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# A Great Lakes Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Species

## ADDENDUM

### **Vision**

We, the entities represented on the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, envision healthy aquatic ecosystems where new introductions of nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species are prevented, and adverse ecological and economic impacts of species already present are minimized.

### **Goals**

We recognize the threat posed by nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species and acknowledge our responsibility, both independently and collectively, to act promptly and decisively to attain three goals:

- 1) prevent the unauthorized introduction of nonindigenous aquatic species;
- 2) limit the spread of established aquatic nuisance species within the region; and
- 3) minimize the harmful ecological, economic, social and public health impacts resulting from aquatic nuisance species already present.

In addressing these interrelated goals, we agree to pursue a series of objectives and strategic actions detailed below under the headings of *Research and Monitoring*; *Research and Monitoring*; and *Information, Education and Collaboration*. Some are most appropriately addressed at the individual agency/organization level, while others will require action at the regional level.

## **Objectives and Strategic Actions**

### Management Programs

**Objective:** A prompt and authoritative mechanism to prevent new introductions and limit the spread of existing populations.

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Establish a regional decision making process at the multi-jurisdictional, basin-wide level for the purpose of establishing and implementing prevention and control policies and programs, including procedures for emergency response to new introductions.
- ? Promote development of comprehensive and consistent laws, regulations, policies and programs, where feasible, that provide jurisdictions with the authority needed for effective prevention and control.

**Objective:** Measures that reduce or eliminate the potential for future introductions of nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species.

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Determine the pathways and mechanisms through which nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species can be introduced.
- ? Characterize the hazards posed by each pathway by assessing the relative risk for introducing nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species into the wild.

- ? Identify nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species that have a high probability of introduction and develop associated prevention strategies.
- ? Use an integrated approach of education, policy, management and best available technologies to interrupt pathways of introduction.
- ? Establish ballast water standards and criteria and evaluate associated technologies and management practices that eliminate or minimize the risk of introduction and spread in an ecologically sound and economically responsible manner.
- ? Encourage the adoption of interim best management practices for ballast water by all commercial vessels operating in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system while concurrent short and long-term solutions are pursued.

**Objective: Measures that reduce or eliminate the spread of existing nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species into uncolonized waters.**

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Identify nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species that should be targeted for abatement strategies because they threaten public safety, human health, and ecological integrity.
- ? Develop and implement voluntary and regulatory control strategies, where appropriate.

**Objective: Research results are translated into effective guidance for policy makers, resource managers and other decision makers.**

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Develop and implement mechanisms that provide timely and effective communication between researchers, policy makers, resources managers and all affected parties.

**Objective: Basin jurisdictions that provide the resources required to develop and implement effective prevention and control programs.**

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Acknowledge aquatic nuisance species prevention and control as a management priority and allocate the staff and resources required for effective prevention and control programs.
- ? Provide needed support to the management effort, including laboratories, research vessels and related resources.

***Research and Monitoring***

**Objective: Strategies that eradicate or significantly reduce populations of targeted species.**

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Identify and assess the economic and ecological impacts associated with each species.
- ? Establish criteria (i.e., ecological, social, economic and public health) to evaluate current control strategies and guide the design and implementation of new ones.
- ? Provide technical, scientific and financial assistance for the implementation of control measures that meet accepted criteria.

**Objective:** A multijurisdictional research effort that is appropriately balanced between efforts to understand and control species already present and efforts to prevent new introductions.

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Establish a regional monitoring regime that provides early detection of new introductions and effectively determines the distribution and abundance of species already present.
- ? Inventory and assess current research efforts in multiple areas (i.e., Biology and Life History, Control and Mitigation, Ecosystem Effects, Prevention of Introduction, Socio-economic Considerations and Analysis, and Spread of Established Aquatic Nuisance Species Populations); identify unmet needs; and promote attention to them.

**Objective:** An adequately funded, multidisciplinary research effort that involves all relevant entities at the federal, state/provincial, tribal, regional and academic levels.

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Ensure adequate support for agencies, laboratories, grant programs and outreach efforts that conduct, manage or apply research related to nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species.
- ? Encourage academic institutions, foundations and other nongovernmental entities to support and participate in nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species research.
- ? Coordinate the collective research effort to avoid duplication of effort, address research priorities and communicate research results to policy makers and other stakeholders.

***Information, Education and Collaboration***

**Objective:** Government jurisdictions that collaborate on basin-wide prevention and control measures.

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Adopt comprehensive management plans that advance interjurisdictional cooperation and implementation through common goals and complementary prevention and control measures.
- ? Establish a process, through the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, for all relevant jurisdictions to periodically assess progress in plan implementation and promote interjurisdictional consistency and cooperation.
- ? Promote interjurisdictional arrangements, where appropriate, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of prevention and control programs addressing shared water resources.
- ? Participate in deliberations and actions at the national and international levels to ensure that Great Lakes management needs and priorities are considered in the development of any treaties, laws, policies and programs.
- ? Promote the use of prevention and control guidelines developed by the national Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force among resource user groups and other appropriate parties.

**Objective:** Nongovernmental organizations that accept and assume a partnership role with government and industry in prevention and control efforts.

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Promote the development and implementation of prevention and control strategies by each relevant sector of resource users, consistent with the comprehensive management plans adopted by relevant government jurisdictions.
- ? Promote the involvement of nongovernmental organizations in developing and implementing comprehensive management plans of relevant jurisdictions.

- ? Encourage partnership agreements and related mechanisms through which public agencies and nongovernmental organizations can jointly undertake research, outreach program design and implementation activities.

**Objective:** An informed public that adopts behaviors necessary for the prevention and control of nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species.

**Strategic Actions:**

- ? Raise awareness of the threat that nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species pose to ecological integrity, biological diversity and economic well being.
- ? Inform the public and key target audiences of actions to prevent new introductions and control existing populations.
- ? Secure the commitment of elected officials at all levels of government to strong prevention and control programs.
- ? Evaluate existing information/education programs to build on strengths and address weaknesses.
- ? Distribute and promote timely public access to information/education materials and activities that convey clear and regionally consistent messages.
- ? Provide opportunities for public involvement in policy and program development and implementation.

## Endorsed by the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species ~ Members ~

**States**

Illinois  
Indiana  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
New York  
Ohio  
Pennsylvania  
Wisconsin

**U.S. Federal**

National Park Service  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Coast Guard  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of State  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
U.S. Geological Survey

**Tribal**

Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission  
Chippewa/Ottawa Resource Authority

**Canadian Provincial**

Ontario  
Québec

**Canadian Federal**

Department of Fisheries and Oceans

**Binational**

Great Lakes Commission  
International Joint Commission

**University/Research**

Cooperative Institute for Limnology and Ecosystem Research  
Michigan Sea Grant College Program

**Regional Interests**

Council of Great Lakes Industries  
Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council  
Great Lakes United  
Lake Carriers' Association  
Ontario Hydro