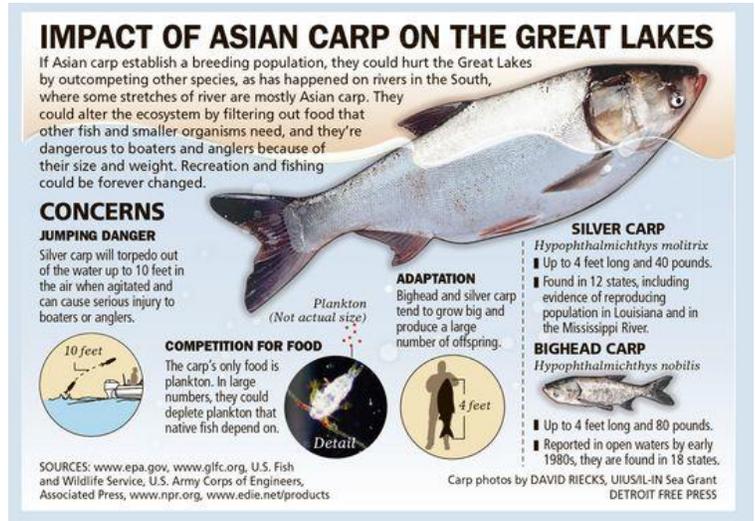


## Asian Carp

### What are Asian Carp?

Asian carp are an aquatic invasive species that deplete resources away from native aquatic species. They cause problems for human activity, both recreational and commercial, in waterways. The collective term “Asian Carp” refers to bighead carp, black carp, grass carp, and silver carp. These species were imported from Southeast Asia in the 1970’s to control weeds and parasites in aquatic farm and wastewater treatment plants, but their proliferation has led to problems in the Mississippi River and associated waterways.

Asian carp weigh between 30 and 40 pounds and can grow to up to 110 pounds. They feed on plankton, which is a key food source for many native fish. Asian carp have few predators, so populations grow quickly and are not significantly inhibited by natural predator-prey interactions.



### Asian Carp in the Great Lakes Region

As of February 2015, no detectable Asian carp have been found in the Great Lakes. However, Asian carp are found in the Illinois River, which is connected to the Great Lakes via the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. Asian carp pose a threat to the \$7 billion Great Lakes fishery industry because they proliferate rapidly while threatening ecosystem stability.

Asian carp also affect recreational waterway activities. Silver carp can leap up to 10 feet in the air when startled; this behavior poses a threat to humans and may damage watercraft on the Great Lakes.

### What is GLSLCI’s position on Asian Carp?

The Cities Initiative participates in the Chicago Area Waterway System Advisory Committee, which evaluates strategies for preventing Asian Carp from entering Lake Michigan via the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS). The committee includes the Great Lakes Commission, the Alliance for the Great Lakes, the Army Corps of Engineers, and additional government, non-government, and commercial stakeholders. The Cities Initiative endorses a physical barrier on the CAWS as the best solution to preventing Asian Carp from entering the Great Lakes system.

### What action is being taken on Asian Carp?

- The CAWS advisory committee meets quarterly to evaluate options for preventing Asian Carp from entering the Great Lakes.
- In February 2015, Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Representative Candice Miller (R-MI) introduced the “Defending Our Great Lakes Act,” which is a bi-cameral, bi-partisan piece of legislation that specifically targets action by the US Army Corps of Engineers on the Chicago Area Waterway System to prevent the proliferation Asian Carp and other Aquatic Invasive Species.

### Resources

Restoring the Natural Divide

GLMRIS

Statement of Unity

Resource: [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/us/bracing-for-carp-in-great-lakes-but-debating-their-presence.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/us/bracing-for-carp-in-great-lakes-but-debating-their-presence.html?_r=0)

GLFC press release from 2/25

### Tracking Asian Carp

eDNA

History of Asian Carp Action

Current Asian Carp Action

GLSLCI position on Asian Carp

Resources

### ASIAN CARP

[LINK TO 21ST CENTURY WATERWAY STUDY HOMEPAGE](#) (aka *Restoring the Natural Divide Initiatives page*)

[can this page become a fact sheet and a statement?]

[Statement of Unity](#)

[Additional Documents](#)

(Photo: T. Lawrence, GLFC)

What are Asian Carp?

### Press Release/Can be a fact sheet: February 2010

**(02/05/10)** The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative announced today that maintaining unity within the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence community is essential to prevent Asian carp from establishing populations in the largest freshwater resource in the world. The Cities Initiative Board of Directors has adopted a "Statement of Unity" that sets out key steps that need to be taken to protect the resource.

Cities Initiative Chairman George Heartwell, Mayor of Grand Rapids, MI, said, "This is a matter of utmost urgency and we need a united sense of purpose among the government partners and the stakeholder community that the Asian carp must be stopped dead in their tracks. There is no tomorrow when it comes to solving this problem."

The Cities Initiative outlines key steps in the short, mid, and long term that need to be taken. In the short term in 2010, much more comprehensive surveillance and monitoring is essential immediately to know where the Asian carp are, how

## Fact Sheets

many of them are there, and where they are going. With that information available, the authorities can make much better decisions about what type of actions are necessary for what numbers of fish in what locations. While this is being done, continued operation of the electronic barrier at optimum levels, construction of flood protection, additional chemical treatment, and other possible steps must be taken or readily available.

Moving from the short term to the mid- term in 2011 and 2012, there must be an expedited study for long term solutions, including separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi watersheds in a way that prevents fish and plant life from moving between the two basins. Upon completion of those studies, there must be full and timely implementation of the solutions in 2013 and beyond, and the funding to make it happen.

David Ullrich, Executive Director of the Cities Initiative, said, "Mayors from across the basin are prepared to work with all partners to come up with the best solutions and make them a reality so the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence are protected. The quality of life and economic well-being of our people are determined by the resource, and we owe it to ourselves and future generations to keep the Asian carp out."

Statement: February 2010

### Statement of Unity

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative joins the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence community in a united commitment to keep Asian carp from establishing populations in the lakes or river. The most immediate threat is in the Chicago Waterway System (CWS). There have been extensive efforts at the Federal, state, and local levels, with strong support from stakeholders, to prevent the Asian carp from moving toward Lake Michigan. However, there is evidence that our efforts to date have not been aggressive enough, and some carp have reached the Lake already. An all out effort to block the further passage of the Asian carp is needed immediately in pursuit of a goal of zero Asian carp north of the electric barriers. This includes actions, plans, studies, and other steps in the short, mid, and long term. Effective coordination among government parties, transparency with stakeholders, and opportunity for public involvement are essential for success.

### Short Term (2010)

1. Comprehensive surveillance and monitoring to track the Asian carp, including eDNA testing, netting and electro-fishing to support management decisions
2. Adopt and implement a Contingency Plan with clear triggers for action and resources to implement, especially to restrict the further movement of Asian carp
3. Operation of the electronic barrier at optimal capacity and completion of Barrier IIB
4. Implement recommendations of the Efficacy Study, including measures for flood bypass protection
5. Identify and obtain appropriate funding sources, including GLRI, WRDA, and others
6. Clarify or expand Federal and state authorities so that agencies have the ability to act to implement the plans and studies developed, (especially so the Corps can proceed without a conflict with their navigational responsibilities)
7. Begin independent, collaborative studies to investigate long term sustainable solutions to prevent the movement of invasive species between the basins and address intermodal transportation and water management challenges for the greater Chicago region.

### Mid Term (2011-2012)

1. Expedited Corps of Engineers Feasibility Study for long term solutions with the Chicago Waterway phase of the study to be completed no later than September 30, 2011
2. Complete independent, collaborative studies to investigate long term actions to address economic, transportation, water management, and related issues that would arise from ecological separation of the Chicago Waterway System.
3. Begin implementation of long-term sustainable solutions, including those recommended by the feasibility study.
4. Identify appropriate funding sources, including GLRI, WRDA, and others

### Long Term (2013 and beyond)

1. Fully fund and complete implementation of long-term, sustainable solutions, including those recommended by the

Sources : Restoring the Natural Divide, GLMRIS, Statement of Unity, [Asian Carp in the Great Lakes \(NYT\)](#), GLFC Press Release from 2/25/15



## Fact Sheets

feasibility study, to prevent the movement of invasive species between the basins and address transportation and water management needs for greater Chicago.

Most parties concur that the best long-term solution for the health of both the Mississippi River and Great Lakes watersheds is ecological separation. However, the Chicago region's uses of local waterways—for storm and wastewater, transportation of commercial goods, recreation and emergency response—have evolved over decades and are complex. The search for long-term sustainable solutions must start with a unified, immediate, and significant commitment of resources and to an aggressive timetable. The collaborative development of long-term solutions that will benefit all stakeholders must follow very shortly after.

This statement addresses the most significant and immediate avenue for Asian carp to enter the Great Lakes. Additional actions are needed to prevent Asian carp and other invasive species from entering the lakes from other sources including ballast water, live trade, and other interbasin linkages.

### Resources

#### **Additional Documents and Articles of Interest on Asian Carp:**

The Guardian (UK) - "[Terminator Carp Threatens Great Lakes](#)"

New York Times - "[Fight Against Asian Carp Threatens Fragile Great Lakes Unity](#)"

Mayor George Heartwell's [Testimony](#) on Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework

Great Lakes Commission- Resolution: [Actions to Address the Threat to the Great Lakes from Asian Carp](#) (February 23, 2010)