

The Working Great Lakes

By Karen Gersonde

The Great Lakes are mighty lakes, tough lakes, working lakes.

For centuries, wooden schooners, fishing boats, car ferries, ore carriers and cargo ships have braved the demanding waters of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, carrying people and cargo of all types to distance ports of call on their routes.

In the early days, villages sprung up on their fertile shores, depending on these lakes for survival. Then villages became small cities, and the small cities became large cities. Businesses and industries thrived because of these lakes. All people through the ages depended on these lakes, on these boats and ships for food, raw goods, transportation, fish and other items like Christmas trees and lumber. Shipping was their life lines, shipping was their survival.

America still depends on these lakes for the same reasons the early settlers did. We need to protect these lakes and maintain their integrity so they stay Great Lakes, Working Lakes, Mighty Lakes, for generations to come.