

Jan 25, 2014

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Dear Corps of Engineers,

With the release of the Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study,

we know that physical separation is the most effective means of preventing the transfer of aquatic invasive species between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River Basin. The threat of these invaders poses a catastrophic risk to people, wildlife, and our economies.

We need to move from studying separation to planning it.

Hydrological separation of the two basins is the only permanent solution that addresses the problem of all harmful aquatic invasive species.

Band-aid temporary solutions currently used and proposed, such as relying on flawed electric barriers, will not protect our waters.

Massive cost estimates for flood control and sediment remediation are fundamentally flawed. These issues that have plagued communities for decades need to be addressed with or without separation. Solving these will add value to the region and should not be framed as a cost deterring separation.

Clean up the Chicago and Illinois River, protect millions of jobs, and keep invasive species from transferring between waters in both basins!

Physical separation could be staged in phases, like other major infrastructure projects, spreading the costs over time. Interim measures can be implemented in a way that provides immediate enhanced protection for the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins, and supports the long-term achievement of physical separation.

The Corps should work with a local leader to design a separation scenario that addresses local problems, revitalizing the region while finding a solution that is cheaper, better, and faster.

The need for prevention of aquatic invasive species transfer between

the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin is clear, and now more than ever so is the answer: physical separation.