

Despite the fact that TOFC has been deregulated in the U.S. the small western Canadian exporter wishing to use this mode will find it relatively unattractive when compared with other alternatives. As third party shippers' agents and forwarders can obtain volume discounts and as they can also provide specialized equipment, and further, because other services (such as customs brokerage services) are often available from such organizations, these intermediaries represent a more appropriate choice for Canadian shippers wishing to utilize the intermodal option. Further information on rail carriers and intermediaries offering intermodal services is provided on pages 54 to 57.

MARINE

Among all the modes, water transportation is the least expensive and the slowest. The inland waterway system nearest to British Columbia and Alberta is the Columbia/Snake River System which runs eastward from Portland, Oregon to Lewiston, Idaho. This system is attractive to bulk commodity producers (grain, forestry products) located in southern Washington, northern Oregon and Idaho wishing to transport their goods at low marine rates to Portland for overseas ocean export transport. Bulk commodity shippers in British Columbia and Alberta will find it more practical from a cost and speed point of view to transport their large scale overseas exports by rail or truck to export position in Vancouver or Seattle.

Moreover, marine transportation is an important option for shippers wishing to export to Hawaii and Alaska. The several services which are available are discussed in detail in Section III.B (Shipments to Hawaii) and Section III.C (Shipments to Alaska).