

APRIL 2014

Port n' News

WHEN WILL THE FIRST SHIP ARRIVE AT PORT OF GREEN BAY?

A Tough Winter and Heavy Ice Cover Could Make Guessing a Bit Tricky

(Green Bay, WI) – Can you guess when the first ship will arrive at the Port of Green Bay? “Considering about 90 percent of the Great Lakes was covered in ice, the first ship could slide into port!” said Dean Haen, director for the Port and Resource Recovery department. “It’s really anybody’s guess as to when the first ship will arrive. This year’s guessing contest should provide some interesting and fun answers.”

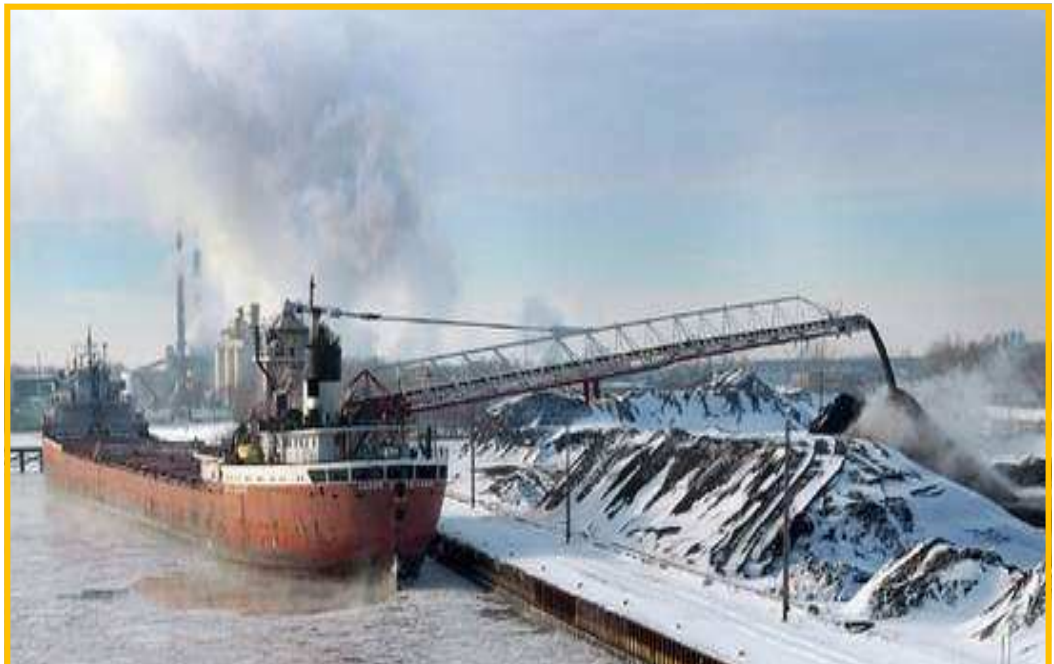
The contest of guessing the day the first ship will arrive at port has become a yearly tradition for the Port and the Greater Green Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau. “It’s a fun way to get the community involved and get the 2014 shipping season kicked off,” said Haen. “Since the 2013 season ended earlier than usual, we may see an early demand for materials from Port businesses. Historically, the earliest we can ask the Coast Guard for ice breaker assistance is anytime after March 15, however, this year it is April 15th due to ice, so I guess that’s a hint.”

The person who comes closest to the date and time of the first ship’s arrival will win a prize package from the Port of Green Bay which includes passage for two (2) plus one (1) vehicle on the Washington Island Ferry, a \$25 gift certificate to The Ship’s Wheel restaurant on Washington Island and a set of four (4) of “in-demand” Port of Green Bay can coolers.

To make your guess, visit the Greater Green Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau website at www.greenbay.com and click on the First Ship in Port contest link. Learn more about the shipping industry in Green Bay and how it impacts our community by visiting www.portofgreenbay.com.

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Cason J. Callaway in the Port of Green Bay, WI.

SHIPPING ON ICE

by Ramelle Bintz, Door County Advocate

Normally the U.S. Coast Guard would be breaking the ice of Green Bay by the end of March. Not this winter. There is so much ice on the Great Lakes, ice breaking is all taking place north of Green Island between Marinette and Egg Harbor, according to Jack Crumbaugh, vessel traffic controller who works as a civilian with the Coast Guard in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.

The Great Lakes shipping season started Tuesday [March 25, 2014] with the opening of the Soo Locks in Sault Ste. Marie, but because of the ice, not a single vessel could make it through to the locks. That delays shipping of coal, iron ore and grains throughout the Great Lakes.

The Coast Guard cutter Mobile Bay, stationed out of Sturgeon Bay, is currently breaking ice and escorting ships at the Straits of Mackinac to try to help ships make their way. After the Stewart J. Cort left its winter layup at Bay Shipbuilding Co. in Sturgeon Bay Monday [March 24, 2014] night, it got stuck on its way to the Soo Locks. The Mobile Bay broke more than three feet of ice to free the Cort.

Crumbaugh confirmed the Cort was stuck and said most vessels are changing their course and adding days to their transit. The ice is one reason many vessels are staying put for now.

“They’re not leaving like they usually do,” he said. “This excess ice has pushed back sailing dates by one to three weeks. In most places, the ice is from 2 to 4 feet thick, including Green Bay and out in the open in northern Lake Michigan, Huron and Superior.”

The waters of the bay of Green Bay itself (from Escanaba, Mich., to Green Bay) are still completely frozen and in some areas the ice is still more than 28 inches thick, according to Keith Kompoltowicz, chief of watershed hydrology with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Detroit. Last year at this time, the ice was also very thick— 12-28 inches — but the ice cover is even thicker and more extensive than average this year.

There is some shipping traffic moving from Escanaba with escorts by the Coast Guard, but the most recent ice breaking near Door County is scheduled this weekend from Marinette to Rock Island.

Kompoltowicz said this month Lake Michigan was at its highest percentage of ice cover since 1973 at 93.2 percent. But in just one week that has dropped almost in half, and as of Wednesday [March 26, 2014] it was already down to 44 percent — mostly in the southern part of the lake.

The Great Lakes in general peaked at 92.2 percent ice cover, second only to 1979. As of Wednesday [March 26, 2014] the ice cover was down to 74 percent with Lake Superior still 94 percent covered and Lake Huron

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

HARBOR COMMISSION

April 23, 2014

KI Convention Center @ 8:30am

2014 PORT SYMPOSIUM

April 23, 2014

KI Convention Center @ 9:30am



HARBOR COMMISSION

May 12, 2014

Port & Resource Recovery @ 11:00am

HARBOR COMMISSION

June 9, 2014

Port & Resource Recovery @ 11:00am

SHIPPING ON ICE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2...

still close to 90 percent. The change has little to do with ice breaking, in which a small track is cut for shipping. The change is due to the change of seasons with warmer temperatures and the higher position of the sun in late March and longer days where the ice has more of an opportunity to absorb heat even if the temperatures remain cold, Kompoltowicz said.



Convoy of ice breakers and vessels in Lake Superior down bound to The Soo Locks. Source: US Coast Guard, 2014)

LAKE LEVELS REBOUND

Last winter, the water surrounding Door County was at a record low with Lake Michigan-Huron at 576.02 feet. In February, the Michigan-Huron lake level was more than a foot higher than the

all-time low of January 2013. Lakes Michigan and Huron are measured together because they are connected. Water levels are now higher but still below average.

“We’ve had two consecutive winters with conditions of water levels rising,” Kompoltowicz said. “We had a decent amount of snow last year and then a very wet spring in 2013. Fast forward to 2014 with the coldest winter since 1994 and the most snow ever in some places. Water levels have come up significantly. We’re anywhere from 14 to 15 inches above the same time a year ago. But we are still a foot below the long-term average.”

There is a lot of snow in the basin, and when the snow pack finally melts, the lake will begin to rise, he said. A greater concern now is for flooding in areas such as Milwaukee and Grand Rapids, Mich.

Forecasts show more storms and snow bringing more precipitation, but longer forecasts don’t give a clear signal either way, Kompoltowicz said. The short-term forecast is about a 14-15 inch seasonal rise, which will keep the lake well above the levels a year ago.

“There is significant ice that remains on the Great Lakes, and that may have a cooling effect as water temperatures stay cooler and act as an air conditioner,” he said. “That will cool the air, and there is some thought it could be a cooler than average spring and summer because of that.”

Water temperatures also will be colder in spring going into summer and fall, and that could mean less evaporation next fall, which could help retain water levels next winter, he said. “Whether this is a return to a cycle of higher water levels, no one knows,” Kompoltowicz said. “It’s not been a typical winter, and winter hasn’t quite given up its grip on the Great Lakes yet. We’ll need to wait and see.”

2014 ANNUAL PORT SYMPOSIUM

(Green Bay, WI) - Brown County Port & Resource Recovery will host the annual 2014 Port of Green Bay Symposium on Wednesday, April 23, 2014 at the KI Convention downtown Green Bay. The meeting will provide a great opportunity to gather and exchange information on current issues concerning the Port of Green Bay and the Great Lakes. The event begins at 9:30 am with a coffee social followed by presentations from each of our distinguished guest speakers.

PORT TERMINAL OPERATOR PROFILE

FOX RIVER DOCK INCORPORATED

(Green Bay, WI) – The Port of Green Bay is the western-most port of Lake Michigan offering a direct route for shipping raw goods and materials using the most cost effective and sustainable method of transportation available. There are 16 private terminal operators located along three miles of the Fox River. These businesses move more than two million tons of cargo on more than 200 ships each year. The Port of Green Bay is a vital part of our local economy, our history and our lives. It plays an important role in the transportation of goods and commodities that are critical to the economic health of the region. Opportunities for growth, whether using an existing port facility or developing a new property, makes the port an attractive option for businesses.



Aerial of Fox River Dock Company Incorporated, Port of Green Bay, WI.

Fox River Dock Company Incorporated (FRDC) – 1400 Bylsby Avenue Green Bay, WI 54303. The Fox River Dock Company imports and distributes dry bulk coal, salt, gypsum, and pig iron and is located immediately north of the I-43/Leo Frigo Bridge on 27.9 acres of land on the west side of the Fox River. The majority of FRDC cargo arrives for distribution by Great Lakes vessels. Coal is transferred to trucks, which is then hauled to mills to power their boilers. Salt is also transferred to trucks for transport to County highway sheds for use as road salt. In addition to the 27.9 acres of land owned by the Fox River Dock Company, FRDC has waterfront access to approximately 2,230 feet of improved dockwall along the Fox River and adjoining slip.

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