

For immediate release

May 10, 2012

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Statement from the Great Lakes Commission on the Accelerated Release of Options for Keeping Asian Carp out of the Great Lakes

The Great Lakes Commission welcomes the recent decision by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that it would accelerate the presentation to Congress and the public of options for permanently preventing Asian carp from invading the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River watershed. The Corps has now committed to releasing a short list of proposed alternatives in 2013, rather than 2015 as previously planned.

“This is a step in the right direction that reflects the urgency needed to find a permanent solution that safeguards the Great Lakes from the threat posed by Asian carp,” said Marc Miller, director of the Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources and Great Lakes Commissioner. Noting that the leading edge of the carp invasion is only 55 miles from downtown Chicago, Miller added “it’s imperative that the region come together in support of a long-term solution to this threat as quickly as possible.”

In January the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative released a comprehensive report that presented three alternatives for permanently separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River in the Chicago area, where a series of rivers and canals creates an artificial connection between the two watersheds that is the most likely pathway for Asian carp – and other invasive species – to enter the Great Lakes.

“Our report shows that hydrologic separation is feasible, that it will effectively safeguard the Great Lakes from Asian carp migrating through Chicago’s waterway system and that it can be done while preserving the benefits of the waterway to northeast Illinois and northwest Indiana,” said Tim Eder, executive director of the Great Lakes Commission. “It’s critical that the Corps include

(more)

Great Lakes Commission

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hydrologic separation as one of the alternatives it presents to Congress and the public and that it be prepared to quickly implement the solution that best protects the Great Lakes.”

The study from the Great Lakes Commission and Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, Restoring the Natural Divide, is available online at <http://www.glc.org/caws/>.

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The Great Lakes Commission, chaired by James Tierney, assistant commissioner for water resources at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, is an interstate compact agency established under state and U.S. federal law and dedicated to promoting a strong economy, healthy environment and high quality of life for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region and its residents. The Commission consists of governors' appointees, state legislators, and agency officials from its eight member states. Associate membership for Ontario and Québec was established through the signing of a "Declaration of Partnership." The Commission maintains a formal Observer program involving U.S. and Canadian federal agencies, tribal authorities, binational agencies and other regional interests. The Commission offices are located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Learn more at www.glc.org.