



GETTING THE WORD OUT

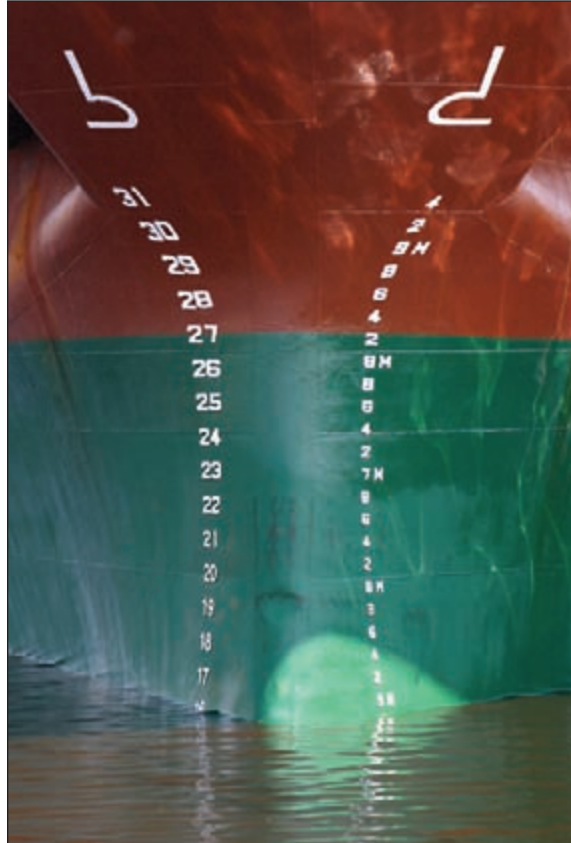
High-level media event educates on ballast water management requirements

News Item: 1) Ballast water management requirements in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System are the most stringent in the world; and 2) There is no unmanaged ballast water entering the Seaway.

That was the message delivered to U.S. and Canadian media, state regulators and legislators, and environmental representatives during a first-ever ballast water inspection demonstration held May 5 and 6 in Montreal, Quebec. This message has been all-too-frequently underreported in the public debate on ballast water. The goal of the two-day event hosted by the Canadian and U.S. Seaway Corporations was to get this message out to dispel the false notion that nothing is being done to protect the Great Lakes.

A large event such as this required significant planning and coordination among many agencies and individuals. Key participants in the demonstrations were Fednav Ltd., Transport Canada and the U.S. Coast Guard. They were joined by Canadian and U.S. scientists as well as marine industry representatives in an effort to provide information about the increased binational efforts to prevent further invasive species from entering the Great Lakes Seaway System. That so many entities would devote the time and effort to this "show-and-tell" event underscored how important we all feel it is to get the word out.

This unique event provided a rare opportunity for U.S. and Canadian media and stakeholders to examine first hand the joint ballast water inspection process which occurs prior to a vessel entering the Seaway system in Montreal. Attendees were permitted to photograph and document ballast water inspections being performed by marine inspectors and also examine the control room of the Fednav vessel *M/V Federal Kivalina*. Senior ballast water experts from the U.S. Coast Guard, Transport Canada, Environment Canada, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



(Dr. David Reid) and the University of Windsor (Dr. Hugh MacIsaac) participated. In all, representatives from more than 22 U.S. and Canadian media outlets, state and provincial regulators, and 16 other stakeholders came to Montreal for the chance to question key agency policy leaders, scientists and maritime industry representatives about what is being done, today, to protect the Great Lakes from invasive species.

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ing into the Seaway from the Exclusive Economic Zone, resulting in more ballast water inspections of incoming vessels and more industry reporting of adherence to best management practices. Recent scientific study has shown that saltwater flushing of ballast tanks that contain residual amounts of water or sediment is highly effective in eradicating most aquatic invasive species coming into the Great Lakes.

Based on what I have seen and read in the reports on the Montreal ballast water demonstration event, it appears that these key facts are finally reaching a wider audience throughout the Great Lakes. We need to do more, and we will, but the events of May 5 and 6 were a good start to demonstrate that many of the most practical and immediate solutions to the invasive species problem are already in place. ■

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