



Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee

City of Chicago

Great Lakes Interagency
Task Force

Illinois Department of
Natural Resources

Metropolitan Water
Reclamation District

U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers *

U.S. Coast Guard *

U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency *

U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service *

U.S. Geological Survey *

Great Lakes Fishery
Commission

White House Council on
Environmental Quality

** Member, Great Lakes
Inter-Agency Task Force*

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Field Crews Announce February - March Sampling Results in Chicago Area Waterway System

CHICAGO- Over the last six weeks, field crews from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers intensively sampled throughout the entire Chicago Area Waterway System and no Asian carp were observed or collected. A total of 25 biologists have been involved in the effort that began on February 16, which has included sampling with both electrofishing and nets. A commercial fishing vessel supplemented the netting effort.

A team of fisheries and invasive species experts are currently developing a longer term monitoring plan to outline continued sampling/monitoring efforts over the next three months as part of the larger Asian Carp Control plan that includes both short and long term actions.

“It is critical that we have a better understanding of where Asian carp are in the Chicago Area Waterway System and a better idea of population size so we can better assess the risks to the Great Lakes. That’s why this monitoring effort is so important,” said John Rogner, Assistant Director of the Illinois DNR.

“Intensifying our sampling and monitoring efforts in high-risk areas for Asian carp provides us with critical data on population dynamics, potential range expansion and movement of the species,” said Charlie Wooley, Deputy Regional Director of the Service. “The Service will continue to support monitoring efforts in coordination with Illinois DNR crews to ensure we cover as much area as possible this field season.”

Field crews set approximately 5.6 miles of net and sampled for a total of 60 hours using electrofishing gear in the main channels, barge slips, marinas and other off-channel areas. Species collected in highest abundance were common carp (1,000) and gizzard shad (+1,000). Other species observed or collected included bluntnose minnow, drum, pumpkinseed sunfish, largemouth bass, northern pike, channel catfish, yellow perch, green sunfish and yellow bullhead. All fish collected were returned to the channel.

Early sampling efforts were coordinated around warm water discharge areas in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC), Des Plaines River, Little Calumet River, South Branch Chicago River and Cal-Sag Channel. Warm water discharge areas were targeted due to the tendencies of fish to congregate in warm water areas during colder temperatures.

In order to validate the sampling techniques upstream, field crews also sampled in areas far below the electric barrier where Asian carp populations are present. IDNR biologists recovered 36 Silver carp and four Bighead carp near Starved Rock Lock and Dam-approximately 70 miles downstream from the electric barrier. Field crews expanded the search for Asian carp as ice receded from the waterways and water temperature rose.

The Regional Coordinating Committee is developing a three month monitoring plan to extend sampling efforts through the field season.

The Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee includes representatives from the City of Chicago, Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Great Lakes Fishery Commission and White House Council of Environmental Quality.

These partners are working to address the threat Asian carp pose to the Great Lakes through the development and implementation of the Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework. The Framework, which is guided by the latest scientific research, encompasses over 32 short and long term actions and \$78.5M in investments to combat the spread of Asian carp. For a full copy of the framework go to: www.asiancarp.org