



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 8, 2012

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Obama Administration to Present Asian Carp Control Options by 2013

As part of the Obama Administration's commitment to protecting the Great Lakes from Asian carp and other invasive species, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced today that it will provide Congress and the public the opportunity to identify a potential permanent Asian carp solution in 2013, much earlier than expected.

With this important new step under its Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study, the Corps will release in late 2013 an assessment of the best options for keeping Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, including the preliminary estimated costs and mitigation requirements for each option. Congress requested this information in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, which directed the Corps to evaluate the options and technologies available to prevent aquatic nuisance species such as Asian carp from transferring between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. This report will allow for public and Congressional input on which options merit more detailed project design.

"The Army Corps of Engineers understands and appreciates the importance of continuing with GLMRIS, and preventing aquatic invasive species from reaching the Great Lakes," said Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. "This optimized schedule will allow for public engagement earlier and collaboration with Congress to determine viable alternatives."

"This 2013 report will provide us with an assessment of the best options for keeping Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, as Congress requested in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007," said John Goss, Asian Carp Director at the White House Council on Environmental Quality. "This new step will result in a more focused path forward that could mean faster implementation of a permanent solution for protecting our Great Lakes from Asian carp."

The Army Corps already has developed a number of interim GLMRIS products, including an Aquatic Nuisance Species Control Paper that identified 90 control technologies available to prevent 39 invasive species of concern from transferring through the aquatic pathways in the Chicago Area Waterway System. The Army Corps also has identified 18 other potential pathways for invasive species transfer throughout the Great Lakes region, along the entire basin divide, which already has resulted in action to close off Asian carp pathways of concern.

While the Army Corps undertakes GLMRIS, the Obama Administration has invested more than \$150 million to protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp, and formed an Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC) in 2009 to ensure a comprehensive and effective response. Ongoing efforts of the ACRCC include aggressive tracking, monitoring and removal of Asian carp; strengthening the electric dispersal barriers in the Chicago Area Waterways System to prevent Asian carp from reaching Lake Michigan; and developing new technologies to control the abundance and distribution of Asian carp.

Led by the White House Council on Environmental Quality, the ACRCC includes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, and all Great Lakes states, as well as the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, and the City of Chicago.

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