

Webinar Showcases Actions to Keep Asian Carp Out of the Great Lakes

A multi-prong action plan featuring more than 50 monitoring, control and research projects coordinated by a binational partnership of federal, state/provincial and tribal agencies continues to safeguard the Great Lakes from Asian carp. Meanwhile, a gauntlet of new control technologies is being developed for a key "pinch point" near Chicago.

An October 22 webinar presented by the Cities Initiative showcased these and other activities underway to prevent Asian carp from invading the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. The leading edge of the carp population, located approximately 47 miles from Lake Michigan southwest of Chicago, has remained stable for several years thanks to aggressive commercial fishing and monitoring efforts. New control technologies are being developed, electric barriers in the Chicago Area Waterway System have been expanded, and several connections between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds are being closed.

Finally, the long-awaited plan to deploy control technologies at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam is poised to move into the design phase. The state of Illinois and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are finalizing an agreement for the state to serve as the non-federal sponsor, and Congress is expected to formally authorize the project this year. Illinois and Michigan are providing $2.5 million and $8 million, respectively, as cost-share for the 3-4 year design process, with construction expected to require 6-8 years.

Safeguarding the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River from Asian carp is a longstanding priority for the Cities Initiative, which will continue to push for aggressive actions and long-term solutions to prevent the movement of harmful aquatic invasive species into our region. The webinar recording and presentations are posted on the Cities Initiative's website.