

Thank you for your comment, Michael Ripley.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is GLMRIS50219.

Comment Date: February 7, 2011 10:18:25AM

GLMRIS

Comment ID: GLMRIS50219

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Privacy Preference: Don't withhold my personal information from the website and NEPA documents

Attachment: CORA GLMRIS 25jan11.pdf

Comment Submitted:

See attached letter with comments from Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority.



Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority

179 W. Three Mile Road
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January 25, 2011

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
GLMRIS Scoping
111 North Canal St.
Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority (CORA), I am writing to submit comments on the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) for the NEPA scoping process. CORA and its constituent Tribes are very concerned about the potential ecological damage that will occur should Asian Carp become established in the Great Lakes. CORA would like to ensure that the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) thoroughly examines every possible pathway that invasive species could use to traverse the Great Lakes/Mississippi River watershed divide but the Corps needs to give priority to restoring the permanent, natural ecological and physical separation of the watersheds in the Chicago area.

CORA represents five Tribes in Michigan with regard to the Tribes' commercial and subsistence fisheries in the 1836 treaty-ceded waters of Lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior. The Tribes which are party to the 1836 Treaty are the Bay Mills Indian Community, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

For thousands of years, the Great Lakes aquatic ecosystem was protected from the encroachment of certain species by geographical barriers such as Niagara Falls and the natural watershed divides that define the Great Lakes basin. These divides were breached in the 19th and 20th century by canals and locks to facilitate shipping into and out of the Great Lakes. These breaches allowed what is arguably the most devastating invasive species to enter the Great Lakes from the Atlantic coastal system and that is the sea lamprey. Within the space of a human generation, the sea lamprey had nearly wiped out lake trout, the top predator of the Great Lakes aquatic ecosystem and altered forever, the balance of the fisheries that took thousands of years to develop. Not only have billions of

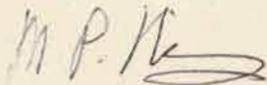
dollars been spent since then by American and Canadian taxpayers to battle sea lamprey, but the repercussions of the mid-twentieth century fishery collapse in the Great Lakes continues to affect Native American communities that depend upon fishing for their livelihoods and culture.

Now the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has the opportunity to prevent Asian carp and other invasive species from wreaking the same sort of havoc as the sea lamprey has done. CORA has been invited by the Great Lakes Commission and Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Cities Initiative to participate on the Resource Group of the project titled *Envisioning a Chicago Area Waterway System for the 21st Century* that seeks to find engineering strategies to restore the ecological separation between the Great Lakes and Mississippi watersheds. We realize that the GLMRIS study has identified the Chicago area waterway system (CAWS) as the most likely pathway for Asian carp to enter the Great Lakes and evidence suggests that Asian carp may have already crossed that threshold.

CORA is therefore demanding that the Corps make the closing of the CAWS pathway a priority for GLMRIS and that the timeline to achieve this be moved up immediately in order to prevent Asian carp from becoming established in the Great Lakes. CORA would also remind the Corps of their trust responsibility to protect the resources for the Tribes through the Treaty of 1836 and the U.S. government's responsibilities under the Consent Decree of 2000.

If you have any questions or would like further comments on this subject, please do not hesitate to contact me or CORA's Executive Director, Jane TenEyck at (906) 632-0043 or via email mripley@sault.com or jteneyck@chippewaottawa.org.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Ripley
Environmental Coordinator
Inter-Tribal Fisheries and Assessment Program

Cc: CORA Board