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GLMRIS

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Last Name: [Withheld by requestor]

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Address: [Withheld by requestor]

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Attachment: GLMRIS - NEPA comments.pdf

Comment Submitted:



# STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR  
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
PATRICIA L. BODDY, INTERIM DIRECTOR

January 3, 2011

Susanne J Davis  
Chief of Planning Branch  
Chicago District U. S. Army Corps of Engineers  
111 North Canal Street  
Chicago IL 60606-7206

Dear Ms Davis:

On November 12, 2010 the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers announced it's intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) pursuant to the Water Resources and Development Act of 2007 and the National Environmental Development Act of 1969 (NEPA). This letter is intended to respond to this action. As you are aware the Great Lakes and Mississippi River were originally separate ecosystems that were joined when the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal was created which has allowed the movement of aquatic organisms between these two ecosystems.

Invasive species have been identified as one of the top threats to aquatic resources in Iowa, and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is very concerned about the continued exchange of aquatic invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins. On average, a new aquatic invasive species is established in the Great Lakes every 7 months. Infestation of the Great Lakes risks infestation of the entire Mississippi River Basin via the Waterway, as happened with zebra mussels. The cost of zebra mussels to industry and communities was estimated at \$1 billion per year. Species such as Asian carp are threatening to move from the Mississippi River Basin to the Great Lakes. If the ecological, economic, and recreational impacts Asian carp have caused in parts of the Mississippi River Basin are as devastating in the Great Lakes, the future of the Great Lakes \$4.5 billion sport and commercial fisheries is at risk.

Numerous other nonnative species have already invaded either the Great Lakes or the Mississippi River Basin, but many have not yet crossed between the two systems. Both ecosystems are continually threatened with invasion from the other as long as the Waterway serves as a viable connection; therefore, we need a reliable barrier between the two. Since the aquatic ecosystems of so many states are at risk, it is in the federal interest and a federal responsibility to operate and maintain such a barrier. It is also in the federal interest to seek ways to permanently separate the biological systems of these two basins. Several options have been proposed for such separation and others undoubtedly remain to be identified.

We urge you in your study to examine ways to biologically separate the two basins so the exchange of ANS species can not occur in either direction between these two ecosystems. This will help protect not only the Great Lakes ecosystem but also the Mississippi River ecosystem from the damage caused by these non-native invaders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia L. Boddy", written over a horizontal line.

Patricia L. Boddy  
Interim Director