

Marine Highway M-55

Sponsors: Illinois, Missouri, and Mississippi Departments of Transportation

Supporters: Southeast Missouri Regional Port Authority and the Ohio Department of Transportation

Landside Route Served: Interstate-55

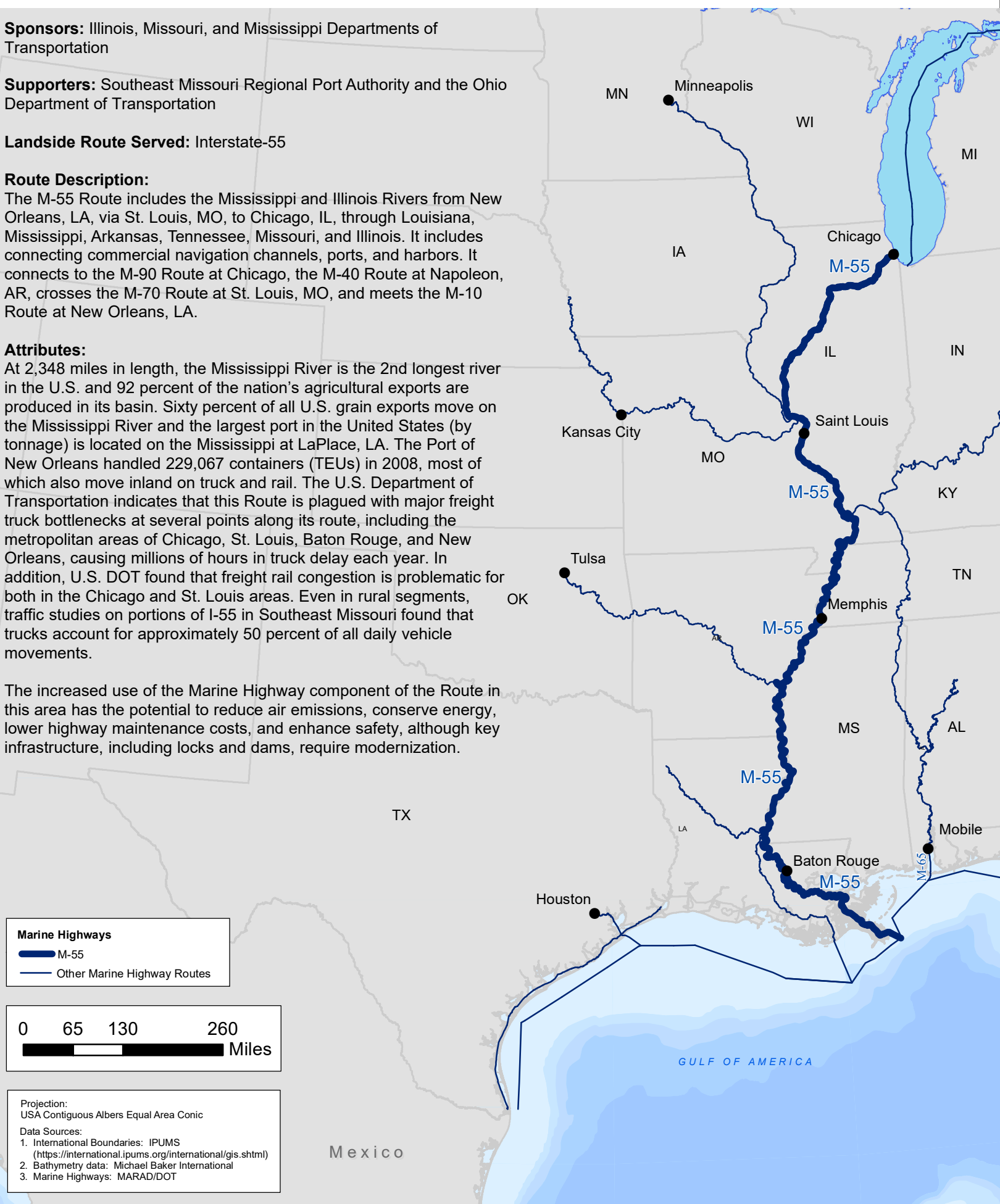
Route Description:

The M-55 Route includes the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers from New Orleans, LA, via St. Louis, MO, to Chicago, IL, through Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, and Illinois. It includes connecting commercial navigation channels, ports, and harbors. It connects to the M-90 Route at Chicago, the M-40 Route at Napoleon, AR, crosses the M-70 Route at St. Louis, MO, and meets the M-10 Route at New Orleans, LA.

Attributes:

At 2,348 miles in length, the Mississippi River is the 2nd longest river in the U.S. and 92 percent of the nation's agricultural exports are produced in its basin. Sixty percent of all U.S. grain exports move on the Mississippi River and the largest port in the United States (by tonnage) is located on the Mississippi at LaPlace, LA. The Port of New Orleans handled 229,067 containers (TEUs) in 2008, most of which also move inland on truck and rail. The U.S. Department of Transportation indicates that this Route is plagued with major freight truck bottlenecks at several points along its route, including the metropolitan areas of Chicago, St. Louis, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans, causing millions of hours in truck delay each year. In addition, U.S. DOT found that freight rail congestion is problematic for both in the Chicago and St. Louis areas. Even in rural segments, traffic studies on portions of I-55 in Southeast Missouri found that trucks account for approximately 50 percent of all daily vehicle movements.

The increased use of the Marine Highway component of the Route in this area has the potential to reduce air emissions, conserve energy, lower highway maintenance costs, and enhance safety, although key infrastructure, including locks and dams, require modernization.



Marine Highways

- M-55
- Other Marine Highway Routes

0 65 130 260
Miles

Projection:
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Data Sources:

1. International Boundaries: IPUMS
(<https://international.ipums.org/international/gis.shtml>)
2. Bathymetry data: Michael Baker International
3. Marine Highways: MARAD/DOT