

## **Media Contact:**

Jerry Vallely, Bi-State Development External Communications Manager 314-982-1458 (o) (314) 486-5553 (c) Julie Hauser
or PR Counsel, St. Louis Regional Freightway
(314) 629-3887 (c)

**Link to Session** 

## Ingram Investing \$50M to Enhance Operations in the St. Louis Region

Investments and Environmental Initiatives Highlighted during FreightWeekSTL

[ST. LOUIS, MO/June 2, 2025] Ingram Marine Group (Ingram), the largest barge operator on the inland waterways, showcased its operations and planned investments in the bi-state St. Louis region during the opening session of FreightWeekSTL 2025. Hosted by the St. Louis Regional Freightway, the virtual panel session on June 2 featured Dan Lester, Senior Vice President of Business Development at Ingram Infrastructure Group (IIG), part of Ingram Marine Group's family of businesses. Lester highlighted the company's strategic initiatives to leverage the St. Louis region's prime location and multimodal connectivity and provided insight on Ingram's commitment to sustainability.

He emphasized the importance of the St. Louis region to Ingram's operations and said the area has been a hub for the company's barge line for a long time. "St. Louis is a key growth area for the infrastructure group. We have eight landside terminals on the Missouri and Illinois sides of the Mississippi River here," Lester said. The company focuses on moving bulk and break-bulk commodities, including fertilizer, steel, and grain exports to the Gulf of America. With the acquisition of SCF in February 2024, Ingram also picked up fleeting and barge maintenance services, expanding its workforce in the St. Louis region. Lester said it now employs approximately 200 people in the bi-state area.

Ingram is set to invest nearly \$50 million in the St. Louis region over the next three years. Key projects include the expansion of the Municipal River Terminal (MRT) on the riverfront just north of Downtown St. Louis, which will feature one of the largest and most efficient barge-to-rail direct transfer systems focused on fertilizer crop nutrients supporting farmers throughout the Midwest. Additionally, the company is rebuilding the Tyler Street terminal just south of the MRT to handle export bulk materials more efficiently. On the Illinois side of the Mississippi River, Ingram is developing another rail-to-barge facility to support grain and grain byproducts. The projects are funded through a combination of private funds and a public BUILD grant as Ingram works with various agencies to deliver them, including the St. Louis Port Authority and America's Central Port.

The company is also committed to sustainability and reducing emissions. "We have made strategic investments in companies producing alternative fuels, and we anticipate that in the next three to five years, we will be powering our fleet with some percentage of alternative fuel," said Lester. Ingram has also invested in new material handling equipment and replaced older locomotives with newer, more efficient units. Recognizing they are operating in an area with non-attainment for air quality, Ingram's air emissions capture rate has been enhanced, which will positively impact the region's air quality.

As the discussion turned to opportunities for increased movement of cargo between the Port of New Orleans and the Ag Coast of America, Lester highlighted the strategic advantages of the St. Louis region, including its connectivity between various modes of freight transportation.

"I think with St. Louis having such a nexus of connectivity, you have this perfect intersection of Class I Railroads, the Mississippi River, and then major highways," Lester said. He also noted that St. Louis is the northernmost ice-free, lock-free port, providing significant opportunities for servicing shippers of ag products and grain byproducts for export markets.

"We really are, logistically speaking, in a great spot for northbound and southbound freight. That will create additional opportunities and economies of scale," said Lester. "We can take products from St. Louis, the Midwest in general, put them into the river system and run a 40-barge tow all the way down to the Gulf. That generates a pretty significant competitive advantage for our customers, our shippers, where they can utilize the efficiency and the economies of the waterways to handle their export products."

Looking to the future, Lester said the return of manufacturing to North America presents additional growth opportunities for Ingram. He said customers, shippers and producers are looking at how to utilize domestic transportation in conjunction with the reshoring of manufacturing into the United States. He thinks it will create a large opportunity for an area like the St. Louis region where there is a good logistics hub and a large number of operators in the area.

The virtual panel session was moderated by Mary Lamie, Executive Vice President of Multimodal Enterprises for Bi-State Development, which operates the St. Louis Regional Freightway.

"It's great to hear that Ingram is already seeing the advantages of operating within the most efficient inland port in the nation and planning additional investments to strengthen its presence here in the St. Louis region," said Lamie.

FreightWeekSTL 2025 continues through June 6. The week-long freight and logistics event is delivered by the St. Louis Regional Freightway. To learn more, register for the remaining virtual panel sessions, or view any of the virtual panel sessions for FreightWeekSTL 2025 as they are released, visit <a href="https://www.freightweekstl.com">www.freightweekstl.com</a>.

## About St. Louis Regional Freightway

A Bi-State Development enterprise, the St. Louis Regional Freightway is a regional freight district and comprehensive authority for freight operations and opportunities within eight counties in southwestern Illinois and eastern Missouri, which comprise the St. Louis metropolitan area. Public sector and private industry businesses are partnering with the St. Louis Regional Freightway to establish the bi-state region as one of the premier multimodal freight hubs and distribution centers in the United States through marketing and advocacy for infrastructure development that supports the movement of freight. To learn more, visit thefreightway.com.