

Thank you for your comment, PaT Kochanny.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is GLMRIS50600.

Comment Date: March 31, 2011 13:27:37PM

GLMRIS

Comment ID: GLMRIS50600

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

Attachment:

Comment Submitted:

Major General John Peabody,

I'm writing today representing Trout Unlimited, the nations largest coldwater conservation organization. The Great Lakes are a body of water that is a true treasure and we the citizens of this country need to take every precaution and protection measure possible to ensure that they remain the treasure that they are. They represent over 20 percent of the world's fresh water and have over 30 million people living in the basin. The introduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS), like Asian carp, to the Great Lakes has the possibility to disrupt the financial structure of over 500,000 jobs and over 20 billion dollars of industry. Protective measures need to ensure that foreign invaders like Asian Carp, and other non-native species stay out of their waters. The Great Lakes Watershed and the Mississippi River Watershed basins are two very diverse ecosystems. Both watersheds are under significant stress from current AIS and threatened by many new, known and unknown AIS. One of these known AIS threatening the Great Lakes is Asian carp.

It is widely accepted that hydrologic separation is the only viable long-term solution to keeping Asian carp out of the Great Lakes. This includes not only permanently closing the Chicago Area Waterway System but all other gateways threatening the Great Lakes.

Currently, the GLMRIS is scheduled for completion in 2015, or later. This is much too long. This timeline must be shortened significantly. Utilizing the study data from the Great Lakes Commission's (GLC), Chicago Waterway Study, when completed, is one way to shorten the timeline for the GLMRIS recommendations.

Trout Unlimited suggest the following short term and on going remediation actions:

- Strengthening the electrical barriers.
- Constructing physical barriers at all potential breach sites for Great Lakes access.
- Continued suppression of Asian carp populations below the barriers.
- Continued surveillance, physical & eDNA, above the barriers.
- Comprehensive bait sales monitoring.
- Encourage other Great Lake states to develop a control plan similar to Michigan's.
- Assurance that availability of operational funding for this study will continue in light of congressional budget cutting.

Finally, answers to the following questions need to be provided:

- When and where will additional meetings and updates be held as to the study's progress?
- How will the economic factors like the economic value of recreational fishing on the Great Lakes and its connecting waters be factored into the study?
- What are the expected outcomes and next steps of the study going to be so the study leads to corrective action?

Trout Unlimited is pleased that the US Army Corps is completing the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study. However, we urge you to significantly speed up the completion of this study and the announcement of recommendations. The lives of two irreplaceable watersheds are depending on our actions as resource stewards.

Sincerely;

Bryan Burroughs, Executive Director, Michigan Trout Unlimited

John Lenczewski, Executive Director, Minnesota Trout Unlimited

Patrick Kochanny, National Leadership Council-Great Lakes Chairman

Dan Wisniewski, National Leadership Council-Wisconsin

Greg Prosen, National Leadership Council-Illinois