



Oceanus Line service links Florida’s SeaPort Manatee, Texas’ Port Freeport with key ports of Mexico, Colombia

CORAL GABLES, Florida / PALMETTO, Florida / FREEPORT, Texas (March 30, 2023) – A new direct liner service of Oceanus Line is now providing an efficient all-water link between key seaports of Mexico and Colombia and the dynamic U.S. ports of SeaPort Manatee on the Florida Gulf Coast and Port Freeport on the Texas Gulf Coast.

With inaugural calls of March 26 and March 29, respectively, at SeaPort Manatee and Port Freeport, Oceanus Line’s *X-Press Cotopaxi*, with a capacity of 1,740 twenty-foot-equivalent container units, has launched attractive import and export opportunities via a pair of fast-growing, uncongested U.S. Gulf gateways, with inland rail and truck reach encompassing Southeast, Northeast, Southwest and Midwest markets.

Oceanus Line’s Florida Gulf Express (FGX), initially fortnightly (every two weeks), operates counterclockwise from Cartagena, Colombia, to SeaPort Manatee, then across the Gulf of Mexico to Port Freeport, before heading south to Veracruz, Mexico, and returning to Cartagena. On the inaugural voyage, the vessel called at the Mexican port of Tuxpan on its way north from Colombia. Norton Lilly International serves as agent in both U.S. ports.

“Fast transit times and personalized customer service make it swifter and easier to ship containerized and breakbulk cargos between the United States, Mexico and Colombia,” said Hans C. Schriwer, chief executive officer of Coral Gables, Florida-based Oceanus Line, which also has representation in Mexico and Colombia.

SeaPort Manatee’s executive director, Carlos Buqueras, said, “This new service further expands connectivity between major Latin American trade partners and Southwest and Central Florida’s vibrant hub of maritime commerce.”

Manatee County Port Authority Chairman George Kruse commented, “Importers and exporters alike should benefit from this latest addition to SeaPort Manatee’s growing portfolio of highly competitive ocean services.”

Port Freeport’s executive director and chief executive officer, Phyllis Saathoff, noted initiation of the Oceanus Line service is well-timed with planned midyear opening of Port Freeport’s newest deepwater berth, adding, “Port Freeport is delighted to welcome its first direct container service with Mexico while resuming its connection with Colombia.”

Port Freeport Commission Chairman John Hoss said, “With expanded service offerings, Port Freeport is furthering its impressive contribution to the economic prosperity of our region.”

Located “Where Tampa Bay Meets the Gulf of Mexico,” SeaPort Manatee, the closest U.S. deepwater seaport to the expanded Panama Canal, offers 10 deep-draft berths, proficiently fulfilling diverse demands of container, liquid and dry bulk, breakbulk, heavylift, project and general cargo customers. Without benefit of local property tax support, the self-sustaining port generates \$5.1 billion-plus in yearly impacts while providing more than 37,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Port Freeport is a leading port in the export of crude oil and natural gas liquids, ranked sixth in the United States in chemicals and 11th for total foreign waterborne tonnage, while ranking 26th in containerized cargo. A 2019 economic impact study by Texas A&M Transportation Institute revealed that, nationally, the Freeport Harbor Channel generates 279,780 jobs and has a total annual economic output of \$149 billion.

PHOTO CUTLINE for manateeoceanus.jpg:

Oceanus Line’s *X-Press Cotopaxi* makes its March 26 inaugural call at SeaPort Manatee, furnishing direct links with the ports of Cartagena, Colombia, and Veracruz, Mexico.

PHOTO CUTLINE for freeportoceanus.jpg:

With its March 29 first call at Port Freeport, Oceanus Line’s *X-Press Cotopaxi* launches direct all-water connections with Cartagena, Colombia, and Veracruz, Mexico.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Hans C. Schriwer
Chief Executive Officer
Oceanus Line
1-855-4-OCEANUS
Hans.Schriwer@OceanusLine.us

Virginia Zimmermann
Dir. of Communications & Public Relations
SeaPort Manatee
office 941-721-2323 / cell 941-932-1006
VZimmermann@SeaPortManatee.com

Tricia Vela
Public Affairs Assistant
Port Freeport
979-233-2667, ext. 4330
Vela@PortFreeport.com