

THE GREAT AMERICAN LOOP

TAD AND LIBBIE SHELDON



BUT FIRST...

OUR HOUSE IN TAHOE...



Two Weeks Ago

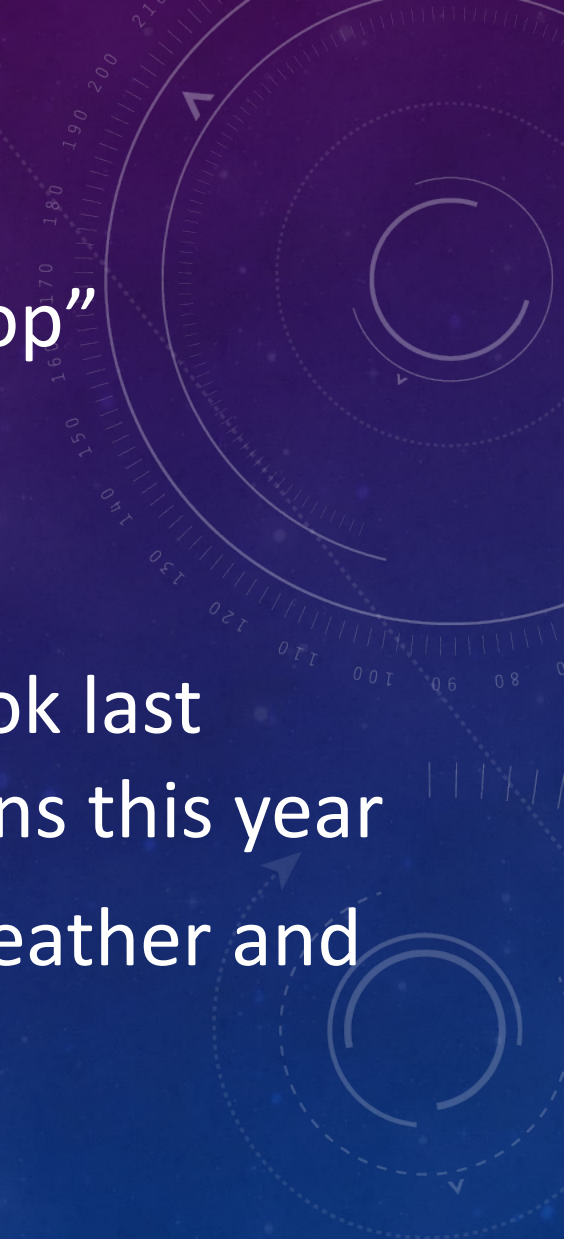


2/28/23



OUTLINE

- What is “The Loop”
- Kinds of Boats
- Our boat, *Selkie*
- The route we took last summer and plans this year
- How we plan (weather and navigation)
- Selkie Blog
- Q&A





WHAT IS “THE LOOP”?

WHAT IS THE GREAT AMERICAN LOOP?

- A 5,250 mile circumnavigation of the Eastern third of the USA, as well as part of Canada
- Many other **options** while doing the Loop, adding to the distance





Lake Superior

North Channel and Georgian Bay

Lake Champlain and St. Lawrence Seaway

Trent Severn Waterway

Lake Michigan

Lake Huron

Lake Ontario

Downeast Loop

Chicago/Illinois Rivers

Lake Erie

Erie and Oswego Canals

Hudson

Chesapeake and Delaware Canal

ICW

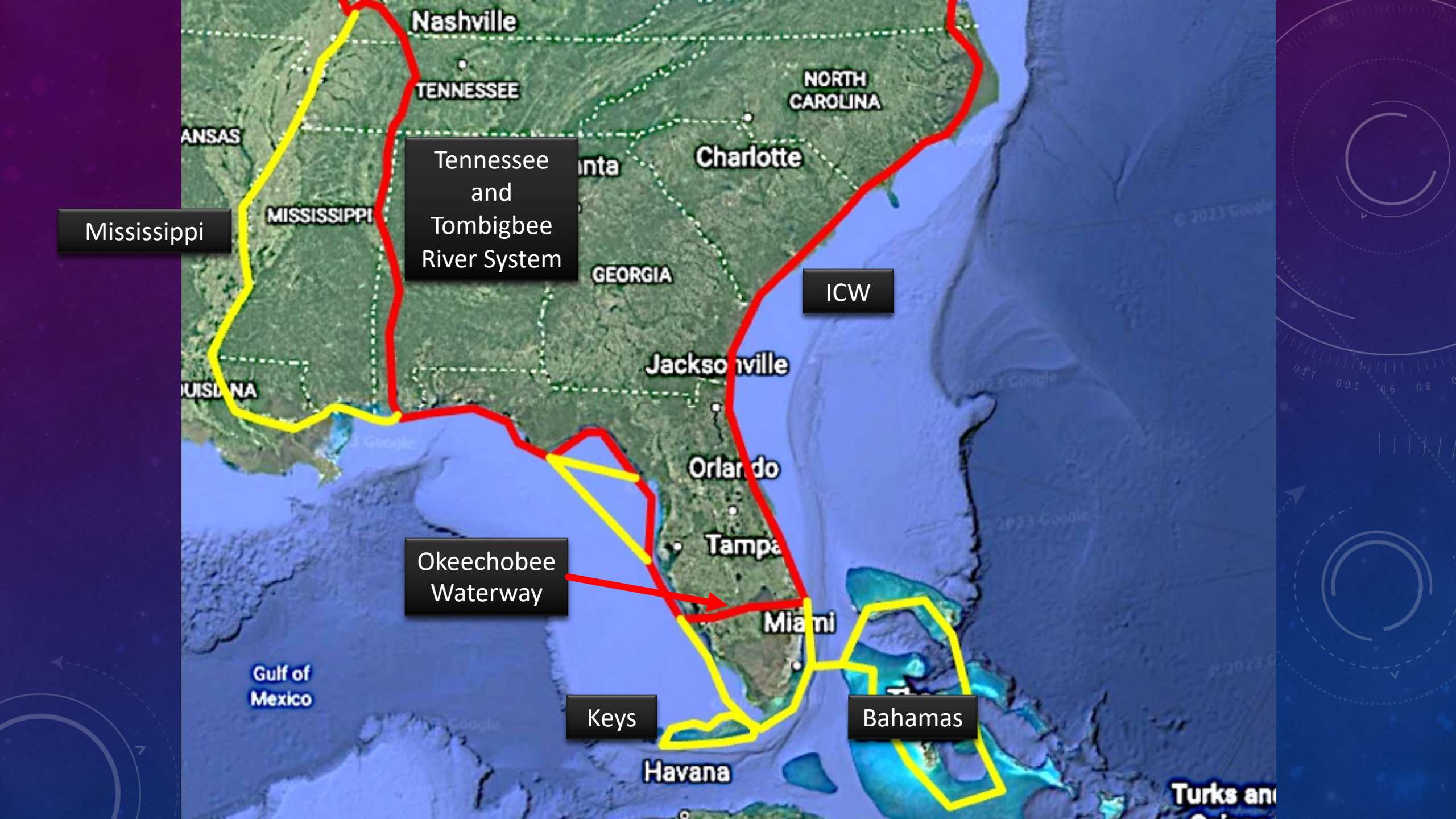
Delaware Bay

Mississippi

Ohio River

Chesapeake Bay

Tennessee River



Tennessee and Tombigbee River System

Mississippi

ICW

Okeechobee Waterway

Keys

Bahamas

Gulf of Mexico

Nashville

TENNESSEE

NORTH CAROLINA

KANSAS

MISSISSIPPI

GEORGIA

LOUISIANA

Charlotte

Jacksonville

Orlando

Tampa

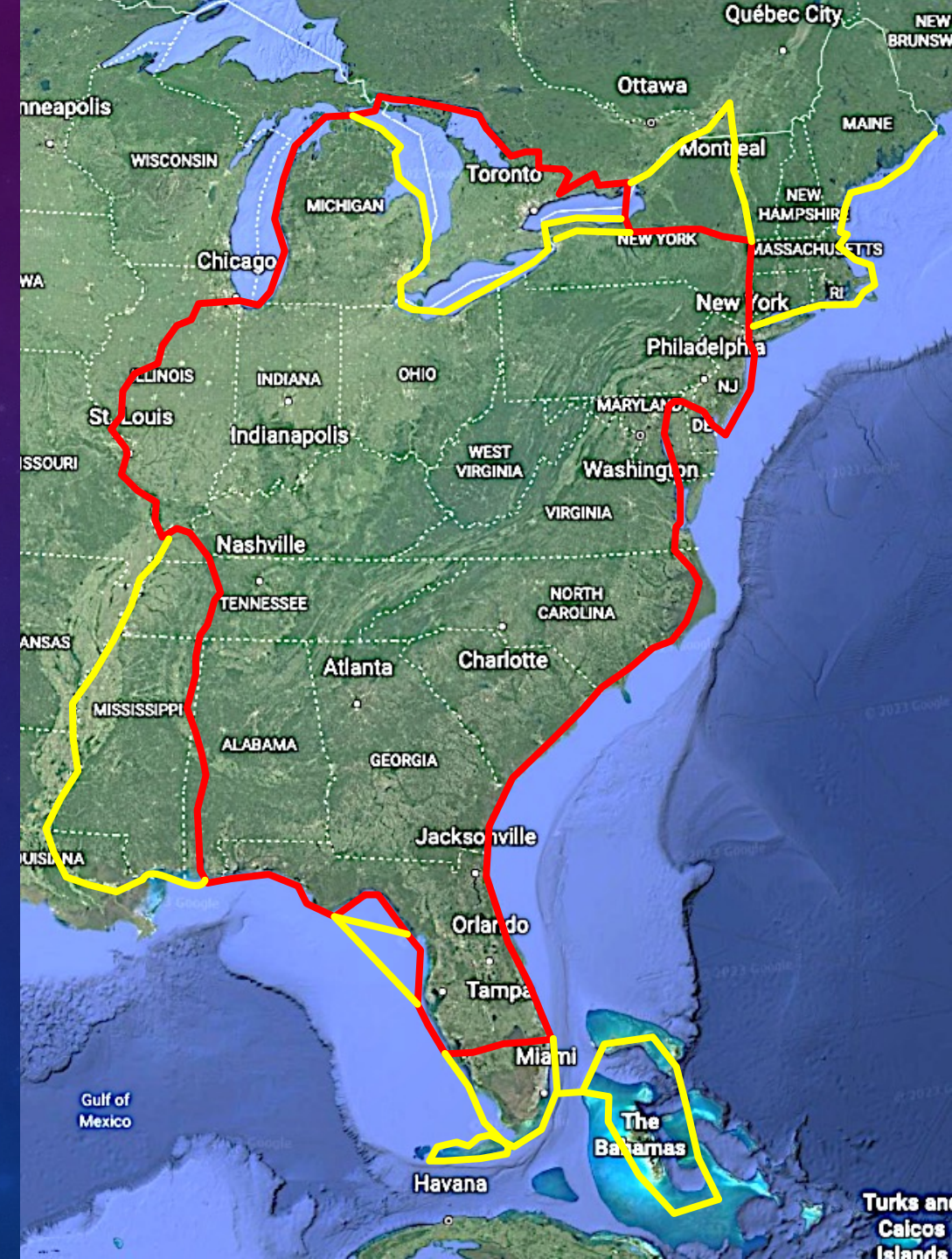
Miami

Havana

Turks and Caicos

OTHER LOOP FACTS

- Most people do about 6,000 miles on average with all the options
- If you are doing the Loop, you are known as a "Looper"



WHAT BOATS HAVE DONE THE LOOP?

- Jet skis
- Kayaks
- Sailboats (with stepped masts for part of the Loop)
- Most boats are powerboats





HOW MUCH TIME?

- The Great Loop has been done in as little as six weeks
 - $15 \frac{5}{8} \text{ mph} \times 8 \text{ hr} \times 7 \text{ days} \times 6 \text{ weeks} = 5250 \text{ miles}$
- Traditionally, Loopers have spent about a year on the route. After all, it is a seasonal trip.



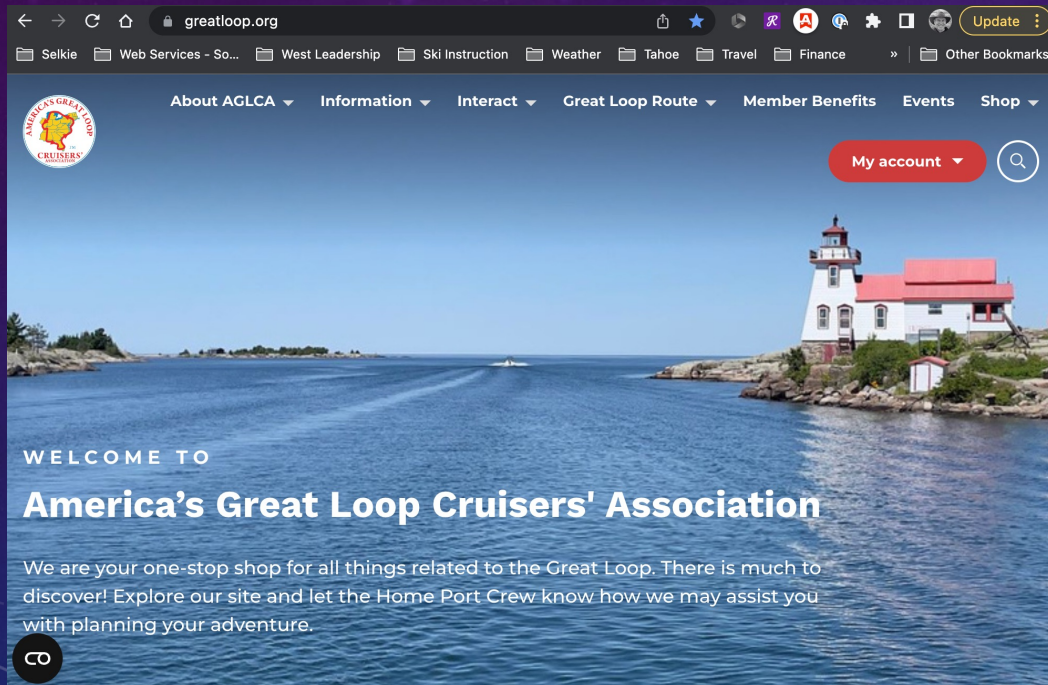
HOW MUCH TIME?

- However, many people take longer
 - In as much as 12 years.
 - Many do it in segments, and take more than a year
- There are a ton of places to experience along the way, so **TAKE YOUR TIME**

HOW TO START?

THE AMERICAN GREAT LOOP CRUISERS ASSOCIATION (AGLCA)

www.greatloop.org



- \$79/year plus \$15 one-time fee
- The AGLCA is **THE** resource to research the Loop
- Route information
- Types of boats that do the Loop
- Forum
- Resource Library
- ...and lots of other stuff

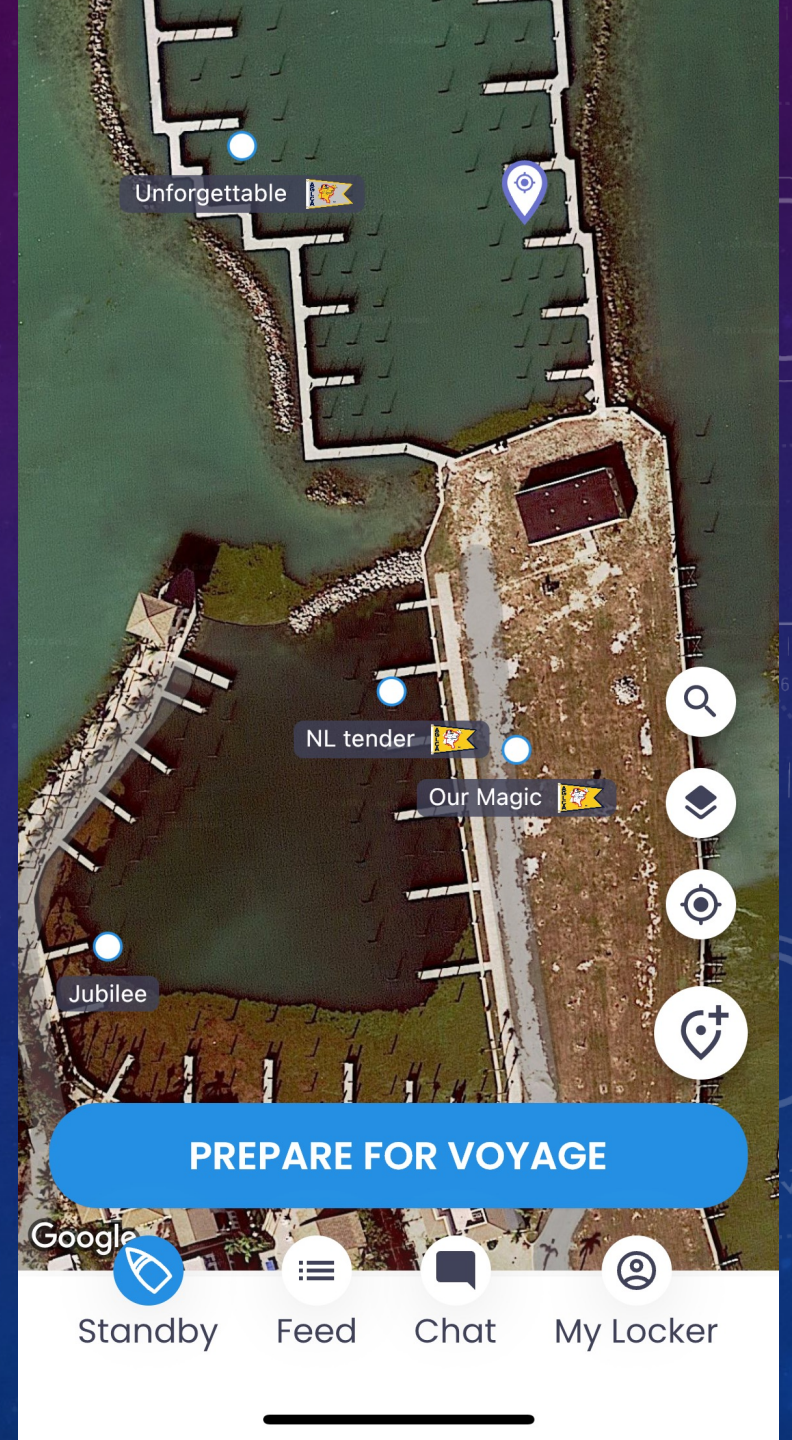
OTHER LOOPERS

- The American Great Loop Cruisers Association (AGLCA) is a huge perpetual motion yacht club
- Frequent socialization with DOCKTALES and dinners together
- We made quite a few friends on the Loop



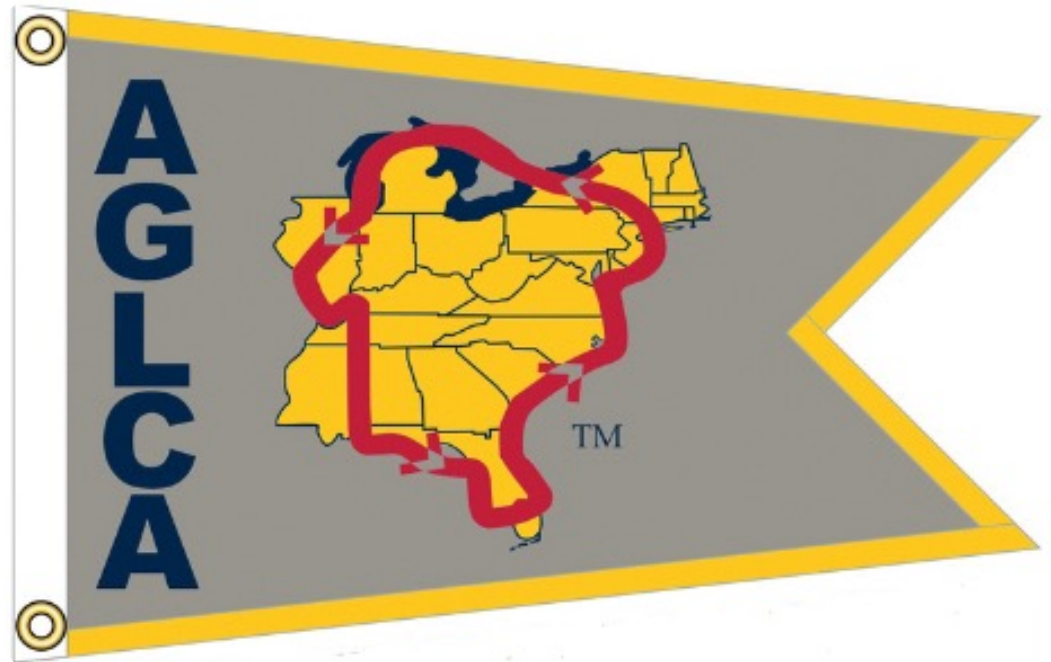
SPEAKING OF FRIENDS

- NEBO: Navigation Social App on Apple App Store and Google Play
- Automates logging sea voyages
- Keep in touch with friends on the water
- AGLCA members are shown in Nebo with the AGLCA logo as their boat marker
 - You can contact someone you see on Nebo and share information, pictures, and plan DOCKTALES!



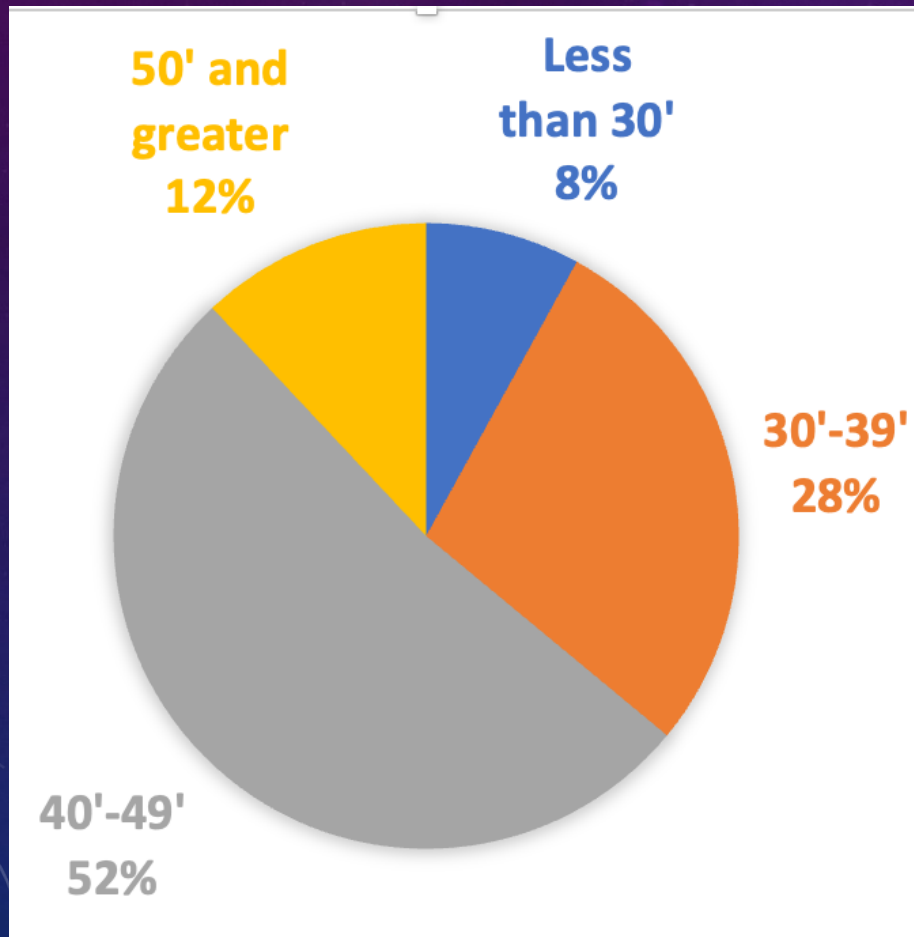
AGLCA BURGEES

Color	Purpose
White	Doing the Loop for the 1 st time
Gold	Completed the Loop once
Platinum	Completed the Loop more than once



2022 BOAT STATS

41.1' Average Boat Size



Most popular boat makes:

1. Mainship (20)
2. Sea Ray (15)
3. Ranger Tug (13)
4. Grand Banks (11)
5. Carver (10)
6. Kadey Krogen (9)
7. Meridian (7)
8. DeFever (7)
9. Bayliner (7)
10. Marine Trader (6)
11. Endeavor (6)
12. Monk (6)

BOAT RESTRICTIONS

- You must clear a fixed 19' 5" railroad bridge near Chicago
 - If you clear 17', you can go through downtown Chicago
 - If you clear 15', you can do the entire Erie Canal
- Drawing more than 4' 6" will limit your options on where you go
 - Going through the Canadian Canal System, you will have to sign a waiver for a boat drawing 5' +



BOAT RESTRICTIONS

- You are restricted in length and width by the locks you go through
 - Example: The smallest lock on the Trent Severn Waterway is 84' long and 23' wide
- Range: maximum distance between fuel stops is 200 miles on the upper Mississippi
- Slips 44' or more either are often scarce, so longer boats can have difficulty finding marina space



The background is a gradient from dark purple to dark blue, overlaid with a pattern of small white stars. On the right side, there are several technical diagrams: a large circular gauge with a scale from 0 to 210 and a needle pointing to approximately 180; a smaller circular gauge below it with a scale from 0 to 100 and a needle pointing to approximately 80; and a dashed circular arrow in the bottom right corner. In the top left, there is a partial circular diagram with a scale from 0 to 180 and a needle pointing to approximately 150. The text "OUR BOAT, SELKIE" is centered in the lower half of the image.

OUR BOAT, *SELKIE*

OUR CHOICE: KADEY KROGEN 39

Selkie



- 44' overall, 4' 3" water draft
- 26' air draft with mast up, 14' air draft with everything but bimini down
- 33,000 pound full displacement hull
- Taiwan manufactured, Hull 20 out of 52 built in 2000



- Single Engine John Deere 135HP
- Trac Bow Thruster
- Naiad Stabilizers
- Comprehensive Garmin electronics suite
- 700 gal fuel, 300 gal H2O
- Walkaround cabin,
- 7+' Headroom
- 6' headroom in Engine Room

SELKIE PICTURES



OUR DINGHIES

The background is a dark blue gradient with a subtle pattern of white stars and technical diagrams. On the right side, there are several circular diagrams resembling gauges or dials. One large gauge has a scale from 0 to 210 in increments of 10. Other smaller gauges and dashed circular paths with arrows are scattered across the right half of the image. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and technical.





OUR ROUTE LAST SUMMER

The background features a gradient from dark purple at the top to deep blue at the bottom. It is populated with numerous small white stars of varying sizes. Several faint, white circular diagrams are overlaid on the background. One prominent diagram in the upper right quadrant consists of concentric circles with radial tick marks and numerical labels (100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210) along its outer edge. Other diagrams include dashed lines and arrows, suggesting a technical or scientific theme.

THE 2000-MILE ROUTE WE TOOK LAST SUMMMER

- Solomons, MD to Mackinaw City, MI
 - Chesapeake and Delaware Bay
 - Jersey Coast
 - Hudson River
 - Eastern Erie Canal
 - Oswego Canal
 - Lake Ontario
 - Trent Severn Waterway
 - Georgian Bay
 - North Channel
 - St. Mary's River
 - Straits of Mackinac









ENGINEERING MARVELS: THE CANAL SYSTEMS IN THE US AND CANADA

ERIE AND OSWEGO CANALS

The background is a dark blue gradient with a field of small white stars. On the right side, there are several technical diagrams. One is a large circular gauge with a scale from 0 to 210 and a needle pointing to approximately 190. Another is a smaller circular diagram with concentric circles and arrows. There are also some dashed lines and other faint technical symbols scattered across the right side.



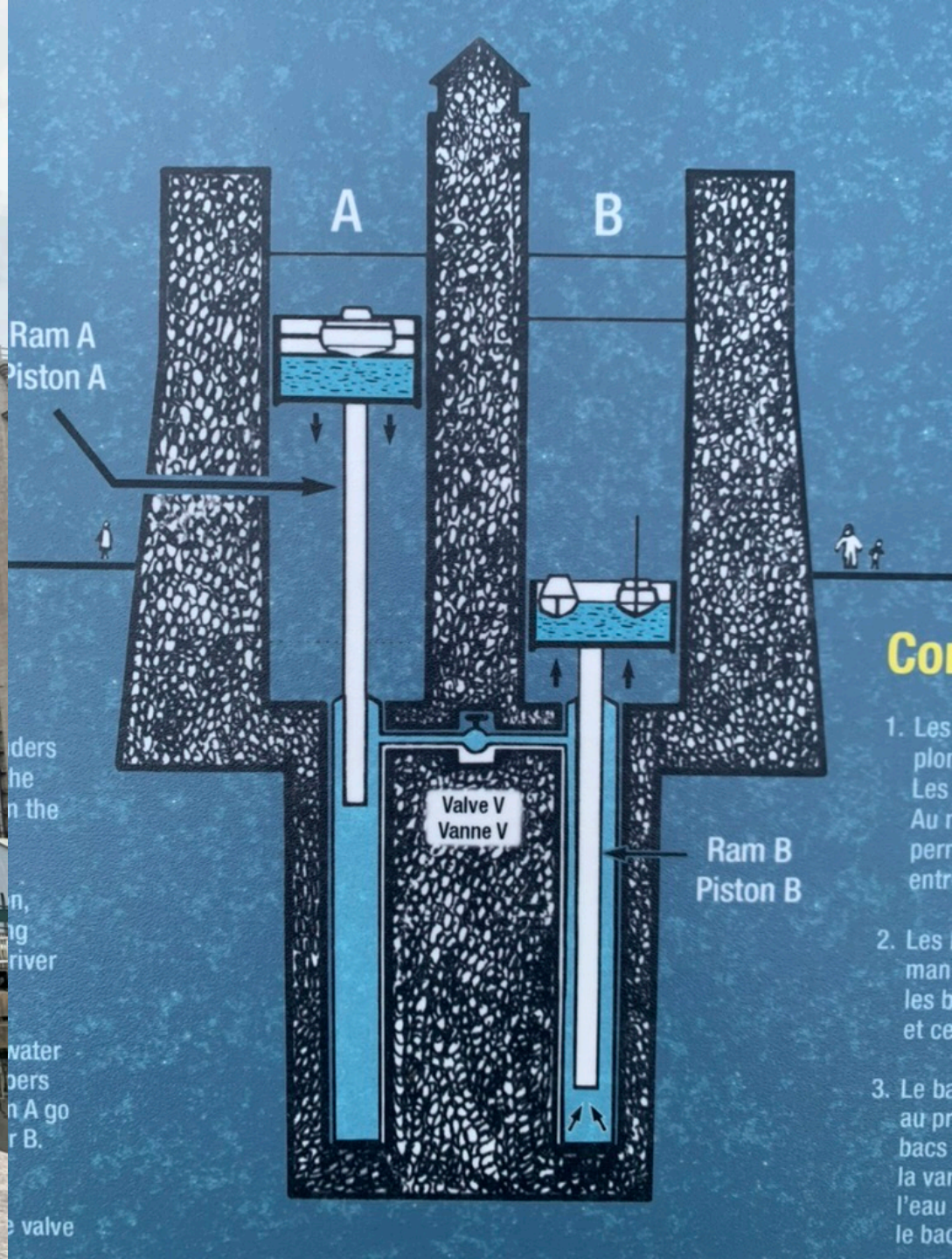
LOCKS 3 AND 4 OF THE ERIE CANAL



The background is a dark blue gradient with a field of small white stars. Overlaid on this are several faint, light blue technical diagrams. On the right side, there is a large circular diagram with concentric circles and radial lines, resembling a scale or a gauge, with numbers from 80 to 210. Below it is another circular diagram with dashed lines and arrows. On the left side, there are partial circular diagrams with arrows. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

TRENT SEVERN WATERWAY ONTARIO, CANADA

PETERBOROUGH LIFT LOCK



Con

1. Les plongeurs... Les plongeurs... Au n... per... entr...
2. Les man... les b... et ce...
3. Le bac... au pr... bacs... la van... l'eau... le bac...





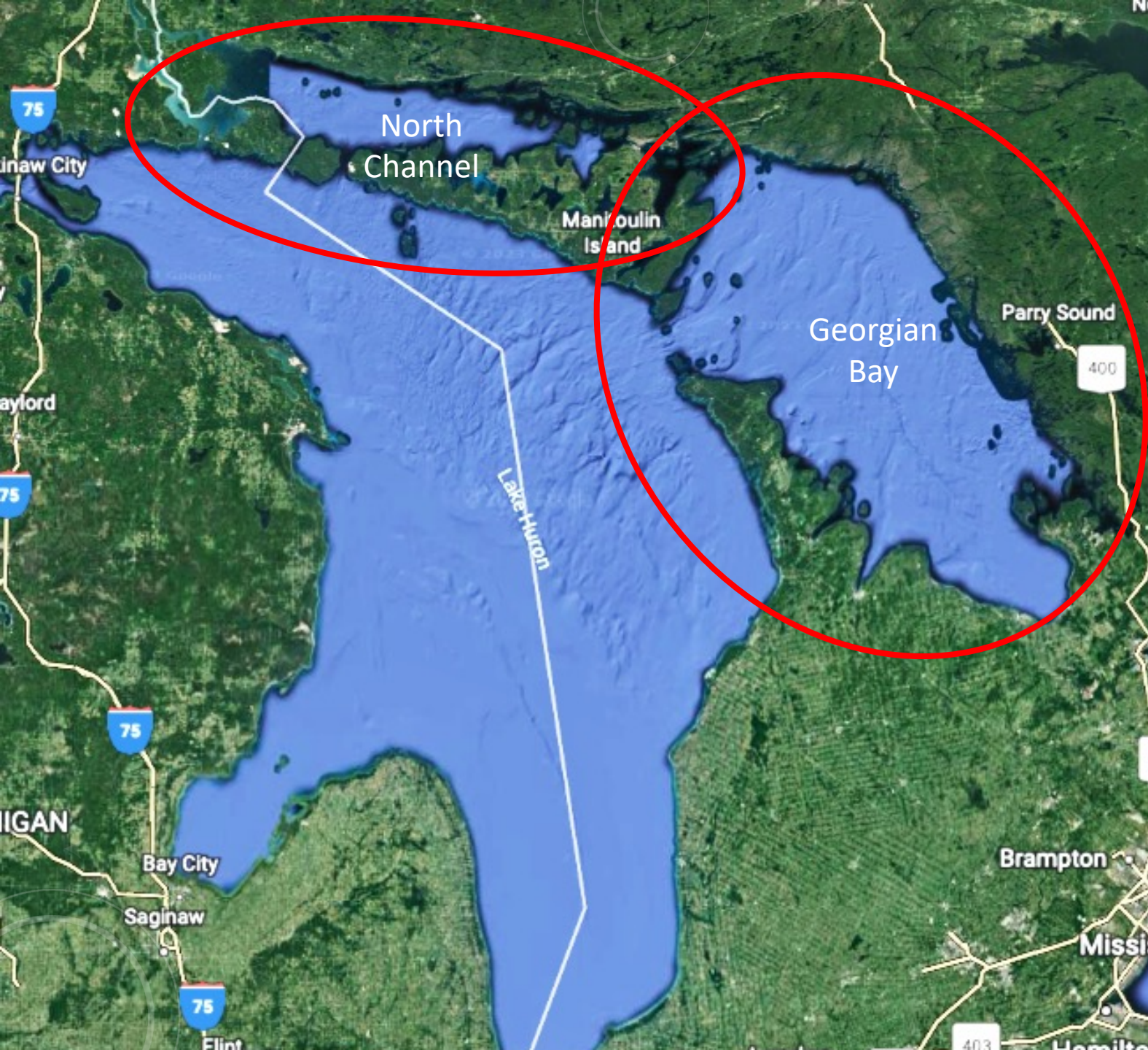






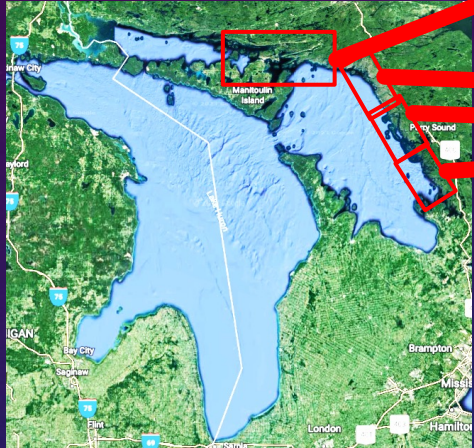
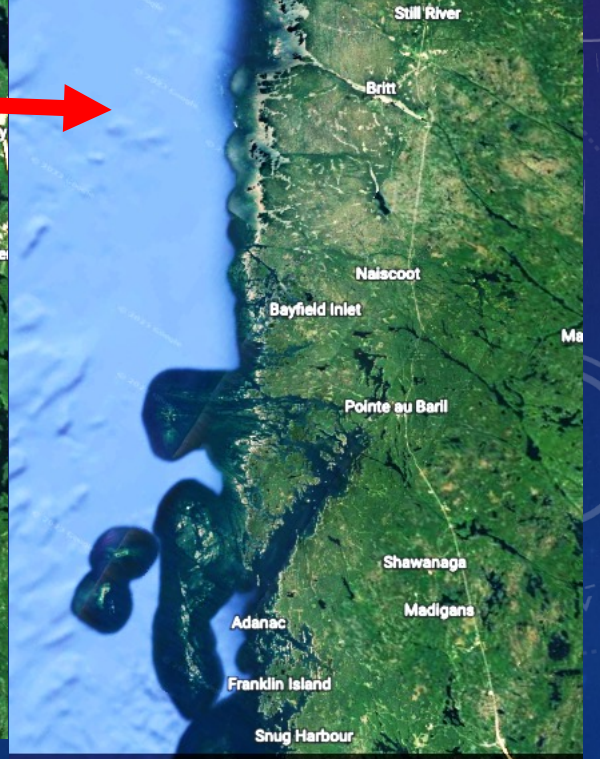
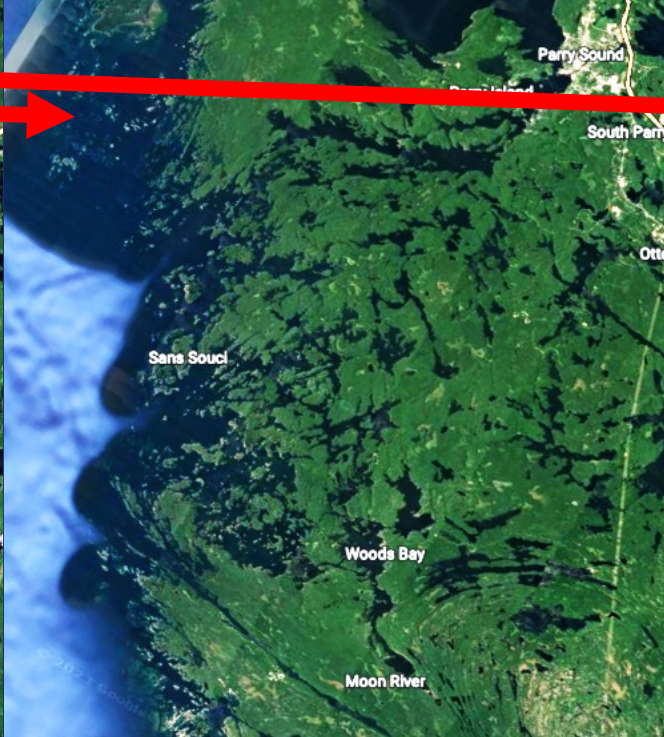
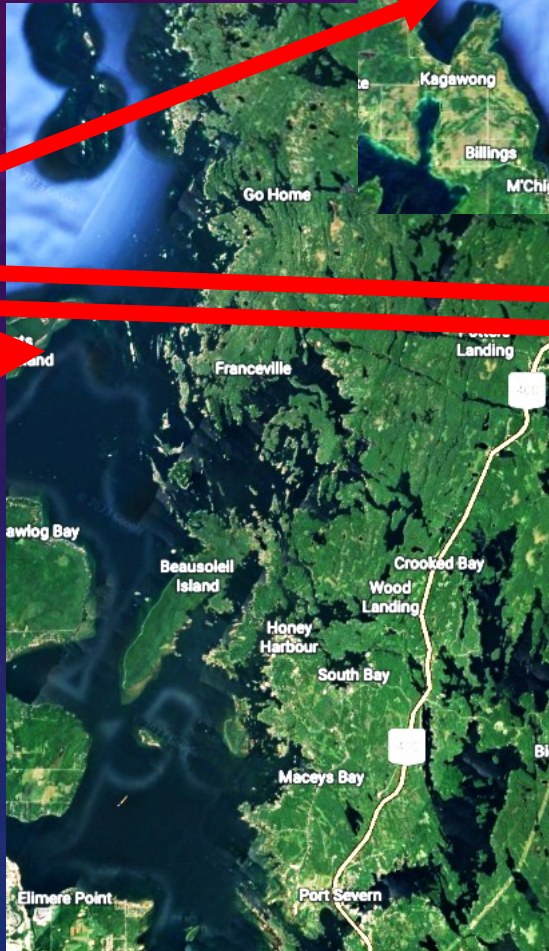
The Big Chute Railway

The background is a dark blue gradient with a field of small white stars. On the right side, there are several technical diagrams. The most prominent is a large circular gauge with a scale from 0 to 210 in increments of 10. It has multiple concentric circles and arrows indicating direction. Below it is another circular diagram with dashed lines and arrows. In the bottom left corner, there are more faint circular diagrams with arrows.

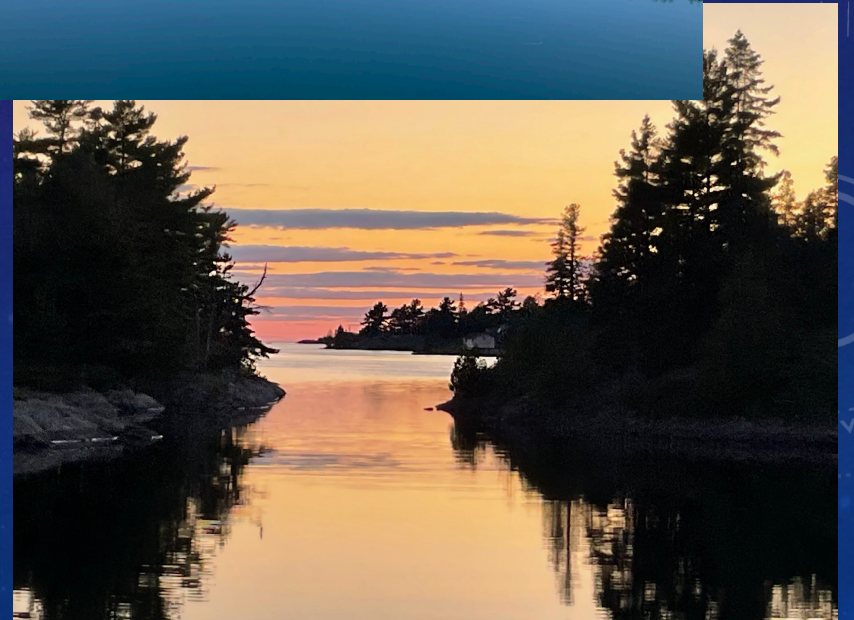


GEORGIAN BAY
AND
THE NORTH
CHANNEL
OF
LAKE HURON

GEORGIAN BAY



Georgian Bay is a beautiful place to explore



WHEN YOU ARE UP NORTH, YOU SEE NORTHERN LIGHTS

- Looking north from Harbor Springs, Michigan
- This summer it will be spectacular because of the Solar Cycle close to maximum











IT'S HARD TO
FIND LIBBIE ON
SELKIE
SOMETIMES....

Notification Center



EMERGENCY ALERT / ALERTE D'URGENCE

1h ago

At 4:21 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time Thursday, Environment Canada has issued a tornado warning for this mobile coverage area. Take cover immediately if threatening weather



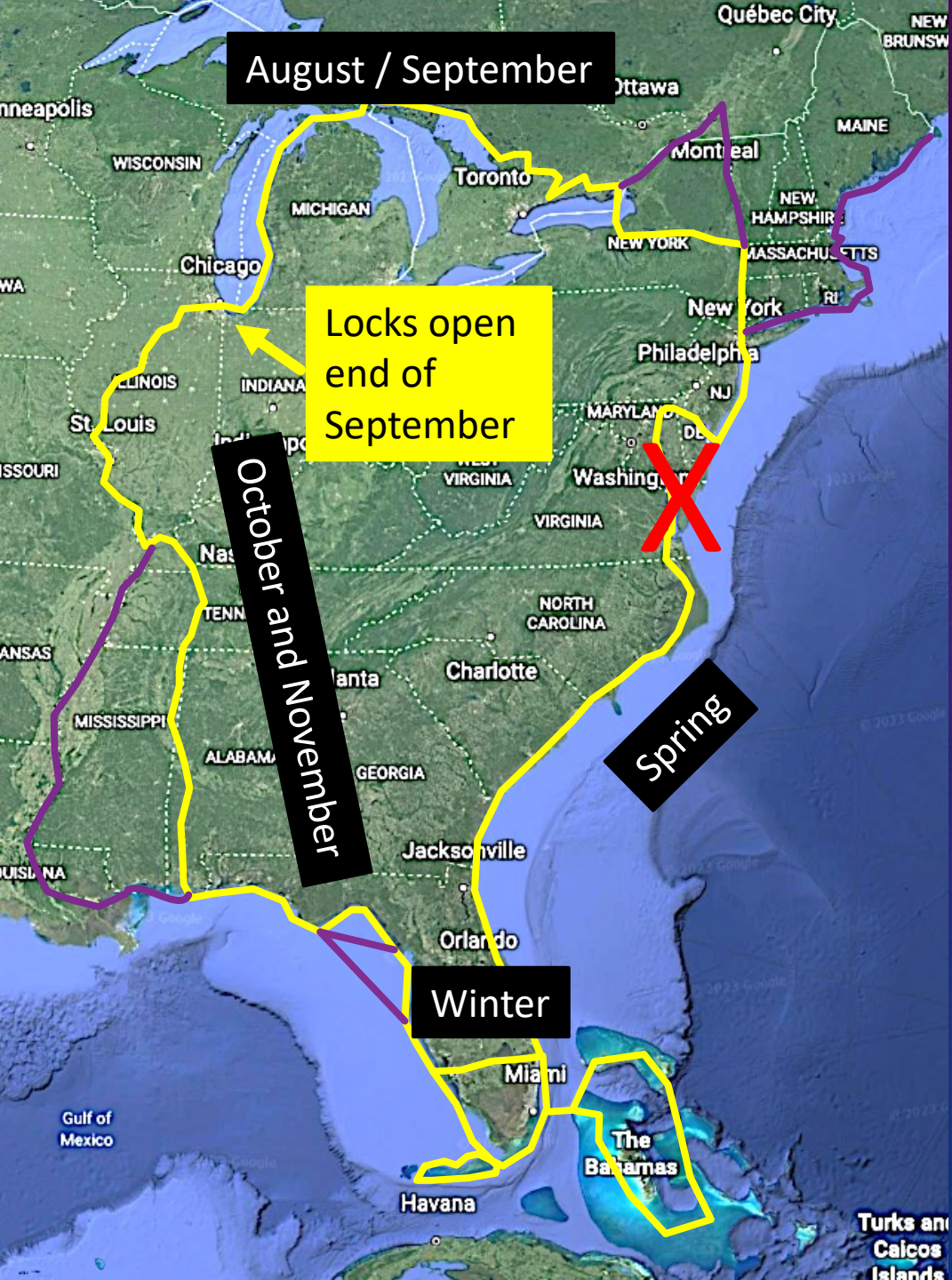
approaches. /// À 16h21 heure avancée de l'Est le jeudi, Environnement Canada a émis une alerte de tornade pour cette zone de couverture mobile. Mettez-vous immédiatement à l'abri si un phénomène météorologique menaçant s'approche.





WHERE IS *SELKIE* NOW?





CONTINUING THE LOOP THIS YEAR

- Explore Lakes Huron and Michigan in August and September
- Lock system on the Illinois River opens end of September
- River System and Gulf Coast in October and November
- Florida in Winter
- Eastern Seaboard in Spring
- “Cross our wake” in Maryland

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DO THE LOOP, BUT I WANT TO EXPERIENCE PARTS OF IT...IN CANADA

Georgian Bay
Canadian Yacht Charters



Trent Severn Waterway
Kawartha Voyager



DAY TO DAY PLANNING

The background is a gradient from dark purple to blue, filled with a field of small white stars. Overlaid on this are several technical diagrams: a large circular gauge with numerical markings (100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210) and arrows, a smaller circular gauge with a dashed outer ring and an arrow, and a partial circular diagram in the bottom left corner.

PLANNING DAY TO DAY

- Only plan a few days ahead for routes
 - Things often change (weather, other issues, or what looks like a cool place to stay)
- We typically went 30 – 40 miles in a day and always had a backup, shorter destination if things got tough
 - Our longest day was 90 miles and 12 hours on the Jersey coast



GOVERNMENT WEATHER FORECASTS MOSTLY TRUSTWORTHY, BETTER THAN MANY OF THE APPS

- Both National Weather Services were (usually) good for 48 hours
 - In Canada you had to wait for the French forecast to stop and the English forecast to start
- Using 2-3 apps with the NWS data gave us a good idea of what to expect, but we discovered:
 - ***Wind could be 50% worse than forecasted for a period of time at any time***
 - Worst case: we experienced 55 knots of wind on a day when 20 knots were forecast
- Experience reinforced our go-no go criteria of max 15 knots forecasted on big water



Grand Haven, Mi South Pier Lighthouses
Credit: Jon Arvey
Jon & Lori Arvey Photography

DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES HAVE NO PLACE ON THE LOOP... BUT WE HAD ONE ANYWAY

- A family reunion required that we make it from Maryland to Michigan starting mid-May to end of July

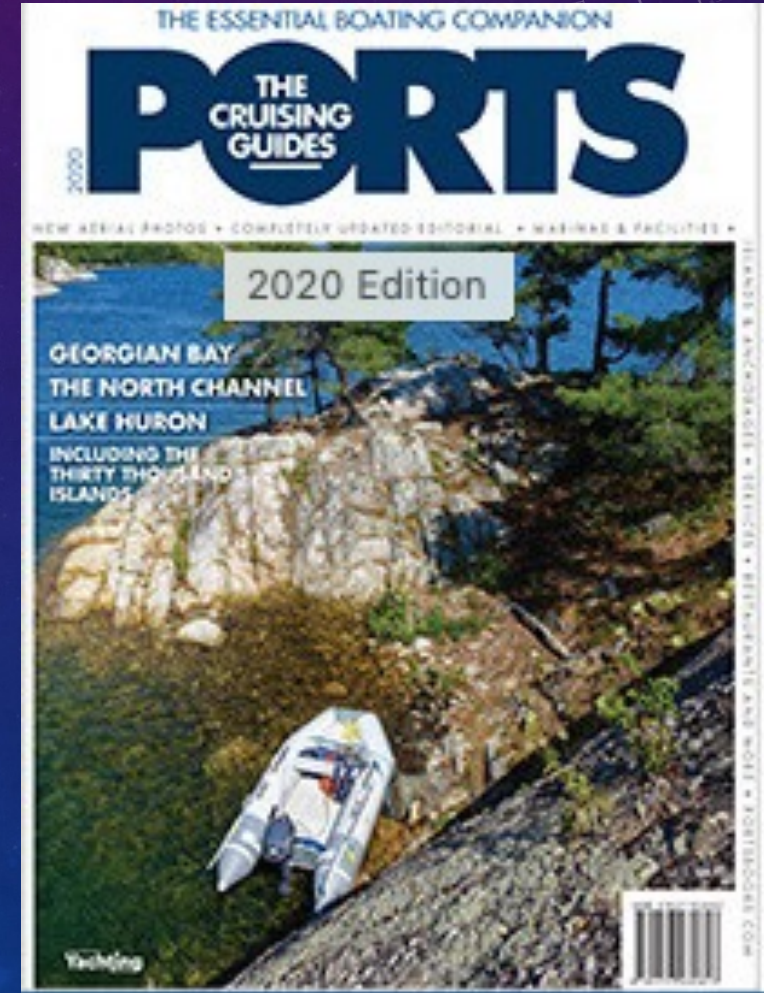
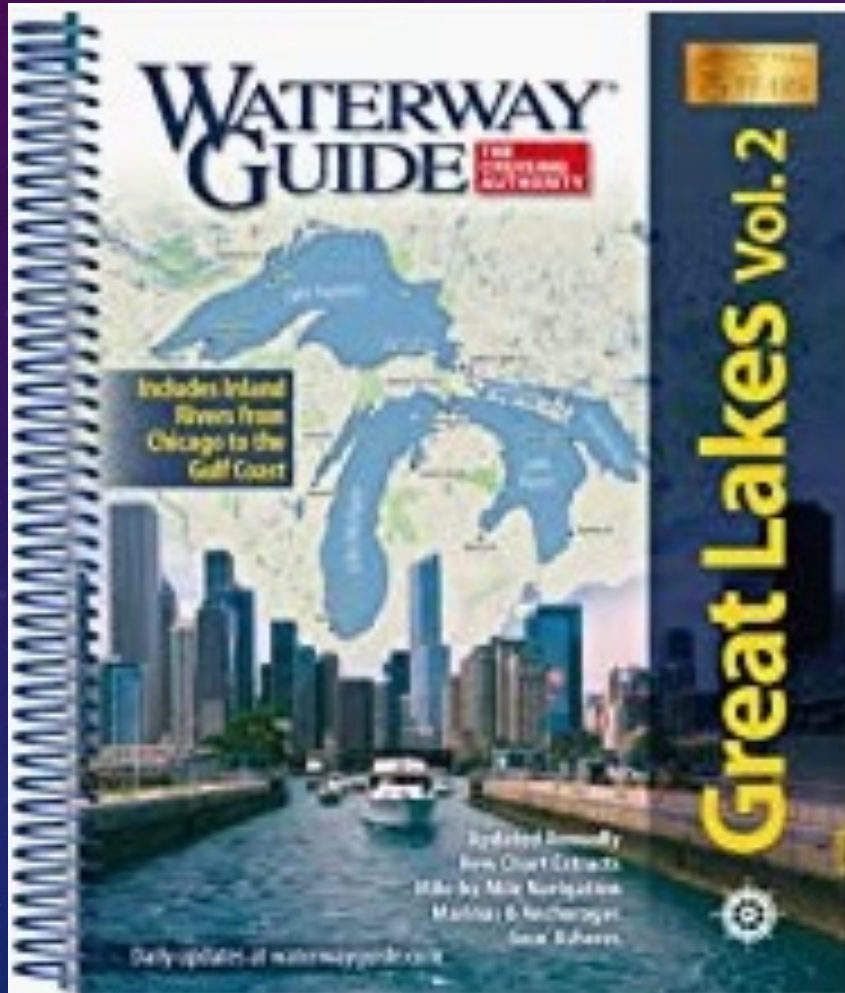


NAVIGATION SYSTEMS



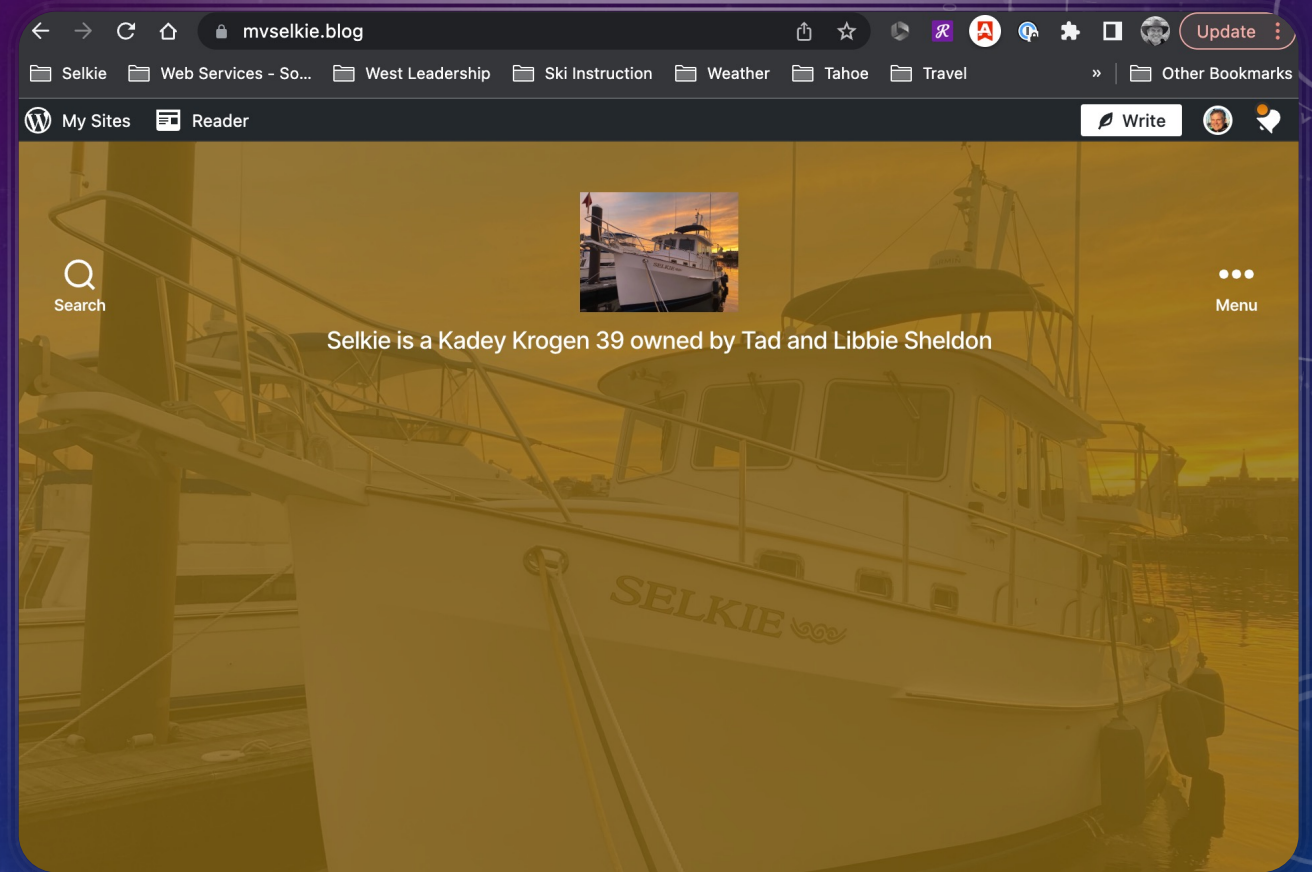
- Garmin shipboard systems worked fine at higher resolutions in the US, but no Canadian charts (legacy system)
- iPad Pro was great with blue toothed Garmin Glo 2.0 GPS
 - Navionics was primary navigation system
 - Aquamaps used as backup integrated with Waterway Guide and Active Captain

PLANNING AIDS



MVSELKIE.BLOG

- This blog documents our search for, purchase and travels on Selkie
- We will be continuing the Blog as we restart our journey this summer



AND IN
CONCLUSION....



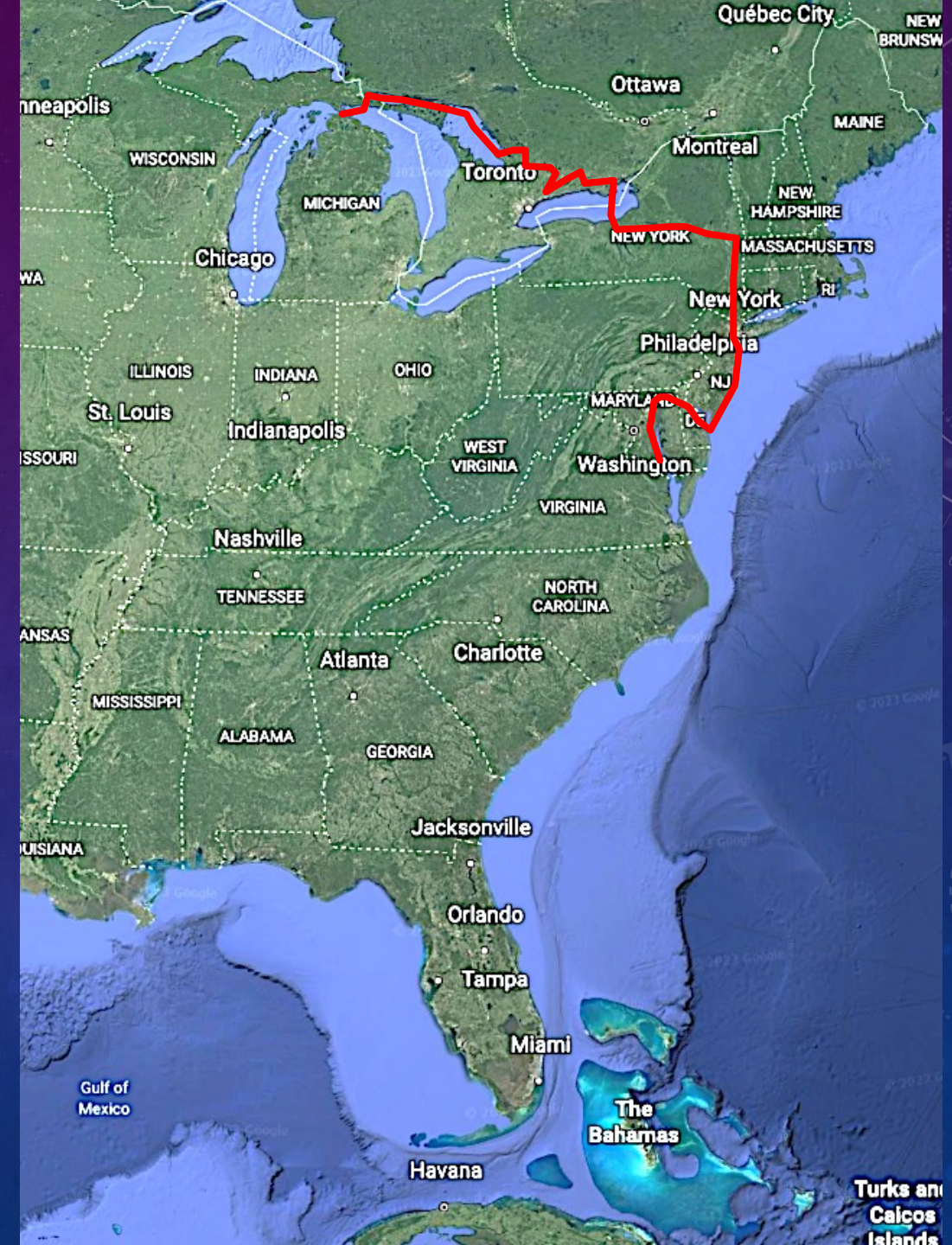


Q&A



THANK
YOU!!





SOME STATISTICS:

On Mount Everest

- On average 800 people climb Mt Everest, including Sherpas
- On average, 5 people die each year

On the Loop

- On average, 150 people complete the Loop
- On average, no one dies

Conclusion: Fewer people do the Loop than climb Everest, and ***NO ONE DIES!***

HIGHLIGHTS AND LOWLIGHTS

- Lowlight (if you can call it that): Stuck in Cape May, NJ for several days waiting for a weather window to go up the Jersey shore
 - ...and learning that the Jersey Shore Marinas are some of the most expensive we came across (we haven't made it to Florida yet)
- Highlights for Libbie: fishing, paddle boarding, streaming pilates on board
- Highlights for Tad: pulling into Tad's hometown and Selkie's Home Port, Mackinaw City, Michigan with cousins greeting us at the dock after traveling 2000 miles
- Highlights for both: the anchoring out in some amazing places and the time together

