



MUCC's Camo Coalition

Arming you with the knowledge to protect Michigan's natural resources

Take Action: Fund the Asian Carp Barrier

URGE CONGRESS TO PROTECT GREAT LAKES FROM MONSTER FISH

05/25/06

Problem : An electric barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal being built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is out of money and urgently needs \$400,000 to keep Asian carp *which could destroy the \$4 Billion Great Lakes fishery* - out of the Great Lakes .

Senators Voinovich (R-OH) and Obama (D-IL) were able to pass an amendment to the Senate's version of an emergency spending bill that will authorize the Corps of Engineers to spend \$400,000 in 2006 to maintain the Asian carp barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. Some congressional leaders are saying that the emergency spending bill should be for defense and hurricane Katrina related projects only. It is our job to show Congress that keeping Asian carp from destroying the Great Lakes is an emergency and must be in this bill.

Solution : This amendment is a critical first step to keeping the Asian carp out of the Great Lakes and we now must push for it to survive a House / Senate conference committee. Unfortunately this is only a temporary solution. We still need funding for 2007 and beyond to make the barrier permanent and for its operation and maintenance. MUCC will keep you apprised of new actions as they arise.

ACTION 1: If you are a constituent of Congressman Joe Knollenberg please fax him a letter or call him as soon as possible. You can use the points below for your letter and the phone call. Phone: 202-225-5802. Fax: 202-226-2356. If you are not a constituent of

Congressman Joe Knollenberg please take **ACTION 2** :

- Please retain the Senate amendment that provides \$400,000 for the Asian carp barrier system to keep Asian carp from destroying the Great Lakes fishery.
- This amendment does not add any cost to the emergency supplemental appropriations bill (HR 4939).
- This funding is fully offset within existing fiscal year 2006 Army Corps of Engineers funds.
- The amendment comes at a critical time. The Army Corps needs the resources to continue operating the demonstration barrier while Congress considers permanent authorizations for operating and maintaining this critical system.

ACTION 2: Congresswoman Biggert (D-IL) is circulating a dear colleague letter to the members of the conference committee asking them to fund the Asian carp barrier. Please contact your member of Congress and ask them to sign on to this dear colleague letter.

Thus far, the following members of Congress have signed the letter: Kirk, Ehlers, Slaughter, Dingell, Green (WI), Oberstar, Emanuel, Kildee, Gutierrez, Levin, Brown (OH), Miller (MI), Lipinski, Ryan (OH), Bean, Schwarz, Baldwin , Souder, Kucinich, Petri, Schakowsky

Background: Asian carp pose a significant threat to the Great Lakes by disrupting the food chain that supports the native fish of the Great Lakes . Due to their large size, ravenous appetites, and rapid rate of reproduction, the Asian carp could become the dominant species in the Great Lakes . Such an invasion would put a \$4.1 billion sport and commercial fishing industry critical to the Great Lakes region at risk.

Currently, a barrier system is being completed in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, which connects that Mississippi River basin with the Great Lakes system. Barrier I is currently operating. Barrier II is under construction and will hopefully be finished and tested soon. Congress has never permanently authorized the system and it continues to face challenges in finding the funding needed to continue operations.

Bills are pending in Congress that would authorize the barrier system. The Great Lakes Collaboration Implementation Act (HR 5100/S 2545) contains an authorization provision. The Senate Water Resources Development Act would also authorize the operation of the barrier system.