

PO Box 1308
Kalkaska, Michigan 49646
March 24, 2011

US Army Corps of Engineers
Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study
111 North Canal, Suite 600
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Dear GLMRIS:

I would like to submit a few comments/concerns to your study of our great watershed(s). I had previously registered to speak at your public meeting in Ypsilanti earlier this month as a member of the Michigan River Guides Association, but, unfortunately, could not make it. I am specifically concerned with the seemingly undeterred progress of invasive Asian Carp species from the Mississippi watershed into the Great Lakes.

My fear is not only derived from general environmental concerns, but personal economic ones as well. I make my living guiding fly fishing clients who want to catch trout and salmon on the rivers of Northern Michigan.

During the interminable time it is projected to complete this current study, the invasion may well occur, if it already hasn't. We need to prevent this occurrence, if possible; not just slow it down or "reduce the risk." We don't need another study like the ones on the possible effects of acid rain or tobacco consumption. It is my understanding that the Federal Congress in 2007, through the Water Resources and Development Act, authorized this study and mandated, as well, that the Army Corps of Engineers to "consider options and technologies available to prevent the spread" of invasive species)..." (My underlining.)

I am sure that you are aware of at least two comprehensive reports describing the likely impacts of Asian carp on the Great Lakes have already been written, one from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and one from Fisheries and Oceans Canada. In addition, Fisheries and Oceans Canada recently commenced a bi-national effort to create an updated risk assessment for Asian carp. There is copious literature describing the potential movement of other invasive species via the Chicago Waterway System (CWS) and the impacts of the movement of zebra mussels into the Mississippi River basin via the CWS. There is absolutely no justification for the Corps to place higher priority on

conducting its own risk assessment than on preventing the spread of Asian Carp through the CWS. Thus, dragging out the period of inaction.

As well, you must know that the Great Lakes Commission and Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLC/GLSLCI) are conducting a study on the water management and transportation alternatives available after a physical separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River. Other organizations, such as the Alliance for the Great Lakes and the Natural Resources Defense Council, have also described alternatives for achieving prevention through a physical separation. The Corps should incorporate the findings of these projects to hasten its own analysis.

Specifically, I would like to see the study completed in the next 6 months and the canal operation temporarily curtailed physically in the meanwhile to prevent the possible passage of the carp (and other invasive species). An electrical barrier just won't function to accomplish this; e.g., the electrical sea lamprey barriers on some of the Great Lakes streams.

The economic concerns of the commercial shipping interests should not override the prevention of the carp invasion. The Great Lakes deserve better. If you can't take the politics and boondoggle out of the equation, you should not be the agency to deal with it.

Finally, what a great place to have your office; I bet that you will be able to look out the window and see the Carp swimming up and down the canals in and out of Lake Michigan, if we don't do something quick and substantial. Get'er done.

Very sincerely,



Charles V. Weaver

cc:

President Barack Obama

Senator Debbie Stabenow

Representative Dave Camp

Michigan River Guides Association