Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus

2018 Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus

Erie, Pennsylvania
September 21-22, 2018

Resolution of Support for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in its Efforts to Stop Asian Carp from Invading the Great Lakes and Support for Federal Funding of those Efforts

WHEREAS, the Chicago Area Waterway System serves as a pathway for aquatic invasive species to move between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River Basins. Zebra mussels spread from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River and its tributaries through this man-made connection. Now, Asian carp – an invasive species that has been found in the Chicago Area Waterway System – are on the brink of using this same route to invade the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River Basin; and

WHEREAS, Asian carp pose a significant threat to the Great Lakes because they are very large, extremely prolific, and consume vast amounts of food. Because of those characteristics, many native species would be threatened if Asian carp entered the Great Lakes ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of Asian carp to the ecosystems and the economies of the Great Lakes states, provinces, and local communities would be catastrophic. Invasive species established in the Great Lakes already cost the region more than $100 million per year. Asian carp could add dramatically to this cost by threatening the region's annual $7 billion sport and commercial fishing industry and $16 billion recreational boating industry; and

WHEREAS, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has erected an electric barrier in the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal to prevent Asian carp from reaching the Great Lakes. However, multiple studies have shown that the electric barrier is not completely effective at stopping all the fish; and

WHEREAS, the Army Corps, under its existing Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) authorization, is investigating additional structural control technologies, including an Aquatic Invasive Species Treatment Lock, to prevent long-term movement of aquatic invasive species into and out of the Great Lakes; and

WHEREAS, as part of GLMRIS, the Army Corps is in the process of completing the Brandon Road Study. The draft study tentatively recommends a plan to implement structural control technologies at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet, Illinois; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus supports all of the following:

- The United States Army Corps of Engineers' timely completion of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) – Brandon Road Study, culminating in a report not later than January 2019;
- The Army Corps, under its existing GLMRIS authorization, in its investigation into additional structural control technologies, including an Aquatic Invasive Species Treatment Lock, to prevent long-term movement of aquatic invasive species into and out of the Great Lakes;
- Congressional authorization of full federal funding for the GLMRIS – Brandon Road tentative plan to implement structural control technologies at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet, Illinois; and
- Federal Funds to continue to expand monitoring and harvesting efforts to diminish the Asian carp population below Brandon Road Lock and Dam; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted to the President of the United States, the President Pro Tempore and the Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and the Commanding General and Chief of Engineers of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Adopted on September 22, 2018.