



GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION



INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

News Release

For Immediate Release

January 18, 2005

Contacts: Marc Gaden, GLFC Ann Arbor MI: (734) 662-3209 x. 14

John Nevin, IJC Ann Arbor, MI: (734) 741-2118

IJC AND GLFC PRAISE SPORT FISHERS FOR COLLECTING FUNDS FOR CHICAGO-AREA INVASIVE SPECIES BARRIER

Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council joins Members of Congress, federal agencies, and state governors in raising badly needed dollars for project.

ANN ARBOR, MI—The International Joint Commission (IJC) and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) today praised the sport anglers of the Great Lakes—led by the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council—for raising private funds to supplement the construction of the Chicago-area invasive species barrier. The barrier is designed to block the migration of harmful fish species—including the destructive Asian carp—from the Mississippi River into the Great Lakes. While federal and state funds have been provided for this critical project, the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council has also been raising funds to improve the barrier and to make up for unforeseen funding shortfalls. **Those wishing to contribute to the barrier project can make a donation on-line at www.great-lakes.org/carp.**

The Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal artificially connects the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River (via the Illinois River). The canal is a prime corridor for the transmigration of species between the two systems. Without an effective barrier on the canal, Asian carp (among other invaders) would have a

clear path to the Great Lakes. It is feared that the Asian carp would spread throughout the basin, compete directly with sport and commercial fish in the Great Lakes, and wreak havoc on the \$4 billion fishery.

Recent federal legislation—authored by Senators Mike DeWine (OH), George Voinovich (OH), and Carl Levin (MI), and Representatives Judy Biggert (IL) and David Hobson (OH)—authorized the Army Corps of Engineers to begin construction of the barrier. The legislation, which requires a non-federal partner, prompted all of the Great Lakes states to join with the State of Illinois (which had already committed funds) in providing the non-federal contribution to the project. The Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council has also been receiving monetary donations from citizens and anglers.

“We must do everything possible to stop the introduction of aquatic invasive species into the Great Lakes,” said Dennis Schornack, U.S. Chair of the International Joint Commission. “Aquatic invasive species have the potential to destroy the environment and cause significant economic harm to the people of the region. The barrier on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal is badly needed.”

“The GLFC and the IJC are particularly pleased that the anglers of the basin have taken an active interest in this project,” added Bernard Hansen, U.S. Chair of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. “Through a special website set up by the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council [www.great-lakes.org/carp], citizens and anglers can help. We urge anyone who is interested in this project to visit the website, learn more about this critical issue, and to become involved.”

The IJC is a binational agency established by the *Boundary Waters Treaty* of 1909 to prevent and resolve disputes between the U.S. and Canada regarding the conservation and management of transboundary water resources. The GLFC is a binational agency established by the 1954 *Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries* to coordinate fisheries research, control sea lampreys, and facilitate interjurisdictional cooperation. Information about the IJC and the GLFC is available online at www.ijc.org and www.glfc.org, respectively.