



July 26, 2017

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 65
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Commission Members:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to urge the Commission to recommend for funding a project that will help protect the Upper Mississippi River and its tributaries from the further spread of invasive carp.

As you know, invasive carp pose a serious threat to the native fish species and ecosystem in the Mississippi, Minnesota and St. Croix Rivers, and we continue to capture these fish in our waters. Most recently, the largest invasive carp recorded in the state was caught in the Minnesota River, and earlier this year, the first silver carp in the St. Croix River was captured. We know these invasive fish continue their march upstream and that once established there are no management actions. It is critical that we continue to take action to protect the waters in our state.

We urge the Commission to recommend the following proposal for funding:

1. PROJECT TITLE: An effective and practical invasive carp deterrent

Dr. Peter Sorensen has spent years researching and identifying the vulnerabilities of invasive carp. He has developed a three-part approach to reduce upstream movement of invasive carp by utilizing the existing locks and dams on the Mississippi River. The economic cost is low compared to the economic threat, and there would be no known effect on navigation, commerce or fishing.

This approach has three essential components: 1) adjust spillway gate operations at locks and dams to create rapid, balanced flows that invasive carp cannot swim against and that do not harm dam structures; 2) block carp passage through the navigation locks using a specially-designed sound system with aversive sounds that invasive carp are sensitive to; and 3) protect native predator populations that could consume any young carp that may be produced.

The proposal before you would fund all parts of this timely and leading approach needed to protect our waters. Data shows that if all three techniques were implemented at Lock and Dams #5 and #8 and function as predicted, overall carp blockage will exceed 99%. Importantly, the US Fish and Wildlife service is a partner in this project while the US Army Corp of Engineers has also pledged to collaborate and consider all actions. This would bring a several million dollar LCCMR project to fruition and serve as the first known success in our battle to stop an aquatic invasive species in our state.

In sum, this project has genuine potential to protect the Minnesota, Upper Mississippi and St. Croix rivers and their invaluable fisheries from invasive carp for many decades. We strongly urge you to advance this proposal for funding.

We appreciate your dedication and thoughtful deliberation as you review proposals, and thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,
Stop Carp Coalition

Cc:
Governor Dayton
Commissioner Landwehr
Legacy Finance Chairs: Senator Ruud and Representative Urdahl
ENR Finance Chairs: Senator Ingebrigtsen and Representative Fabian

Coalition Members:

Christine Goepfert, Senior Program Manager, National Parks Conservation Association
Rick Chapman, Midwest Marina Association and Minnesota Clean Marina Program
Deb Ryun, Executive Director, St. Croix River Association
Whitney Clark, Executive Director, Friends of the Mississippi River
Gary Botzek, Executive Director, Minnesota Conservation Federation
Steve Schultz, Water Program Coordinator, Clean Water Action of Minnesota
Katie Nyberg, Executive Director, Mississippi Parks Connection
Linda Peck, Conservation Chair, Central MN Audubon Society
John Crampton, President, Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America
Kevin ChapdeLaine, President, Board of Directors, Friends of Pool 2
Jeff Forester, Executive Director, MN Lakes and Rivers Advocates
Marc Smith, Regional Conservation Director, National Wildlife Federation