



*PORT OF GREATER  
BATON ROUGE*

# PORT REPORT

≡ 2020 ≡





Ship calls at the Port have increased for almost all tenants. As a result, Port leadership has initiated plans to expand the Port's northern dock on the Mississippi River (far right) to add a fourth deepwater berthing space.

## [ PORT OF GREATER BATON ROUGE ]

# The excitement is building at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge

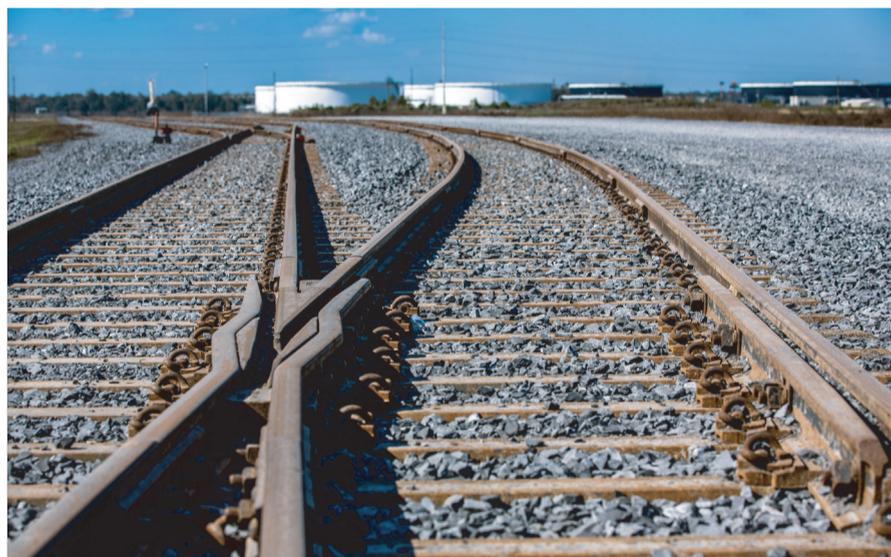
**JAY HARDMAN IS** excited, and he's got every right to be. A variety of current and prospective enhancements at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge, where he serves as executive director, is positioning it for a promising future.

In 2020 alone, the Port completed three major projects—an expansion of its shipping container storage capacity; delivery of a second custom-made piece of equipment for transloading containers into and out of barges; and the opening of a \$22 million railcar chambering yard on property south of the Intracoastal Waterway. And there's still a lot of the Port's 480 acres available for future development.

The fact that Grön Fuels LLC intends to build a \$9.2 billion renewable fuels complex at the site could become another big feather in the Port's cap. The project would showcase the Port's potential to be more than just a bulk shipment facility, but a creator of jobs along with a hub for renewable diesel fuels. The Grön complex could eventually bring an estimated 1,025 new direct jobs to the Baton Rouge area.

### Reacting to the container boom

More proof that the Port is evolving—the rapid growth of its container-on-barge shuttle service. Some 16,000 containers moved through the Port in 2020, more than double the volume of 2017 when the service began. In the process, SEACOR AMH LLC trans-



A recently completed railcar chambering yard accommodates unit trains of 80 or more rail cars to expedite rail delivery to Port tenants like Drax Biomass, which exports wood pellets from the Port to overseas markets.

ports empty containers from Memphis to Baton Rouge via barge to be loaded at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge with resin from area plants, and then moves the loaded barges downriver to the Port of New Orleans for international transport.

This rapid increase in container volumes prompted the Port to increase the size of the container storage facility at its Inland Rivers Marine Terminal. Completed in 2020, the \$5 million expansion has created nearly four acres of additional paved container storage

capacity and given the Port the ability to store about 2,000 containers.

"We've also added new equipment in the yard that can stack empty containers five high," Hardman says. "That's a big deal, as it gives us 25 percent additional capacity and a lot more versatility." One piece of equipment is designed for heavy-duty container handling and the other—a "reach-stacker"—can quickly and efficiently move containers on to and off of barges.

Hardman expects that an additional expansion will soon be necessary. "I

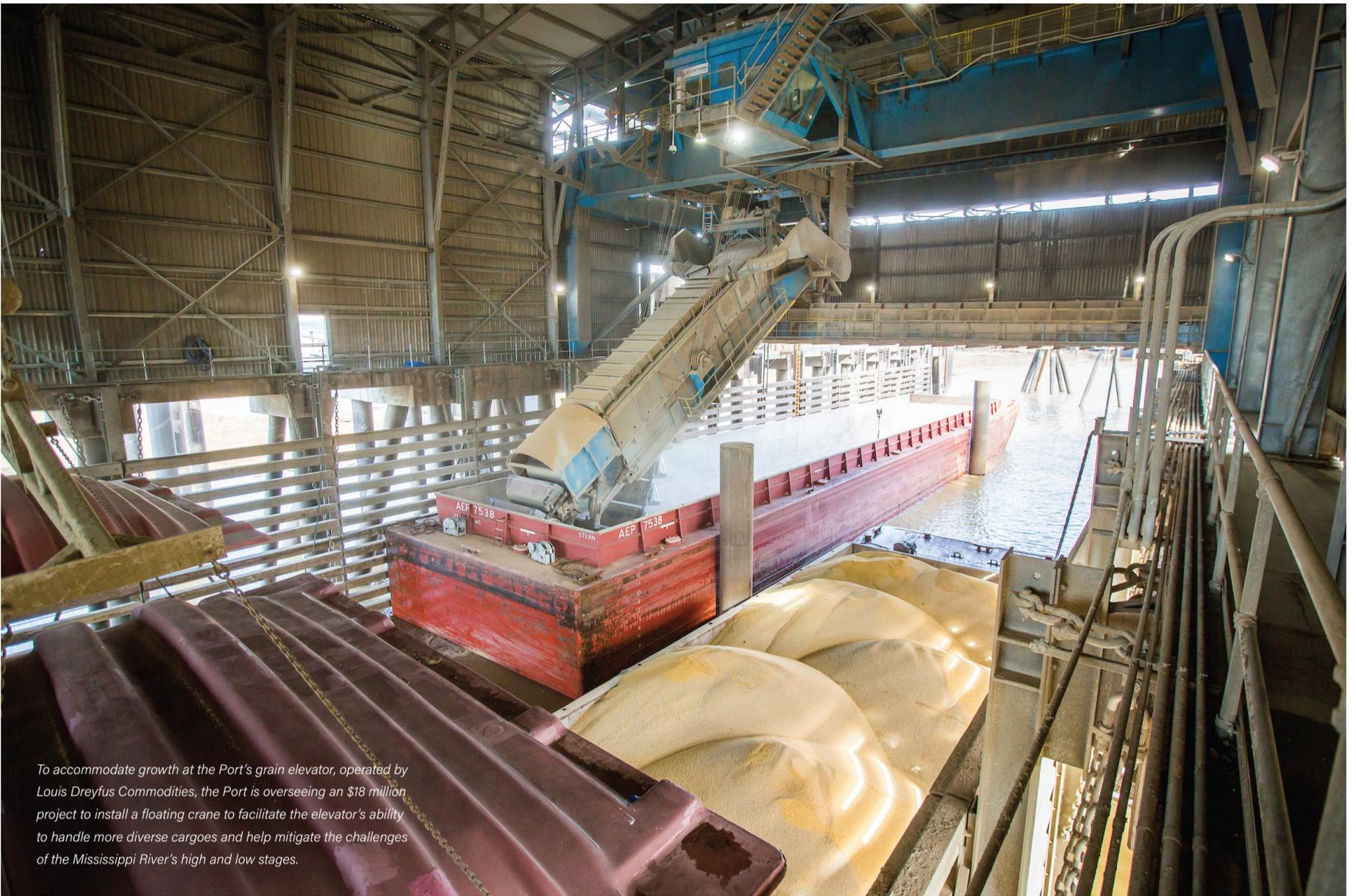
think the re-positioning of these empty containers is going to become more critical," he adds.

### Seeing and meeting tenant needs

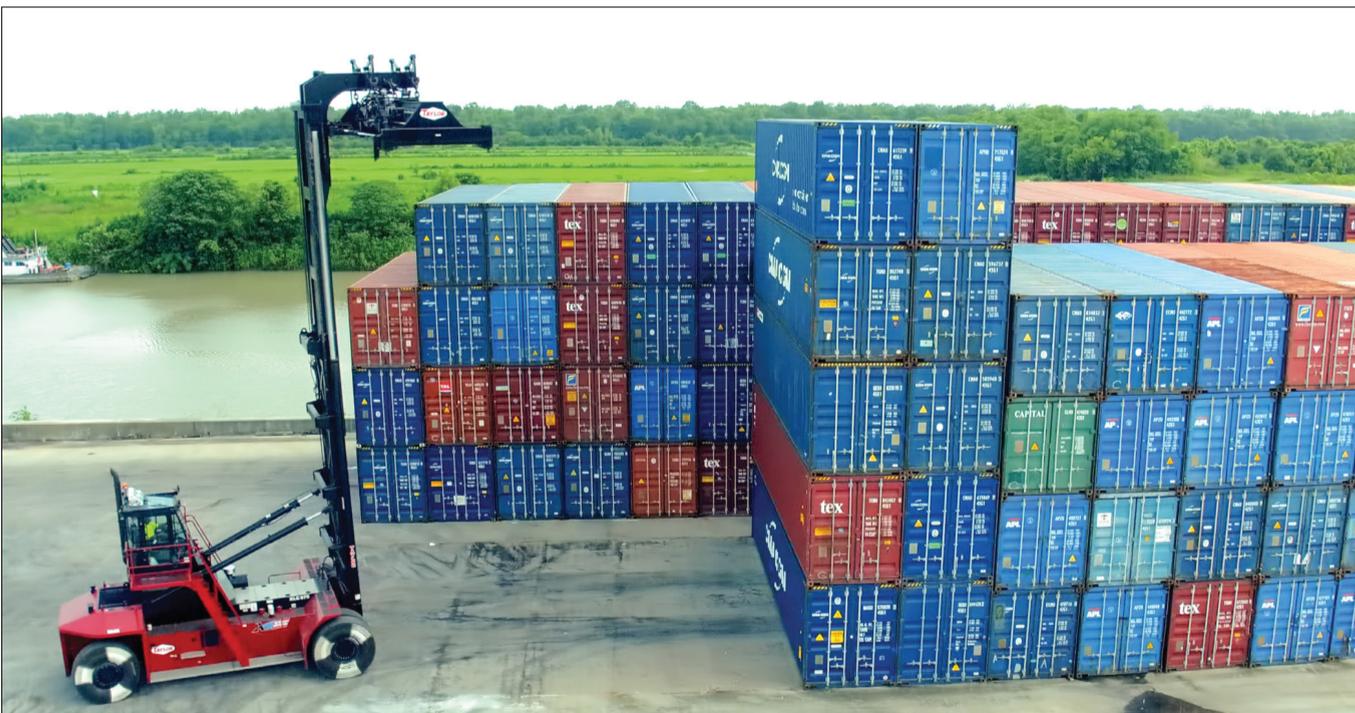
The Port is becoming truly intermodal, evidenced by the completion of its new \$22 million railcar chambering yard in 2020. Located on Port property south of the Intracoastal Waterway, the yard facilitates the storage along with expediting the arrival and departure of unit trains into and out of the Port.

By having the ability to deliver commodities via unit trains of 80 or more railcars, the chambering yard currently expedites rail delivery of wood pellets to tenant Drax Biomass for export overseas. Demand for the chambering yard has increased since its completion, primarily due to the growth of wood pellet shipments to Drax Biomass, which has expanded from its initial two wood pellet mills to four. Grön Fuels is also planning utilization of the rail chambering yard for shipments of renewable diesel.

In fact, "ship calls" have increased dramatically for most of the Port's tenants, including Drax Biomass, Louis Dreyfus Commodities (LDC), Genesis Energy and BWC Terminals. The Port's grain elevator, operated by LDC, also had a good year, finishing up 2020 with the export of approximately 5 million tons of grain. To accommodate the growth at the grain elevator, the Port is



*To accommodate growth at the Port's grain elevator, operated by Louis Dreyfus Commodities, the Port is overseeing an \$18 million project to install a floating crane to facilitate the elevator's ability to handle more diverse cargoes and help mitigate the challenges of the Mississippi River's high and low stages.*



*To meet the increased local demand for container services, the Port has expanded its container storage yard to handle up to 2,000 containers and has added customized container handling equipment to enhance operational efficiencies.*

overseeing an \$18 million enhancement project that will install a floating crane to help LDC handle more diverse cargoes and mitigate the Mississippi River's high and low water issues.

Port leadership has also submitted an application to the Louisiana Department of Transportation Port Construction

and Development Priority Program (PCDPP) for a \$15 million rehabilitation/expansion of its "Northern Berth" on the Mississippi River. Currently in design, the expansion would allow for the Port to have a fourth deep draft vessel berth at its northernmost point.

Other recent improvements focused

on enhancements to the Port's existing deepwater docks. A \$10 million investment added new modern mooring hooks and new curbing along the dock face, as well as rehabilitating the dock's fendering system with more durable synthetic materials.

There's little doubt that things are

in constant motion at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge, as it continues to evolve into a more proactive—rather than reactive—force. In the process, Hardman plans to collaboratively work with other Port leaders to help bring new industries and jobs to the whole of southeast Louisiana. ■

## AT A GLANCE

**PRIMARY PRODUCT/SERVICE:** Marine transportation

**TOP EXECUTIVES:** Jay G. Hardman, P.E., Executive Director; Greg Johnson, Director of Business Development

**YEAR FOUNDED:** 1952 • **PHONE:** 225.342.1660 • **WEBSITE:** portgbr.com



# JAY HARDMAN, P.E.

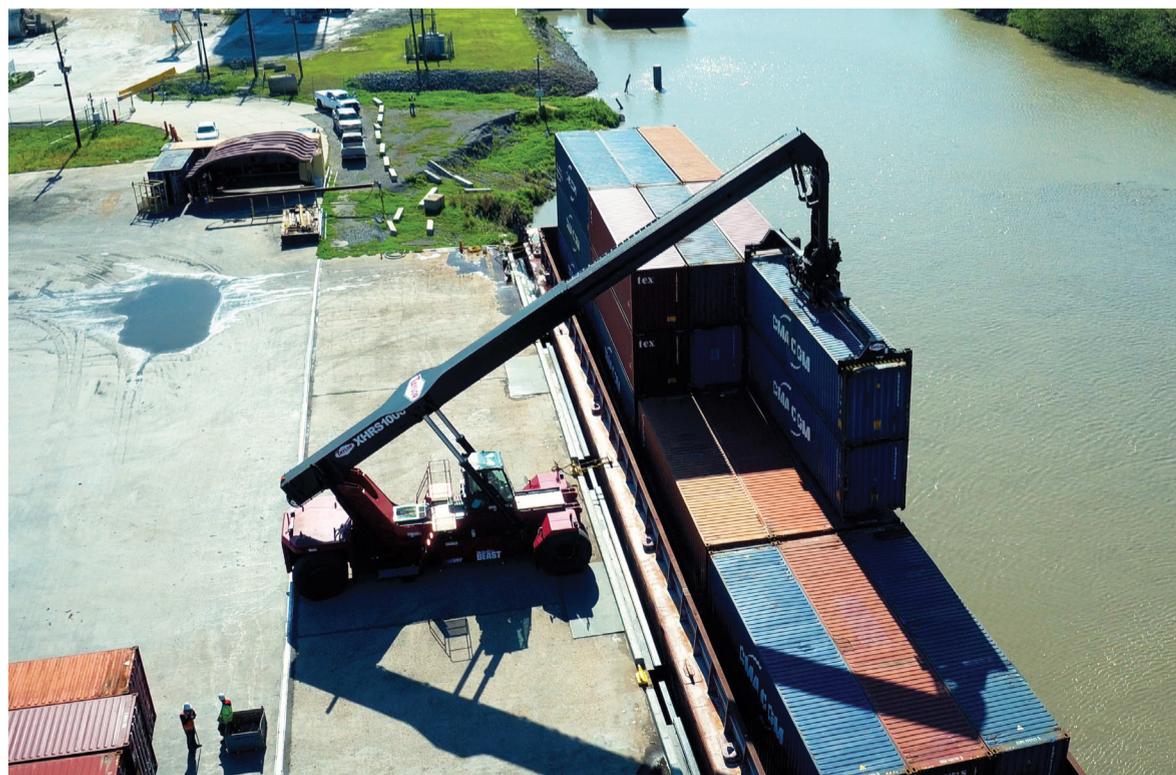
*Executive Director,  
Port Of Greater Baton Rouge*

The diversification of the Port's cargo base and revenue streams and improved utilization of the marine infrastructure and assets continue to be the principal drivers of the Port's overall success and sustainability as a market leader among U.S. Gulf of Mexico ports.

As a public port, one of our strategic objectives is to work closely with all private/public partnerships, port stakeholders and maritime interests along the Mississippi River to promote international commerce and trade.

The Port maintains close working relationships with federal, state, local, and regional authorities and private sector stakeholders within the port jurisdiction to insure a vertically integrated approach to port growth, sustainability, and maritime security.

Our board of commissioners and staff are committed to the mission of the Port of Greater Baton Rouge. The Port's policies and goals for the years ahead will continue to be directed at planning for future port growth and fostering domestic and international trade to create jobs and investment opportunities for industries within the port region.



**SEACOR moves barges with cargo-filled containers from Baton Rouge to New Orleans for export.**

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