
Adopted Feb. 28, 2012

Resolution: Advancing Solutions to Address the Threat to the Great Lakes From Asian Carp and Other Aquatic Invasive Species

Whereas, Asian carp pose an imminent threat to the Great Lakes ecosystem and economy because of their ability to reproduce rapidly and consume large quantities of food, potentially impacting local ecosystems, out-competing native fish species and impacting recreational fishing and boating; and

Whereas, if populations of Asian carp become established in the Great Lakes they will be difficult, if not impossible, to control or eradicate and thus the federal government has recognized Asian carp as “the most acute [aquatic invasive species] threat facing the Great Lakes today”; and

Whereas, monitoring continues to detect Asian carp DNA between the electric barriers on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and Lake Michigan and research by U.S. and Canadian fishery experts shows that there is a significant risk of Asian carp surviving, spreading and establishing populations in the Great Lakes, particularly in shallow, near-shore areas like Green Bay, Saginaw Bay, Lake St. Clair and Western Lake Erie; and

Whereas, extensive monitoring and control efforts over the last two years, led by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and its federal partners, including the removal of over 415 tons of Asian carp from the upper Illinois River waterway, are important interim control measures, while permanent, long-term solutions are pursued;

Whereas, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has identified 39 aquatic invasive species with a high risk of passing through the Chicago area waterway system into either the Great Lakes or Mississippi River basins that likely would have a moderate to severe impact on the basin being invaded; and

Whereas, the Corps of Engineers is conducting the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study to identify, characterize and propose solutions to prevent the interbasin exchange of aquatic invasive species – including Asian carp – between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative have completed the report, *Restoring the Natural Divide: Separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins in the Chicago Area Waterway System*, which presents three alternatives for separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds in the Chicago area waterway system to provide a long-term solution that prevents the transfer of Asian carp and other aquatic invasive species while maintaining or enhancing the system’s benefits for flood protection, water quality and waterborne transportation; and

Whereas, the costs of the least expensive of the three separation alternatives ranges from approximately \$3.2 billion to \$4.2 billion, depending on water quality treatment requirements, and could generate long-term savings of up to \$9.5 billion by preventing future AIS invasions with impacts similar to established aquatic invasive species, and additional improvements in water quality, recreation, flood protection and transportation.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission calls on the Corps of Engineers to take advantage of the engineering expertise acquired by the team preparing the GLC-Cities Initiative report to expedite their

investigation and implementation of permanent solutions to prevent the transfer of aquatic invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins with a focus on the Chicago area waterway system; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission calls for continued dialogue and collaboration among decisionmakers at all levels of government to advance plans for a future Chicago area waterway system that is clean, does not flood, moves goods and people efficiently, and prevents the spread of aquatic plants and animals between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins; and

Be It Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission urges Congress and the Administration to continue to provide funding support for strengthened monitoring, commercial fishing and control efforts for Asian carp and other invasive species while a long-term solution is designed and implemented.