Maritime Transportation Research and Education Centers

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The Maritime Transportation Research and Education Centers' theme is building economic competitiveness through efficient, resilient, and sustainable maritime and multimodal transportation systems. The centers' vision is to be recognized as the nation's premier source for expertise on maritime and multimodal transportation research and education. The MarTREC consortium consists of renowned maritime transportation researchers dedicated to transferable research and inclusive education and workforce development.

Maritime and multimodal transportation research is a national priority that is critical to future economic competitiveness. Waterborne freight directly and indirectly contributes to U.S. economic growth by contributing to economic value, earnings, and employment. The nation's waterways are used to transport approximately 20 percent of America's coal, 22 percent of U.S. petroleum products, and 60 percent of the nation’s farm exports. Better information about economic benefits of waterborne freight can inform private and federal investment in port development and infrastructure improvements, which can increase competitive advantages without negatively affecting social and environmental outcomes.

It is anticipated that transportation agencies and private industry will be increasingly challenged to find highly qualified and technically trained employees in the coming years due to increased retirement rates, fewer entrants into the transportation field, and increased competition for skilled labor, engineers, and planners. The U.S. Department of Transportation-funded 21st Century Workforce Development Summit expressed concern that transportation agencies could face a workforce loss up to 50 percent by 2020. MarTREC is dedicated to transportation education and workforce development.