

Thank you for your comment, Tim Maloney.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is GLMRIS2AP50083.

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Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS)  
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Comment Submitted:

The Hoosier Environmental Council (HEC) submits the following comments on the proposed controls to prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species between the Wabash and Maumee River basins.

HEC appreciates the Corps of Engineers work in helping to identify the risks of aquatic nuisance species spread, including that of Asian carp. We agree that prompt and effective action is needed to prevent ANS from crossing basin divides and creating problems in new basins. In particular, it should be a high priority for the federal government and the State of Indiana to keep Asian carp from spreading into the Great Lakes from the Wabash and Mississippi basins.

Among the control alternatives evaluated in this report, HEC supports the implementation of Alternatives H and/or I, which will "reconstruct the left descending Graham-McCullough Ditch berm", and create a permanent barrier at this site to waters from the Wabash and Maumee basins intermingling. We support these alternatives for the following reasons.

- a) They rate highly on nearly all of the evaluation criteria.
- b) They result in negligible adverse environmental impacts. Alternative I, with its wetlands component, would enhance the local ecosystem.
- c) They are cost effective and affordable.
- d) They have the support of many local interests, including local conservation organizations.

Implementation of Alternative H and/or I should include measures to mitigate the impacts of higher flood levels resulting from the reconstructed berm on neighboring properties and resources.

The spread of new aquatic nuisance species to the Great Lakes, including Asian carp, will have serious consequences for the Great Lakes ecosystem, as well as the local and regional economies that depend on Great Lakes tourism, outdoor recreation, and commercial fishing. Impacts to the Great Lakes ecosystem could include the decline of many native prey and predator fish species, from cisco and yellow perch to lake trout and walleye. The Great Lakes sport, commercial, and tribal fisheries provide about \$7 billion in annual economic impact.

As part of the greater effort to limit the effects of Asian carp to North American waters and native aquatic ecosystems, we urge the Corps of Engineers and other appropriate authorities to also develop strategies for addressing Asian carp control in the event these species overcome the efforts to prevent their spread and enter the Great Lakes basin.

#### Conclusion

The Hoosier Environmental Council urges the Corps of Engineers to proceed expeditiously in identifying the appropriate legal authority and non-federal sponsor(s) for this project, completing the NEPA review, and implementing Project Alternative H or I.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.