“River Quest” Passports to Adventure
St. Louis River Quest to host 1,067 students on educational harbor cruises May 10-13

Duluth, Minn. USA – Boatloads of area sixth-grade students, carrying River Quest "passports" to document their adventures, will travel aboard the Vista Star next week through the Port of Duluth-Superior, to learn all they can about the St. Louis River watershed.

The 18th annual St. Louis River Quest program, scheduled for Mon., May 10 – Thurs., May 13, has drawn a record number of participants; organizers added the extra half-day on Monday afternoon to accommodate demand. A total of 1,067 sixth grade students from ten area schools will participate this year – bringing to over 14,000 the total number of students that have benefited from the River Quest program since its inception in 1993.

River Quest provides hands-on learning activities for students that raise awareness of the St. Louis River ecosystem and interrelated commercial, industrial and recreational activities. During two-and-a-half-hour boat trips, students visit 11 learning stations staffed by volunteers who cover topics ranging from pollution prevention and stopping aquatic invaders to boating safety and commercial shipping.

Students will be encouraged to submit essays about their experiences as part of the event’s “Captain Ray Skelton River Quest Essay Contest,” named in honor of one of the program’s founders, a longtime Port Authority employee and master mariner. The winner’s name will be added to a traveling school plaque to recognize both the student’s writing abilities and the school’s participation in River Quest. Last year’s winner was Pentti Hanlon from Marshall School.

Learning station sponsors for River Quest 2010 include: the City of Duluth, Duluth Sail & Power Squadron, Duluth Public Schools, Duluth Seaway Port Authority, Great Lakes Aquarium, Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute, Minnesota DNR MinnAqua Program, Minnesota Sea Grant Program, Murphy Oil USA, NewPage, Sappi Fine Paper, Superior National Forest, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Western Lake Superior Sanitary District.

-more-

For more about River Quest, visit www.duluthport.com. Educators are also encouraged to check out materials posted at www.seagrant.umn.edu/riverquest.

##

NOTES to Media:  FIRST cruise for River Quest gets underway Monday:  11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Then we run two (2) cruises daily on Tues., Wed. & Thurs. accordingly:  8:30 - 11 a.m. and  11:30 a.m - 2 p.m.

Reporters are invited to ride along for any morning or afternoon session. However, if you cannot stay onboard for the full trip, please note that we will remain “dockside” for the first ten-minute ‘station’ on Monday afternoon and again on Tuesday morning after which you will be allowed to disembark.

For interviews, plan to arrive at least 15-20 minutes prior to departure times noted above.
River Quest 2010: LEARNING STATIONS – SPONSORS & TOPICS

#1  U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
“Cold Hand Luke” – Hypothermia & Water Safety

#2  NewPage & Sappi Fine Paper
Industrial Wastewater Pretreatment: Why does it matter?

#3  Western Lake Superior Sanitary District
The real workers at WLSSD

#4  Duluth Sail & Power Squadron
It floats, you don’t. Wear your life jacket.

#5  City of Duluth (M, T & Th)
The difference between Storm Sewers & Sanitary Sewers

#5  Murphy Oil USA (W)
Working responsibly with oil on the Waterfront

#6  Great Lakes Aquarium + MN DNR MinnAqua Program
Lake Sturgeon: Habitat & life cycle in the St. Louis River

#7  Duluth Seaway Port Authority & Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute
Lakers & Salties: Moving cargo on the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Seaway

#8  Environmental Protection Agency (M & T)
Enviroscape: Protecting your Land protects your Water

#8  Superior National Forest (W & Th)
Watershed Works

#9  Minnesota Sea Grant Program
Stop Aquatic Invaders: Get Habitattitude!

#10  U.S. Coast Guard & USCG Auxiliary
Containing Oil Spills

#11  Observation Station (top deck)