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EXECUTIVE REGIONAL AIRPORT 

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PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA SEES GROWTH IN TONNAGE FOR FIRST TIME IN SIX YEARS

*Despite Challenges including Historically Low Mississippi River Levels,
Port SL Stands Strong in Global Shipping Markets*

Reserve, LA.

With the release of Fourth Quarter 2022 data, Port of South Louisiana (PortSL) saw an annual increase in tonnage of nearly 10 million short tons of cargo. In 2022, PortSL moved a total of 239,257,758 short tons compared to a total of 229,797,480 short tons in 2021. This is the first year that Port of South Louisiana has seen a net increase in tonnage since 2017.

“The numbers do not lie; Port of South Louisiana has reversed a six-year trend and is finally growing,” said PortSL Chief Executive Officer Paul Matthews. “Our Commission, staff, and I are constantly thinking outside the box and taking tremendous steps to maximize our growth and operate at optimal levels. With plans to construct the state’s first grain elevator in 40 years and the prospects of owning Louisiana’s greatest industrial icon, Avondale Global Gateway, Port of South Louisiana is on track to reach new heights, attract good-paying jobs and make Louisiana and America more competitive in the ever-changing shipping markets.”

As the nation’s leading grain exporter and the second largest port in the Western Hemisphere, Port of South Louisiana is a driver of Louisiana’s and America’s economy and is responsible for feeding and fueling the world. With conflict in Europe between two of the world’s largest grain producers, Russia and Ukraine, the eyes of the world have turned to America’s farmers and the Port of South Louisiana, where sixty percent of the nation’s grain is exported through seven grain elevators in the Port’s jurisdiction. PortSL is also currently ranked second in the nation as an energy transfer port. By focusing on diversifying the energy industry in the River Region, the Port continues to attract investment in both the traditional and renewable energy space. In September, PortSL was awarded federal funding to construct the nation’s first hydrogen fueling

— America’s Leading Grain Exporter —



barge, which is an integral piece to a larger \$74 million project to develop a new energy cluster in South Louisiana.

Last year, PortSL faced many challenges, including barges being unable to move safely on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. Upriver, record-low water levels were recorded at Memphis, Tennessee of -10.81 feet below zero gauge in October 2022. Despite the adversity brought on by Mother Nature, the Port took major steps to overcome obstacles and remain resilient. In August, PortSL dedicated two new Konecranes at its Globalplex Intermodal Terminal dock, doubling the Port’s discharge rate, and making the Port more efficient with less downtime in the offloading process.

“When our Commission hired Mr. Matthews a little over a year ago, we challenged him to establish a culture that nurtures growth and embraces concepts and ideas that equip the Port to thrive in an evolving marketplace,” said PortSL Commission Chairman Ryan Burks “This course correction from annual losses to an increase of 10 million tons in just one year’s time is a testament to Paul’s leadership and our staff’s dedication to attracting foreign and domestic cargo and investment to the Port of South Louisiana.”

A few notable cargo statistics found in Port of South Louisiana’s [Tonnage Report 2021-2022](#) (short tons):

• Animal Feed	6,680,812/8,609,604	29% increase
• Concrete/Stone Products	1,196,154/2,520,908	111% increase
• Crude Oil	43,584,653/50,379,545	16% increase
• Petrochemicals	36,235,889/41,583,926	15% increase
• Soybean	37,188,918/42,266,127	14% increase
• Wheat	2,803,217/3,351,240	20% increase

About the Port of South Louisiana

Founded in 1960, the Port of South Louisiana [PortSL] is a 54-mile port district on the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, encompassing the parishes of St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. James. The Port of South Louisiana is the largest port in Louisiana and #2 in the Western Hemisphere. It ranks as the #1 U.S. grain exporter and #2 U.S. energy transfer port. Port SL is home to seven grain transfer facilities, four major oil refineries, 11 petrochemical manufacturing facilities and several other facilities, including the Executive Regional Airport.

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