

THE GREAT LAKES AND MISSISSIPPI RIVER INTERBASIN STUDY NEWSLETTER

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If you have questions or comments about the GLMRIS Newsletter or have suggestions for future topics you would like to see addressed, please contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District Public Affairs Office at ChicagoDistrict.PAO@usace.army.mil, or call us at 312-846-5330.

Additional information about GLMRIS, including previous issues of the newsletter, press releases and interim products are available online at glmr.is.anl.gov.

The purpose of GLMRIS is to evaluate a range of options and technologies to prevent aquatic nuisance species transfer via aquatic pathways between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins by aquatic pathways.

Stay Connected:



Update from the GLMRIS Program Manager

Greetings and thank you for your continued interest in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin Study (GLMRIS).

The GLMRIS Team is actively working on several projects within the GLMRIS Program, both in Focus Area I, Chicago Area Waterways, and Focus Area II, Other Aquatic Pathways.

Since our last newsletter we've had some significant stakeholder engagement. In February and March, Corps leadership visited several Congressional offices. GLMRIS was one of the topics of discussion.

We continue to work closely with our partners in the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC). Recent activities with the ACRCC included presenting information about the 2016 Action Plan (previously known as the Control Strategy Framework) to the Council on Environmental Quality, the Office of Management and Budget, and congressional interests. The Action Plan details activities performed by ACRCC members to prevent the establishment of a sustaining Asian carp population in the Great Lakes.

The team is currently working on updating our communication plan. We will be making some updates to the GLMRIS website over the next few months and reenergizing our social media program. If you do not currently follow GLMRIS on Facebook or Twitter, I encourage you to do so. Links to both can be found on the GLMRIS website: glmr.is.anl.gov.

We are interested in hearing from you if you have ideas for how we can better engage you on GLMRIS-related information. If you have questions, comments or ideas you would like to share, please email me at glmr.is@usace.army.mil.

Jeffrey Heath
GLMRIS Program Manager



GLMRIS - Brandon Road

The team is continuing to gather information needed to develop the Tentatively Selected Plan. USACE is consulting with various natural resource agencies under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. In January 2016, the team met with (USFWS) and representatives of other natural resource agencies from the Great Lakes states to identify concerns they might have with the alternatives being considered in the study.

It is important for the GLMRIS team to keep current on research being undertaken in areas related to potential ANS control technologies. One major source of research coordination is the ACRCC's Monitoring and Response Workgroup (MWRG). Member agencies of the MWRG, including USACE, are continuing research in a variety of areas, including electricity, CO2 and small fish entrainment. MWRG's sound work group is evaluating the impacts of sound on non-target fish species, and

to examine startle responses and habituation of Asian carp to sound in both lab and field environments. At a January 2016 MWRG meeting approximately 50 researchers and administrators from state and federal agencies presented preliminary findings of 2015 field work including updates on CO2 barriers, complex noise, and changes in the distribution of Bighead and Silver Carp adults, larvae and eggs in the Illinois Waterway. The latest published information can be found at asiancarp.us.

The GLMRIS Brandon Road team is committed to continuing engagement with stakeholders. In April 2016, project manager Andrew Leichy and other members of the Brandon Road team were invited to provide an update on the study to members of the navigation community at the Illinois River Carriers Association meeting in Peoria, Ill. The team also met with members of the American Waterways Operators in April.



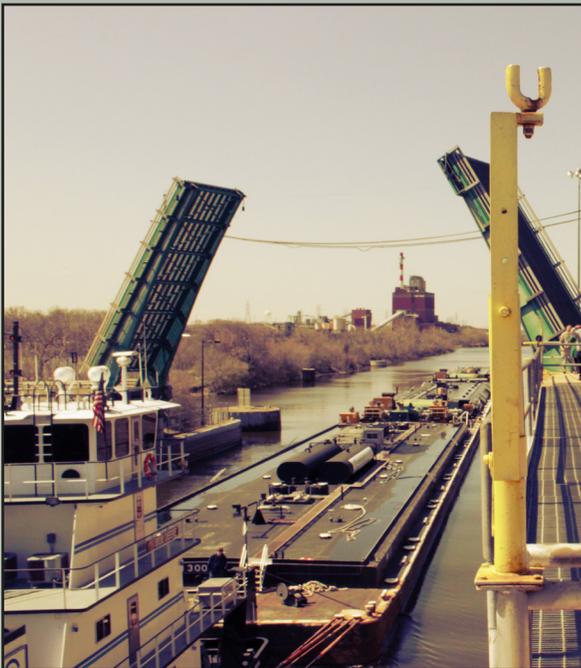
Flume used for research at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineer Research and Development Center

Brandon Road Shipper and Carrier Survey

To supplement the information provided in the GLMRIS Report released in January 2014, the Brandon Road study team is conducting additional research for their commercial cargo economic analysis. A complete fact sheet about the survey is available at GLMRIS.anl.gov.

The commercial cargo economic analysis requires an understanding of how shippers and carriers may respond to changes in waterway and lock availability. Since the locks analyzed in the original GLMRIS effort have a high degree of traffic commonality with Brandon Road Lock and Dam, the shipper and carrier responses from the original GLMRIS survey serve as appropriate approximations of how shippers and carriers might respond to changes to the Brandon Road Lock.

Surveys conducted in 2011 as part of the original GLMRIS study were used to establish the ultimate origin and destination of waterborne commodity movements on the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS); identified how shippers, carriers, river terminal operators, and other affected users would respond to various unexpected lock closure periods; and described how these events would affect their operational, transportation, and logistics costs.



Commercial vessel passing through Brandon Road Lock, April 2014.

The 2011 survey included 90 interviews yielding data on 139 docks. It established a comprehensive understanding of how the CAWS functions within a larger transportation network, the cost of moving commodities on this system, and the increases to these costs under various closure periods. This information was necessary to identify impacts to transportation benefits for the alternatives considered in the GLMRIS Report.

The Brandon Road study team recognized that a supplemental carrier-response survey and shipper-response survey could serve to refine the team's understanding of how shippers and carriers would respond to changes in the availability of the waterway at or near Brandon Road Lock specifically. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center database was used to identify carriers that utilized Brandon Road Lock between years 2010 and 2013. Nine shippers and nine carriers were identified to participate in the GLMRIS Brandon Road survey effort based on their relative shares of tonnage and ton-miles within the various commodity groups transiting Brandon Road Lock.

The new shipper and carrier-response surveys will be carefully used to validate and/or supplement previously-developed estimates of transportation costs under the condition of current lock and waterway availability or given restrictions to their use. While the surveys do serve as an important source of information, the study team will continue to work with stakeholders to obtain the best-available information to inform the study and its conclusions. Responses to this survey will be used to validate or refine, as needed, previously-developed estimates of transportation costs under the current or restricted availability of the waterway at or near Brandon Road Lock.

The team will continue to engage waterway users and industry groups regarding the survey and will continue to provide updates to stakeholders through vehicles such as the GLMRIS newsletter and the GLMRIS.anl.gov project website.

Focus Area 2

Asian Carp Blocked By New Berm Protecting Lake Erie

On May 11, 2016, Eagle Marsh in Fort Wayne, Ind. will be the site for a celebration of accomplishment in the fight to stop the spread of Asian carp.

The Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC) will host a public meeting to provide an update on Asian carp control projects followed by highlights on the construction project recently completed providing an earthen berm barrier blocking fish passage between the Mississippi Basin and the Great Lakes Basin.

ACRCC Public Meeting
May 11, 2016
3:00 - 5:30 p.m. (EST)
Fox Island County Park, 7324 Yohne Road, Fort Wayne, Ind.

The ACRCC is celebrating the completion of the permanent Asian carp barrier between the Wabash and Maumee Rivers at Eagle Marsh, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. This wetland site is owned jointly by Little Rivers Wetlands Project and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The marsh was identified as a significant threat for Asian carp to cross from the Mississippi River Basin into the Great Lakes.

The US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) holds a Wetland Reserve Program easement on the site. Working closely with USACE, NRCS designed a berm that was constructed at the Eagle Marsh to permanently restrict Asian carp entry into the Great Lakes at the Eagle Marsh site.

Ohio-Erie Canal at Long Lake

The Focus Area 2, Other Aquatic Pathways Study (2010-2013) was conducted to evaluate the potential existence of other surface water pathways outside of the Chicago Sanitary Ship Canal through which aquatic nuisance species might be able to move between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins. A large interagency study team was formed by USACE with other federal, state, and local partners to identify and evaluate these potential basin divide locations. Results of the study are available in the Other Pathways section of the GLMRIS website.

In addition to the Eagle Marsh site mentioned earlier, there are also ongoing activities at other locations, including the Ohio-Erie Canal at the Long Lake site. This site was determined to be a concern because there is a medium probability for the transfer of silver carp, bighead carp, black carp, and northern snakehead from the Ohio River basin to the Lake Erie basin at a point just south of the city of Akron, in Summit County, Ohio where the Ohio-Erie Canal provides an aquatic connection between the Tuscarawas River (Ohio River drainage) and the Cuyahoga River (Lake Erie drainage).

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and USACE discussed two primary areas of concern at this pathway:

- The direct transfer of water from the Tuscarawas River watershed to the Cuyahoga River watershed at the feeder gates to the Canal that transfer water from Long Lake to the Cuyahoga River.
- Flooding at the tow path that allows water to move from the Tuscarawas River to the Ohio-Erie Canal and then to the Cuyahoga River.

USACE completed a preliminary closure assessment for this pathway in September 2014. At the request of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, USACE is now completing design-level drawings for these measures. These are expected to be completed by September 2016. This current work is being completed using funds from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). The next step will be to complete all necessary environmental compliance and coordination requirements in preparation for potential construction in 2018.