

# Seaway Plan Promotes Increased Shipping, Ignores Heightened Risk of Invasion

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**(Buffalo, NY August 3, 2006)**-Great Lakes Seaway managers are ramping up a campaign to promote increased ocean-going shipping on the lakes—despite the fact that ocean-going vessels are the No. 1 pathway for non-native species to enter the lakes.

“Shippers, carriers and Seaway managers are responsible for introducing the overwhelming majority of aquatic invasive species into the Great Lakes,” said Jennifer Caddick, executive director of Save the River. “It’s time that they took responsibility for their actions, rather than make the problem worse. This means preventing new non-native species from entering the lakes before promoting increases in ocean-vessel traffic.”

Since the Seaway opened in 1959, ocean-going vessels have transported and introduced 65 percent of aquatic invasive species into the Great Lakes, including invaders such as the zebra mussel, spiny water flea and round goby. On average, one new non-native species enters the Great Lakes every 28 weeks.

New research shows that the rate of discovery of invaders in the Great Lakes is correlated with shipping activity, and is amongst the highest rates for any aquatic system in the world.

“The priorities of U.S. and Canadian Seaway managers are off,” said Jennifer Nalbone, campaign director of Great Lakes United. “The most pressing current debate is how to prevent new invasions from ocean-going vessels, and even whether ocean-going vessels belong on the Great Lakes. With ocean-vessels in the cross-hairs, the Seaway’s top priority should be cleaning up their act.”

The Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation and U.S. St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation are backing a new promotional campaign called “Highway H2O” which aims to bring Seaway-sized container vessels into the lakes.

“Seaway managers have put the cart before the horse,” said Andy Buchsbaum, director of the National Wildlife Federation’s Great Lakes office “The Great Lakes are breaking down, and a big reason is the influx of aquatic invasive species. The good news is that we have manageable solutions. It is now time to use them so that we can protect the lakes for our children and generations to come.”

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