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Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority and Cruise the Great Lakes Announce Record-Breaking 2022 Cruising Season

52 cruise ships visited Detroit in 2022 contributing to \$125m economic impact for cruising in the Great Lakes region

(DETROIT & CHICAGO): Today, the Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority and Cruise the Great Lakes celebrated a record-breaking 2022 cruise ship season for Detroit and the Great Lakes region while touring one of the last vessels to visit Detroit this year, PONANT's small exploration ship *Le Bellot*. 2023 is projected to attract even more ships and passenger traffic than ever before.

"This year was record-breaking for Great Lakes cruising. It was also a record-breaking year for Detroit and our port. This year we welcomed 52 cruise ship dockings here in our city, which is more than double our last cruising season in 2019," said **Mark Schrupp, Executive Director of the Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority**. "The Detroit metro area has some of the greatest cultural draws in the region. Visit Detroit has been a key partner in helping to publicize to cruise lines and passengers places like the Henry Ford, Motown, and Charles Wright Museums, as well as our world class art institute, the DIA, and many more."

2022 was a record-breaking year for Great Lakes cruising with nearly 150,000 passenger visits to Great Lakes ports, an increase of more than 25% from the last cruising season. Overall, Great Lakes cruising generated an economic impact of over US\$125 million, with destinations large and small throughout the region.

"The broader regional success of Great Lakes cruising is represented right here in Michigan," said **Dave Lorenz, Vice President of Travel Michigan and Chair of Cruise the Great Lakes**. "This year, cruises visited places like Houghton, Mackinac Island, Muskegon, Holland, Sault Ste. Marie

and, of course, Detroit. Destinations like these are the reason why Condé Nast Traveler named Great Lakes cruising as one of its top 22 travel destinations of 2022.”

For 2023, Cruise the Great Lakes expects another yearly record with nearly 170,000 cruise passenger visits to regional ports, up 15% from this year. Two new ships will also join the Great Lakes cruise fleet next year: Viking Polaris and Hanseatic Inspiration, bringing the total number of cruise ships on the Great Lakes to 11. This represents a year-on-year increase of over 20%.

Cruise Lines operating on the Great Lakes in 2023 include Pearl Seas Cruises, American Queen Voyages, Viking Cruises, St. Lawrence Cruise Lines, Ponant, Vantage, Hapag-Lloyd and Plantours Cruises.

The total economic impact of Great Lakes cruising in 2023 is expected to be US\$180 million. More passengers, more port visits, a growing price premium for Great Lakes cruises and an increased daily spend rate by passengers are all contributing to an expected overall increase of over 40% in the total economic impact of Great Lakes cruising next year.

In 2022, luxury cruise line PONANT entered the Great Lakes and found immediate success.

One reason for the growth of regional cruising has been a more predictable customs experience. In previous years, cruise operators had to work individually with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to process cruise passengers using remote “jump kit” equipment. Availability of equipment and personnel was often uncertain, and delays occurred making itinerary planning difficult.

To help solve this problem, the Great Lakes region’s Governors partnered with the American Great Lakes Ports Association and the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation to work with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to create a network of four customs processing facilities in Detroit and Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan; Cleveland, Ohio; and Duluth, Minnesota.

Cruise the Great Lakes is the region’s cruise marketing program focused on attracting more passengers. It is a forum to bring together the States, Provinces, cruise lines, ports, convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, associations, and others to work toward shared goals. For more information about Cruise the Great Lakes: www.cruisethegreatlakes.com

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