



Great Lakes Fishery Commission

ESTABLISHED BY CONVENTION BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES TO IMPROVE AND PERPETUATE FISHERY RESOURCES

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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION URGES IMMEDIATE PASSAGE OF BILL TO STOP ASIAN CARP AND OTHER INVASIVE SPECIES

Bill, introduced by Senators Stabenow and Durbin, and Congressman Camp, would accelerate separation of Mississippi and Great Lakes basins

ANN ARBOR, MI—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission today applauded the introduction of the *Stop Asian Carp Act of 2011*, a bill designed to stop the spread of Asian carp and other invasive species via the Chicago Area Waterway System. The legislation, introduced today by Senators Debbie Stabenow (MI) and Dick Durbin (IL) and Representative Dave Camp (MI), would require the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, within a year and a half, to prepare an action plan that outlines the feasibility and the best means of achieving ecological separation of the once-naturally-separated Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds. Such separation is essential if the movement of Asian carp and other invasive species between the two basins is to be stopped.

The Chicago Area Waterway System, a series of canals and rivers in and near Chicago, is a manmade connection of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. The waterway is a vibrant transportation corridor, a route for pleasure boats, and a water management system; any study, as is the case with this bill, must take transportation, economic, and water management factors into account. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (and many others) has repeatedly identified separation as the only viable way to permanently address the invasive species problem caused by that direct link between the two basins [www.glfrc.org/fishmgmt/Hansen_testimony_aisancarp.pdf]. In March, 2010, citizen advisors to the commission—from both Canada and the United States—passed a joint resolution making the same recommendation [http://www.glfrc.org/staff/resol2010_1.pdf]. The legislation complements efforts underway by the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative to investigate ways to achieve separation.

“This important legislation directs the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to apply their considerable engineering expertise to answer a complex question: how do you achieve ecological separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi basins in the Chicago Area?” said Commissioner Michael Hansen, a professor at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. “This legislation, if enacted, would significantly expedite the process to identify the ways to achieve separation.”

Hansen added: “We must support every effort to keep Asian carp and other invasive species out of the Great Lakes. Invasive species harm the ecosystem and the economy. They threaten the \$7 billion fishery and they undermine tourism, jobs, and prosperity. This bill acknowledges the importance of invasive species prevention and sets us on a course to achieve ecological separation with all haste.”

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is an international organization established by the United States and Canada through the 1954 Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries. The commission has the responsibility to support fisheries research, control the invasive sea lamprey in the Great Lakes, and facilitate implementation of A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries, a provincial, state, and tribal fisheries management agreement. Visit www.glfrc.org for more information. For more about Asian carp, visit www.asiancarp.org.