/ MILLION TON MILES	SAFETY (FATALITIES PER BILLION TON-MILES) VERSUS INLAND TOWING
Inland Barge	675 miles	15.1 tons per million-ton miles	1
Rail	472 miles	21.6 tons per million-ton miles	25.9
Truck	151 miles	140.7 tons per million-ton miles	120.1

Source: Texas A&M Transportation Institute

¹ Wisconsin State Freight Plan – 3.4.2 Ports and Waterways

² A Modal Comparison of Domestic Freight Transportation Effects on the General Public: 2001-2019.

Wisconsin's access to major waterway systems connects commercial ports to economies across the United States and globally.

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY AND UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER SYSTEMS

Wisconsin is directly connected to two major waterway systems, the Upper Mississippi River System, and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System. The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway System extends 2,340 miles from Duluth, MN eastward to the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the Atlantic Ocean. It connects the five Great Lakes – Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario – serving eight states and two Canadian provinces and providing access to 15 major international ports. Wisconsin's Great Lakes commercial ports are on MARAD-designated Marine Highway Route M-90¹. In 2020, 101.8 million tons of waterborne freight moved across the Great Lakes with the lion's share being inedible and non-fuel crude materials².

The Upper Mississippi River System is a 1,300-mile waterway linking five states to the Gulf Coast. It supports a wide variety of uses including commercial navigation, fishing, hunting, and other recreational activities. In 2020 the Upper Mississippi River – from Minneapolis, MN to the mouth of the Missouri River near St. Louis, MO – saw over 65 million tons of cargo move through this system³. Food and farm products, petroleum products, and chemical products were the leading cargoes, with food and farm products accounting for approximately 81% of the total tonnage shipped through this vital water route⁴. Wisconsin's Mississippi River commercial ports are on Marine Highway Route M-35.



¹<https://www.maritime.dot.gov/newsroom/new-marine-highway-route-two-new-marine-highway-designations-and-project-designation>. See Appendix for Marine Highway Map

² United States Army Corps of Engineers

³ *ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PORTS

As centers of economic activity, ports and harbors in Wisconsin include the operations of local government agencies, federal agencies such as the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and private operators that contract with these agencies. Also economically significant are port terminal operators, stevedores, vessel suppliers, boat and ship builders and repair facilities, commercial and charter fishing operations, and other marine-related businesses. These are primary impact industries, providing transportation and port services. This analysis focuses on the direct, indirect, and induced economic effects of these industries and provides estimates in terms of employment, wages and salaries, and output (i.e., total economic activity, including sales)¹.

Also economically significant are firms that are attracted to a region because of the presence of a port but are not located at the port itself. These firms typically fall into two groups: exporters of commodities and importers of raw materials for assembly or distribution. Due to data availability constraints, this report does not include estimations of the economic significance of these two groups of industries. There are also port-induced industries resulting from the exporters and importers, and those who have expanded their markets by exporting through the port. For these industries, the port is a source of reduced transportation costs which can support industry expansion. Again, due to data availability constraints, this report does not include the economic significance of these induced industries.

The economic effects of port activities ripple outward through the state, providing both direct and indirect business, income, and jobs. Direct economic impact is the sum of the initial port-related spending by port authorities and their contractors, terminal operators, and other water transportation service providers. This analysis includes ship building and boat building operations tied to ports.

Indirect economic impact is the economic activity generated by suppliers to the port authorities and their contractors, and to all the other businesses

included in the direct economic impact. It also includes the supply chain linked to these suppliers.

Induced economic impact is the activity generated within the state when employees of ports and port-related businesses (as well as government entities such as the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) spend their wages on food, clothing, shelter, etc. All this spending is income for the recipient businesses, and is, in turn, re-spent in the economy, creating a spinoff effect as successive waves of spending occur.

2022 COMMERCIAL PORT ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

As part of this economic survey, 59 private businesses and port authorities were contacted. Forty unique responses were received (approximately 68% response rate) with many businesses located across multiple ports. The private and public organizations contacted to participate were identified through internal research and advice from external stakeholders and reflected the broadest feasible outreach.

As with all surveys, the results hinge on the response rate and the entirety of economic activity cannot be captured. However, the activity captured in this study reflects economic strength. The full economic impact of Wisconsin's commercial ports is likely greater than what is reported here.

Each type of port and related activities impacts jobs, incomes, and output in the economy. The total gross economic impact is the sum of the direct, indirect, and induced impacts on employment, income, and output. Based on IMPLAN's 2021 economic model of Wisconsin, Wisconsin's commercial ports supported 7,601 jobs, and generated over \$1.68 billion in economic output and over \$570 million in personal income from wages and salaries in 2022.

The data and information collected for this report reflect Wisconsin's commercial port

¹IMPLAN* model, 2021 data, State of Wisconsin data Region. For more information on the IMPLAN modeling process, visit IMPLAN.com.

economic activity for 2022. It should be noted that this survey is not exhaustive, and the nature of commercial port activity is impacted by many local and/or global events. Attributing any rationale to these estimates would be a misrepresentation of the many factors which impact commercial port business. As such, this report should be viewed as giving a general idea of the important impact commercial port activities have on Wisconsin's economy by virtue of the jobs they directly create and the many jobs that are supported by their industries.

This study summarizes commercial port economic activity in three categories displayed in the tables on the right: (1) Ship and Boat Building, (2) Other Private Businesses, and (3) Transportation, Port Administration, and Support Activities. Ship and boat building is an important manufacturing industry in Wisconsin, inclusive of businesses that repair and refurbish boats and ships. This industry contributed over 5,800 jobs, nearly \$439 million in wages, and nearly \$1.24 billion in output. Private businesses tied to the maritime sector, such as mining, construction, wholesale trade, and management/professional services, contributed 1,201 jobs, over \$94 million in wages, and over \$341 million in output. Lastly, transportation, port administration, and support activities contributed 556 jobs, over \$39 million in wages and over \$108 million in output.

TABLE 2: SHIP AND BOAT BUILDING ECONOMIC IMPACT

2022 ECONOMIC IMPACT	JOBS	LABOR INCOME (IN MILLIONS)	OUTPUT (IN MILLIONS)
Direct	2,802	\$255.2	\$675.9
Indirect and induced	3,042	\$183.7	\$561.6
Total	5,844	\$438.9	\$1,237

TABLE 3: OTHER PRIVATE BUSINESSES ECONOMIC IMPACT

2022 ECONOMIC IMPACT	JOBS	LABOR INCOME (IN MILLIONS)	OUTPUT (IN MILLIONS)
Direct	444	\$47.1	\$194.2
Indirect and induced	757	\$47.0	\$147.5
Total	1,201	\$94.1	\$341.7

TABLE 4: TRANSPORTATION, PORT ADMINISTRATION, AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES ECONOMIC IMPACT

2022 ECONOMIC IMPACT	JOBS	LABOR INCOME (IN MILLIONS)	OUTPUT (IN MILLIONS)
Direct	270	\$21.9	\$58.7
Indirect and Induced	286	\$17.3	\$49.5
Total	556	\$39.2	\$108.2

PORT PROFILES

The following section features Wisconsin's commercial ports. These ports are members of the Wisconsin Commercial Ports Association and were invited to participate in this study. Port profiles provide background on port activities, capabilities, transportation connections, and port officials' contact information. Annual tonnage data was retrieved from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center.

BAYFIELD

The City of Bayfield Harbor Commission oversees a variety of harbor assets. The Bayfield City Dock includes space for transient boaters and seasonal leases. The City Dock also harbors the Madeline Island Ferry and the Apostle Island Cruise service. In the winter, the City Dock allows other various vessels to "ice" in their vessels¹ which are predominately used in commercial fishing. The Apostle Islands Marina is leased to BD Marine who offers boat service and repair. The LE Dock also rents spaces to BD Marine. The city also oversees the Ernie LaPointe Public Boat Launch.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: WIS 13

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

Various manufactured equipment, petroleum products, various fuel types, forest products, and aggregate stone

2017–2021 FIVE YEAR AVERAGE TONNAGE

13,822 tons



PHOTO CREDIT: BAYFIELD COUNTY

Port of Bayfield

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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¹ Over-winter docking which seasonally immobilizes the vessel in surface ice.

DULUTH-SUPERIOR

With seven berths (6,600 linear feet of dock space) at full seaway depth (27 feet minimum) Duluth-Superior is recognized worldwide as the Great Lakes' heaviest-lift port. A nine-mile natural breakwater shelters the port's 49 miles of harbor frontage located on Lake Superior and along the mouth of the St. Louis River. The Port is a multimodal shipping hub, offering global cargo transport through the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway, free-flowing major highways and direct Class I rail service to the East, West, and Gulf Coast.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: I-35, I-535, WIS 35, US 2, US 53, and Minnesota State Highway 61

Rail: Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railway, Canadian Pacific Kansas City

The port typically handles cement, coal, dry bulk, general cargo/break bulk, iron ore, fertilizer, grain, limestone, liquid bulk, salt, scrap iron and metals, steel coil, stone and aggregate, wind turbine components, wood products, and other heavy equipment for energy-related projects.

AVERAGE 2017–2021 ANNUAL TONNAGE HANDLED

32.23 million tons

WAREHOUSE SPACE

Covered: 256,000 square feet

Uncovered: 500,000 square feet

Temperature controlled: 256,000 square feet

Liquid: 357,619 barrels

Storage: 11.2 million tons capacity for general/bulk cargo, and 52 million bushels of grain

CARGO HANDLING EQUIPMENT

Two 82-metric ton rail-mounted gantry cranes lifting 125 metric tons in tandem (greater capability cranes available on demand). A fleet of forklift trucks with capacities of up to 55,000 pounds. Roll on/roll off ramp with immediate access to Interstate highway and designated heavy-lift route.



Port of Duluth-Superior

PHOTO CREDIT: DULUTH-SUPERIOR-US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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GREEN BAY

The Port of Green Bay is the western-most port of Lake Michigan, offering the shortest, most direct route for shipments on the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Seaway. The Port plays a vital role in providing Northeast Wisconsin with access to the local and world economies. The Port has a 13-mile outer channel leading to the Fox River.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: I-43, US 41-141, WIS 29, WIS 32, and WIS 57

Rail: Canadian National Railway Company and Fox Valley & Lake Superior Rail System

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

The Port of Green Bay typically handles coal, limestone, cement, salt, pig iron, fuel oil, forest products, petroleum products, and liquid asphalt. Eight terminal operators located on the Fox River handle dry bulk commodities, four terminal operators handle bulk liquids, and three general cargo docks handle a wide variety of products and commodities.

2017–2021 FIVE YEAR AVERAGE TONNAGE

2.09 million tons

WAREHOUSE SPACE

Covered: 135,000 square feet

Uncovered: 150,000 square feet

Temperature controlled: 256,000 square feet

Liquid: 34 million gallons

Storage: 30,000 tons of silo storage, and 100 acres for general/bulk cargoes

CARGO HANDLING EQUIPMENT

Three eight-cubic yard payloaders and one 100-ton crane, two 10-inch lines for pumping cement off a ship or barge



Port of Green Bay

PHOTO CREDIT: PORT OF GREEN BAY

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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LA CROSSE

Located on the Mississippi River, La Crosse's commercial port activity contributes to cargos shipping to and from St. Paul Minnesota to St. Louis Missouri and terminates at the Gulf of Mexico. The Port's location provides opportunities for industry, recreation, and tourism. Brennan Marine, headquartered in La Crosse supports many jobs locally and nationally.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: I-90, US 53, US 14/61, WIS 35, WIS 33, and WIS 16

Rail: F.J. Robers Co. has rail access to dockside by Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railroad with 30 spots for loading train cars. Midwest Industrial Asphalt has rail access which connects to Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railroad.

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway serves the east bank of the Black River waterfront.

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

The port handles between 700,000 and 1,000,000 tons per year of grain, cement, salt, pig iron, cottonseed, distillers' grains, fertilizer, coal, and other specialty cargoes.

2017–2021 FIVE YEAR AVERAGE TONNAGE

Not Available¹

WAREHOUSE SPACE

F.J. Robers Co. has 26,000 square feet of covered storage space; 435,600 square feet of uncovered, paved storage space; and 1,306,800 square feet of uncovered, unpaved storage space.



PHOTO CREDIT: CITY OF LA CROSSE

Port of La Crosse

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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Parks, Forestry, Building and Grounds
Project Specialist
City of La Crosse
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Email: flottmeyerj@cityoflacrosse.org

INDUSTRY CONTACT

FJ Robers
Web: www.fjrobers.com

¹Data not available from USACE

MANITOWOC

The Port of Manitowoc handles bulk commodities, newly constructed yachts, and passengers on the SS Badger car ferry. The Port is also home to a marine contracting firm that serves Lake Michigan ports in Wisconsin and Michigan. The Manitowoc Harbor is a federally authorized deep draft commercial port extending from the entrance at the outer breakwater into the Manitowoc River and around the peninsula to the location of the former railroad swing bridge. The Port's layout allows for efficient transfer of inland cargo onto berths.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: US 151, US 10, and WIS 42

Rail: Canadian National Railway Company

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

The Port of Manitowoc typically handles cement, coal, flexible pipe for oil and gas mining, newly constructed yachts, passenger and commercial vehicles, rock, stone, wind turbine towers and parts, and wood products.

WAREHOUSE SPACE

Covered and heated: 100,000 square feet

Uncovered: 100,000 square feet

2017-2021 FIVE YEAR AVERAGE TONNAGE

187,732 tons

CARGO HANDLING EQUIPMENT

Front-end loaders and marine contracting equipment such as cranes



PHOTO CREDIT: CITY OF MANITOWOC

Port of Manitowoc

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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Manitowoc, WI 54220
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Web: manitowoc.org

MARINETTE

The Port of Marinette serves industries with facilities on the harbor. These include Marinette Fuel and Dock, KK Integrated Logistics, and Marinette Marine Corporation, a Fincantieri Company. The Port has a ship lift that can accommodate up to 200 tons and 1,800 feet of dock wall with water depths of over 20 feet for mooring on the Menominee River.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: US 41 and Ogden Street serve Marinette Fuel and Dock. US 41 and Ely Street serve Marinette Marine Corporation.

Rail: Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad Company

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

Marinette Fuel and Dock handles limestone, pig iron, and road salt. Marinette Marine Corporation is an established ship builder that has designed and built high-tech vessels for the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, and other government and commercial clients.

AVERAGE 2017–2021 ANNUAL TONNAGE HANDLED

158,363 tons

WAREHOUSE SPACE

Uncovered: 14.5 acres

Marinette Marine Corporation's shipyard has several buildings used for warehousing, fabrication, construction, and painting of ships.

CARGO HANDLING EQUIPMENT

Marinette Marine Corporation has lifting capabilities ranging from 100-ton cranes to forklift trucks.



PHOTO CREDIT: CITY OF MARINETTE

Port of Marinette

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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1905 Hall Avenue
Marinette, WI 54143
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Web: www.marinette.wi.us

MILWAUKEE

As a department within the City of Milwaukee, Port Milwaukee is currently landlord to over 20 tenants whose daily operations support cargo handling and a variety of transportation and logistics services. Port Milwaukee is an economic and logistical transportation hub for Southeastern Wisconsin as well as home to the City of Milwaukee's major lakefront events and community destinations. Port Milwaukee is the sole Lake Michigan port approved by the U.S. Coast Guard to serve the Mississippi River inland waterway system with direct river barge access from the Port via the Illinois River and the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal System, a vital connection between U.S. ports on the Gulf of Mexico and the Great Lakes region. Port Milwaukee is the northernmost point on the Great Lakes where a barge can safely travel, as approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Port has sixteen berths, each capable of handling vessels with a Seaway maximum draft of 26 feet 6 inches at normal water conditions, with a length of 1,000 feet. The Port also has two dedicated barge berths with drafts in excess of 18 feet. The Port is part of The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway System on Marine Highway Route M-90. The Port has two dedicated cruise docks, handling over 13,000 passengers in 2022, and ferry services through the Lake Express High-Speed Car Ferry which travels between Milwaukee, WI and Muskegon, MI. A new facility operated by the DeLong Company opened in the summer of 2023. This agricultural maritime export facility, located on Jones Island, will connect Wisconsin's agriculture to world markets.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: I-94/I-794 leads directly into Port Milwaukee. Access to the interstate from major Port terminals takes less than five minutes. Several major cities are within 350 miles. Truck scales are located at the port. High-wide truck access to dock areas is available via East Bay Street by appointment.

Rail: Port Milwaukee is served by the Union Pacific Railway (UP) and the Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railway (CPKC). Both UP and CPKC provide direct pier delivery at all Port facilities as well as necessary switching services. The Port additionally owns and maintains 14 miles of its own rail track, providing continuous service and connectivity to UP and CPKC.



PHOTO CREDIT:

Port of Milwaukee

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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Web: portmilwaukee.com

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

The Port typically handles salt, cement, limestone, grain, steel, machinery, and project cargo. Commodities are both imported and exported through Port Milwaukee, handled by the Port's international stevedore, Federal Marine Terminals (FMT). Imports currently outweigh exports.

AVERAGE 2017–2021 ANNUAL TONNAGE HANDLED

2.59 million tons

WAREHOUSE SPACE

The Port provides over 330,000 square feet of covered warehouse space for bulk, steel, and general cargoes, including 30,000 square feet of climate-controlled space. All Port facilities are steel frame buildings with brick and aluminum exteriors. The Port's general cargo piers are paved with concrete and asphalt connections to both UP and CPKC railways. The Port's total general cargo capacity exceeds 20 acres (8.1 hectares).

CARGO HANDLING EQUIPMENT

The Port owns and operates a variety of heavy lift cranes with lifting capacities up to 200 metric tons. These cranes are rented on an hourly basis to port terminal operators for handling both dry bulk and general cargoes.

PORT WASHINGTON

Port Washington, Wisconsin is located on the west shore of Lake Michigan, about 53 miles south of Manitowoc and 29 miles north of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Port Washington Harbor and Coal Dock Park have become home to many research vessels that run out of the Port during late spring, summer, and fall. The Port hopes to become a stop for cruise ships.

The existing federal harbor project, authorized by Rivers and Harbors Acts of July 11, 1870; August 14, 1876; August 30, 1935; July 3, 1958, provides for an outer stilling basin enclosed by a converging north breakwater and shore connection 2,537 feet long; a 456-foot extension of a privately-owned rubble mound and coal wharf on the south; a turning basin 21 feet deep and 750 feet wide in the stilling basin; an entrance channel 21 feet deep and 2,500 feet long through the south side of the stilling basin to the west; and north interior basins which have been dredged to an 18-foot depth.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: WIS 32 and I-43

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

There is a negligible amount of cargo movement at Port Washington. The project served a coal wharf and petroleum tank farm until 2004 when the coal plant was converted to natural gas.

AVERAGE 2017–2021 ANNUAL TONNAGE HANDLED

Not Available¹



PHOTO CREDIT: CITY OF PORT WASHINGTON

Port Washington

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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¹Data not available from USACE

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN

Prairie du Chien has a unique port located along the St. Feriole Island. This location provides both commercial and recreational opportunities. Prairie Sand and Gravel operates alongside Ernest “Doc” Dillman Harbor, using its facilities.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: US 18; WIS 27 and WIS 35

Rail: Wisconsin & Southern Railroad and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

The Port handles coal, gypsum, wood products, salt, fertilizer, sand, and gravel.

AVERAGE 2017–2021 ANNUAL TONNAGE HANDLED

Not Available¹

WAREHOUSE SPACE

Prairie Sand and Gravel provides over 100,000 tons of indoor and outdoor storage.

CARGO HANDLING EQUIPMENT

Five docking sites with the ability to load and unload a wide variety of goods.



PHOTO CREDIT: CITY OF PRAIRIE DU CHIEN

Port of Prairie du Chien

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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¹Data not available from USACE

STURGEON BAY

The Port of Sturgeon Bay is notable for its location on the Sturgeon Bay and Lake Michigan Ship Canal, where the waters of Green Bay connect with Lake Michigan. The Port is home to Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding Company, which constructs new vessels and provides winter layover berthing and servicing of Great Lakes freighters.

Sturgeon Bay is also home to three U.S. Coast Guard units. Coast Guard operations from this port include port security, vessel inspection, buoy tending, and icebreaking. The Marine Safety Detachment Sturgeon Bay regularly inspects commercial vessels and performs port security. USCG Cutter Mobile Bay is homeported in Sturgeon Bay and provides buoy tending and ice breaking services in parts of the Great Lakes, keeping commercial shipping safe and reliable.

Great Lakes Towing, based in Cleveland, OH, recently purchased the fleet of tugboats that provide service to entities in the Sturgeon Bay Region.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

WIS 57, a four-lane divided highway that connects to I-41 and I-43 at the City of Green Bay

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

Ship modules for ship construction

AVERAGE 2017–2021 ANNUAL TONNAGE HANDLED

551 tons



Port of Sturgeon Bay

PHOTO CREDIT: STURGEON BAY – DESTINATION DOOR COUNTY

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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Mike Barker
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Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
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WASHBURN

The Port of Washburn marina serves commercial vessels and has been in operation since 1982. With a 150-ton travelift, the marina is able to haul out and service a variety of commercial craft including tour boats, ferry boats, commercial tugs, and commercial fishing boats. Along with the marina, a 550' commercial dock is available for commercial vessels to transload bulk goods. Open on-the-dock storage is available.

PRIMARY ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS

Roads: The Washburn Marina and Commercial Dock are located three blocks south of WIS 13 off Central Avenue.

TYPES OF CARGO HANDLED

Besides commercial vessels, the dock usually handles rocks, aggregate, sand, and equipment.

AVERAGE 2017–2021 ANNUAL TONNAGE HANDLED

Not Available¹



PHOTO CREDIT: WASHBURN - MARINAS.COM

Port of Washburn

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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¹Data not available from USACE

WISCONSIN'S ISLAND FERRIES

Ferry services in Wisconsin have diverse economic impacts. Some communities, such as Madeline Island and Washington Island, rely almost entirely on ferry services for all their needs. Ferries bring commuters, goods, services, and tourists to Wisconsin's islands. Being vital to these communities, ferry operators must work around the volatility of weather and seasonal fluctuations in demand. As Wisconsin's island ferries are privately owned but used for public transit, ferry service is integral to their communities.

MADELINE ISLAND FERRY

Web: www.madferry.com

The Madeline Island Ferry Line provides transportation between the towns of La Pointe and Bayfield. The short voyage provides spectacular views of Lake Superior and several of the Apostle Islands. Madeline Island is a popular tourist destination.



Madeline Island Ferry

PHOTO CREDIT: MADELINE ISLAND FERRY

PRIMARY PORT CONTACT

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La Pointe, WI 54850
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WASHINGTON ISLAND FERRY

Web: www.wisferry.com

The Washington Island Ferry is located at the tip of the Door Peninsula, in the Northeast corner of Wisconsin. The Washington Island Ferry is accessed via WIS 42 at the Northport Pier. Their fleet uses Coast Guard-approved modern steel ferries that make up to 25 round trips a day during the high season and two round trips per day in the winter. Washington Island is a popular tourist destination.



Washington Island Ferry

PHOTO CREDIT: WASHINGTON FERRY.COM

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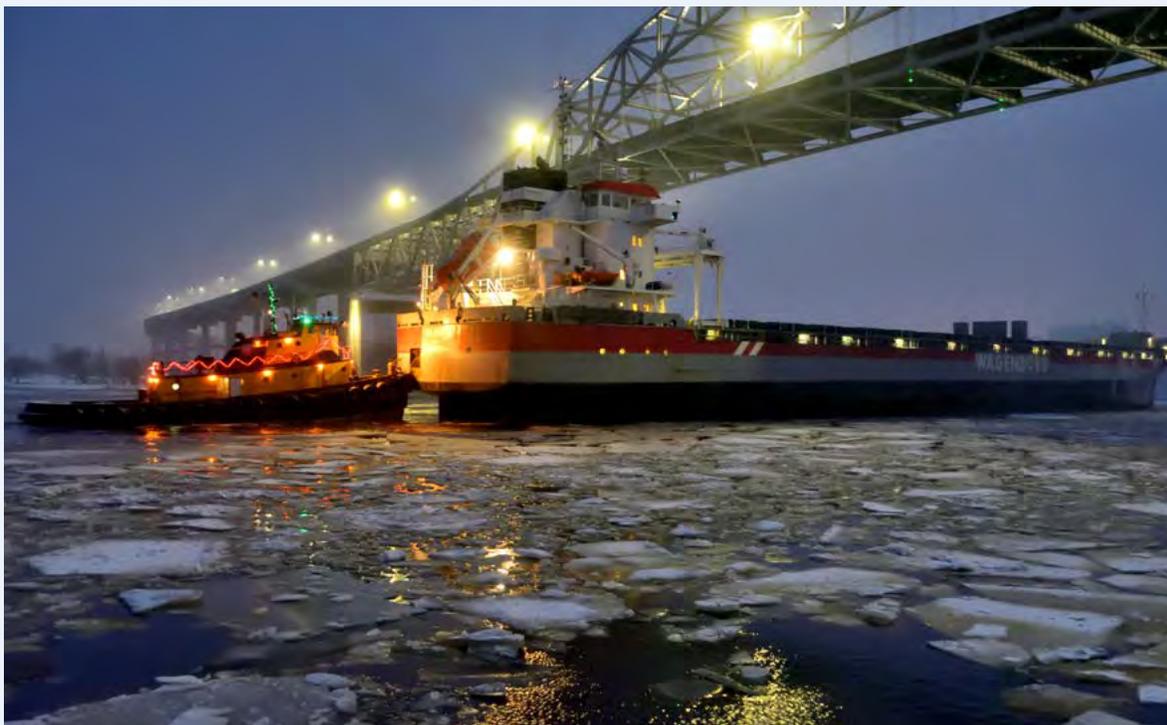
GREAT LAKES TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Connecting Wisconsin to the global economy, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway is significant to Wisconsin now and will continue to be in the future. Great Lakes transportation can move raw goods such as iron or grain and finished products such as agricultural equipment or wind energy components. Cruise ships access the many waterfronts along the system, driving growth that can foster development in businesses catering to visitors and in the maintenance needs of these vessels. Wisconsin's Lake Superior and Lake Michigan waterfronts are already beguiling tourist destinations with the potential to catalyze future cruise tourism. Furthermore, Wisconsin's Shipwreck Coast along the shore of Lake Michigan, designated as a National Marine Sanctuary in 2021 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides opportunities for research, preservation, and education of Wisconsin's maritime history.

The movement of bulk cargo, while generally perceived as less glamorous than tourism, is a critical component for Wisconsin's economy. Occupations in the handling and transportation of bulk cargos in places such as Superior and Milwaukee have supported multiple generations of hard-working Wisconsinites. With U.S.-flagged ships being protected by the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 (the Jones Act), majority-owned and operated American shipping companies are the sole providers of coastwise trade (trade between two ports within the United States).

With Wisconsin situated at the edge of the Great Lakes system, ice and ship damage can become an issue from cold snaps and long journeys. Ice occurs along the entire system and can suddenly bring transportation to a halt. The Straits of Mackinac, which must be crossed to reach Wisconsin, frequently ice over and must be broken up. The importance of the U.S. Coast Guard's ice breakers directly impacts Wisconsin's maritime transportation in early and late ice seasons. H.R. 7900 – National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 included a measure to invest in a new \$350 million icebreaker for the U.S. Coast Guard's fleet.

Ice breakers and other lake carriers directly impact Wisconsin's economy through off-season layup ship repairs in ports such as Superior, Marinette, and Milwaukee. The Lake Carriers' Association estimated that from 2021 to 2023, annual layup investment has averaged over \$40 million in Wisconsin.



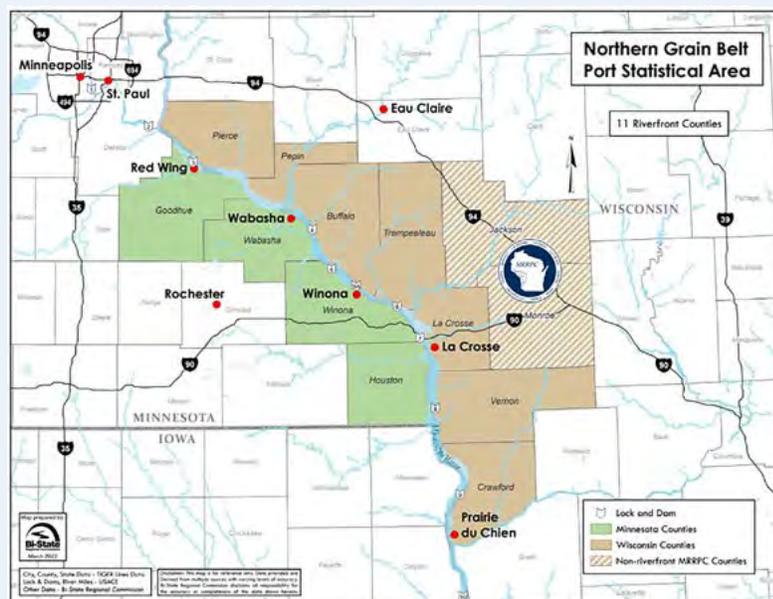
A ship passes under the Blatnik Bridge near Superior, Wis.

PHOTO CREDIT: PAUL SCINOCCA

MISSISSIPPI RIVER PORTS

This study includes data for two of Wisconsin's most important Mississippi River commercial ports, La Crosse and Prairie du Chien. It also recognizes the importance of the addition of the Northern Grain Belt Ports as a federally recognized Port Statistical Area (PSA) in 2022. The bi-state Northern Grain Belt Ports PSA consists of 11 counties (7 from Wisconsin and 4 from Minnesota), five ports (two from Wisconsin, La Crosse and Prairie du Chien) and over 34 terminals along Marine Highway Route 35 (M-35). This PSA is served by an interconnected network of roads and railways and complements nearby industrial and commercial users of the region's multi-modal transportation infrastructure supporting, in turn, growth in other commodities and products. The creation of this federally recognized bistate PSA on the Mississippi River is a first for Wisconsin. Wisconsin is now a federally recognized Tri-Coastal Port state. Tonnage moved along M-35 is now attributed to this PSA, which further documents the economic value of this region (and the value of waterborne commerce) to the national and global supply chain.

This study also acknowledges the work conducted by the National Waterway Foundation, which stated in its 2019 *Economic Impact of Wisconsin's Inland Waterways Report* that "Wisconsin's ports, inland waterways, and inland waterways-dependent industries supported nearly 235,000 jobs, \$14.1 billion in personal income, \$22.4 billion in Gross State Product, \$49.4 billion in total output and gave rise to \$1.1 billion in state & local tax revenue." Additionally, that study also reinforced the environmental value of moving product on the inland waterways. It stated that "one standard 15-barge tow moves the equivalent volume of 216 rail cars or 1,050 trucks," illustrating the potential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by moving more freight to the waterways.



HARBOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Wisconsin's Legislature created the Harbor Assistance Program (HAP) to assist harbor communities along the Great Lakes and Mississippi River in maintaining and improving waterborne commerce. HAP projects typically include dock reconstruction, mooring structure replacement, dredging, and the construction of facilities to hold dredged material. Since 1980, over \$210 million in grants have been awarded with over \$6 million awarded in 2022. Local match requirements range from 20% to 50% of the total project cost. In years when funding is available, the deadline to submit a grant application is August 1. For additional information, please contact:

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APPENDIX



While Wisconsin's waterways and harbors are deeply rooted in our state's history, they continue to play an important role in the state's economic future.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning and Economic Development
wisconsin.gov/Documents/travel/water/ports-report.pdf