

Resolution

Great Lakes Commission Support for Lacey Act Listing of the Silver, largescale Silver, Bighead and Black Carp As Injurious Species

Whereas, species of Asian carp have been widely introduced from their native ranges of China and other Asian countries to the United States, for beneficial uses such as water quality improvement, removal of aquatic plants and animals or to improve fishery production; and

Whereas, species of priority concern including the silver, black and bighead carp, initially confined in the United States to aquaculture facilities in the lower Mississippi River, have escaped in the early 1990's during periods of high precipitation and flooding; and

Whereas, the escape of these invasive fish species from confinement have allowed for self-sustaining reproducing populations to migrate through the Upper Mississippi and Illinois River systems with the potential to invade the Great Lakes given their close proximity to the Great Lakes with 22 rivers flowing into the lakes with suitable spawning habitat; and

Whereas, Asian carp threaten native fish and wildlife, including rare and endangered species, because of their rapid reproduction and growth patterns; opportunistic feeding habits in consuming primarily phytoplankton, as well as zooplankton, bacteria and detritus; and ability to degrade habitat through increased sediment suspension; and

Whereas, silver carp inhabiting the Mississippi and Illinois River systems cause substantial impacts to the health and welfare of human beings using these infested waterways primarily by their jumping habits in the vicinity of moving watercraft, causing injuries that include cuts from fins, black eyes, broken bones, back injuries and concussions; and

Whereas, populations of the silver and largescale silver carp, if introduced, are nearly impossible to control and ultimately eradicate, both technically and financially; and

Whereas, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service proposed a rule in September 2006 to list all forms of live silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*) and all forms of live largescale silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys harmandi*) as injurious wildlife species under the Lacey Act (18 U.S.C. 32); and

Whereas, this proposed ruling is expected to have a minimal economic impact given the low commercial value of silver carp species which are not favored by commercial fishers due to their jumping behavior and are generally considered undesirable by consumers and sport fishers due to their unpalatability; and

Whereas, the best available information indicates that this ruling is necessary to protect public health and safety, water quality, fish and wildlife and associated habitat from the purposeful or accidental introduction and subsequent establishment of silver carp and largescale silver carp populations in ecosystems of the United States; and



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Whereas, listing the silver carp and largescale silver carp as injurious under the Lacey Act would prohibit their importation and interstate transport unless permitted in certain exceptions or if the species is not living; and

Whereas, no final action has been taken on a proposal by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 2002 to list the black, bighead and silver carp as injurious species under the Lacey Act;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission supports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposal, or action by Congress, to list the silver carp and largescale silver carp as injurious species under the Lacey Act; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission encourages its member states to support the proposed Lacey Act listing of the silver carp and largescale silver carp in addition to supporting regulation of these species on a state specific basis; and

Be It Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to finalize the 2002 proposal to add the bighead carp (*Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*) and black carp (*Hypophthalmichthys piceus*) to the list of injurious wildlife under the Lacey Act and advises its member states to also support the expanded listing.

Adopted by the Great Lakes Commission at its Annual Meeting, October 4, 2006, in Duluth, Minn.

The Great Lakes Commission is a binational public agency dedicated to the use, management and protection of the water, land and other natural resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system.