

Alabama

Alabama has both deep-draft and shallow-draft navigation within and along its borders. The approximate 60 miles of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, along the southern border of the state is an important waterway connecting the Gulf States from Texas to Florida. The Gulf port of Mobile shipped and received more than 67.6 million tons, both shallow and deep draft traffic. Shallow draft traffic enters and exits Mobile Harbor via the Alabama and Tombigbee Rivers which flow into Mobile Bay. The Tombigbee River also has the Black Warrior and Tenn-Tom Rivers moving barge traffic to docks on the Tombigbee River and Mobile Harbor. These rivers not only allow commodity shipments to travel inland, but also allow commodities to move to and from the world markets using the port of Mobile, Alabama.

As shown in Table 1, in 2008 over 80 million tons of commodities (mostly coal, petroleum, iron/steel, and grain) moved to, from, and within Alabama. These commodities had a combined value over \$19.2 billion. Coal made up over 48% of this tonnage.



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Waterways Council, Inc. is the national public policy organization advocating a modern and well-maintained national system of ports and inland waterways.

Table 1

Alabama 2008 Waterborne Commerce					
To, From and Within the State (Shallow and Deep Draft)					
<i>(values in millions of dollars)</i>					
Commodity	Shipped	Received	Within	Total	Value
Coal	14,476,143	14,894,898	9,455,545	3,663,003	\$1,550
Petroleum	3,014,175	1,934,250	1,300,422	510,169	\$964
Crude Petroleum	686,891	6,381,857	968,262	8,037,010	\$796
Aggregates	559,268	4,247,615	416,333	2,099,334	\$352
Grain	2,036,163	1,410,066	**	2,647,014	\$519
Chemicals	1,472,191	2,126,504	**	1,249,211	\$3,553
Ores/ Minerals	**	270,654	**	56,895	\$40
Iron & Steel	2,240,034	3,236,091	546,924	2,841,582	\$3,819
Other	4,602,215	3,478,762	629,534	527,262	\$7,703
TOTALS	28,429,345	37,980,697	13,317,020	80,413,953	\$19,296
** Insufficient barge operators to release this tonnage – included in "Other Commodities"					
<i>Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Waterborne Commerce Statistics</i>					
<i>Shipments on Lower Mississippi/GIWW, and Foreign Shipments</i>					

An analysis of the waterborne commerce data for the State of Alabama shows that over 28 million tons of commodities were shipped on the river and harbor system out of the state. Docks in the state received almost 38 million tons, with coal being the primary commodity. More than 13 million tons moved within the state.

Of the 28 million tons shipped from Alabama docks, 14.7 million were deep draft. Of that 14.7 million tons, 8.5 million tons were coal shipments. Almost 38 million tons of goods were received by Alabama docks, 26.6 million tons of which were deep draft cargo, mainly coal and crude petroleum. These two commodities accounted for 11.7 and 5.6 million tons respectively. No commodities were shipped within the state via a deep draft vessel.

Alabama docks shipped commodities by barge to 15 states and received commodities from 19 states ([see map](#)). Of those states, Mississippi received the most cargo (893 thousand tons worth \$355 million). The leading state shipping by barge to Alabama was Kentucky, which transported 4.3 million tons of goods, most of which was coal. Texas shipments to Alabama of high value commodities such as chemicals were worth over \$1.0 billion.

Table 2

Alabama 2008 Commodities							
Shipped by Barge to and from Other States							
Ohio River Basin and Lower Mississippi/GIWW Traffic							
<i>(value in millions of dollars)</i>							
Shipments To	Tons	Value	Top Commodity	Shipments From	Tons	Value	Top Commodity
Florida	4,473,123	\$661	Coal	Louisiana	3,133,133	\$773	Iron/Steel
Mississippi	3,979,919	\$550	Coal	Tennessee	2,623,408	\$155	Coal
Louisiana	3,390,216	\$1,488	Petroleum Products	Florida	2,261,890	\$193	Aggregates
Texas	1,655,078	\$837	Petroleum Products	Texas	1,966,587	\$1,462	Chemicals
Illinois	282,299	\$93	Others	Mississippi	1,001,055	\$177	Other
<i>Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Waterborne Commerce Statistics</i>							
<i>Shipments on Lower Mississippi/GIWW, and Foreign Traffic</i>							

There were 132 manufacturing facilities, terminals, and docks in Alabama that shipped and received tonnage that moved through Alabama waterways in 2008 ([see map](#)). As shown in Table 2, Florida received the most tonnage from Alabama docks, mainly Coal. Louisiana shipped the most tonnage to Alabama docks, mainly Iron/Steel.

Alabama contains one major deep draft port, Mobile, and it is ranked 9th in terms of overall tonnage in the nation. Mobile handles a total of 67.6 million tons with a value of approximately \$14.2 billion. Coal is the largest commodity shipped and received from Mobile, with 20.2 and 14.4 million tons, respectively. Movements in and out of Mobile were mostly the import/exporting of coal.

