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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** August 1, 2023

LUDINGTON, MICH. –After unexpected damage to its ramp system, Lake Michigan Carferry will not be able to resume operation of its SS *Badger* this season.

“We have made the difficult, and unfortunately unavoidable, decision to suspend our daily crossings for the remainder of the season,” says Mark W. Barker, President of Interlake Maritime Services, parent company of the Lake Michigan Carferry (LMC). “This is not how we hoped our 70<sup>th</sup> season would end but we are fully committed to making the extensive repairs – and doing it the right way – so that we will be back better and stronger in 2024 to serve our loyal passengers and port communities.”

On July 21, a failure of the counterweight structure on the port side of the *Badger*’s ramp system occurred. Underwater divers, marine construction contractors and an engineering firm were quickly engaged but over the last week, it became clear that the necessary repairs were extensive and would take months to clear the collapsed structure and erect a new one.

“While an amazing amount of work has been done in last 11 days and an incredible effort has been made by all of our employees and key partners on the Lakes, this is a very complicated process and one that will not be complete in time to resume service this season,” says Sara Spore, General Manager of Lake Michigan Carferry. “We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience and disruption in plans. We know that our passengers and our port communities of Ludington and Manitowoc rely on the *Badger*. We thank them for their support, patience and understanding as we tackle this unexpected and disappointing end to our season.”

In the meantime, the Company is working to keep as many of its seasonal staff working as possible in Ludington and through other employment opportunities in the Interlake family of companies.

Spore says reservation teams are systematically issuing full refunds for passengers with reservations, and they will be contacted individually in order of their reservation date.

“We also ask that people please respect the fencing around the dock area in Ludington as it is an active work site,” Spore says.

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