

2011 Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework
Obama Administration Continues its Proactive Battle against Asian Carp

On December 16, 2010, the Obama Administration released the 2011 Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework, outlining a series of new projects to build on the unprecedented, proactive efforts made under the 2010 framework to protect the Great Lakes from invasive species. This updated Framework outlines 45 action items in an aggressive, multi-tiered strategy to keep Asian carp from establishing self-sustaining populations in the Great Lakes.

Asian Carp and the Great Lakes

The migration of Asian carp through the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS), Wabash River, and Grand Calumet River is one of the most serious invasive species threats facing the Great Lakes today. Asian carp have left a trail of destruction in the Mississippi River system that has harmed the ecosystem, economy, and recreational and commercial boaters. Now, this invasive species is threatening to enter the Great Lakes, the world's largest surface freshwater resource, potentially causing ecological and economic harm to the multi-billion dollar per year commercial and recreational fishing industry, among others.

In February 2010, the Obama Administration announced the Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework, which invested \$78M to combat the spread of Asian carp into the Great Lakes. The scale of the effort described in the Framework was unprecedented for invasive species control, unifying Federal, state, and local action, employing a comprehensive approach to combat against a self-sustaining Asian carp population, and developing longer term biological controls.

The original Framework, updated in May 2010, established the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC) consisting of the Army Corps of Engineers, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard and other relevant agencies to synchronize the Federal response to Asian carp. In September 2010, the Administration announced an Asian Carp Director, based at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, to coordinate and unify the Federal, state, and local responses to Asian carp. In November 2010, each Great Lakes Governor appointed a state representative to serve on the ACRCC to continue this coordinated strategy.

The Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework

The Framework included 32 Federally-funded initiatives in 2010, all of which have been completed or are underway. The 2011 Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework adds 13 new projects for a total of 45 actions to prevent Asian carp from establishing self-sustaining populations in the Great Lakes.

Key accomplishments in 2010 in response to the Asian Carp threat include:

- Enhanced the fish barrier system to include strengthened electric barriers, physical barricades to stop carp migration during floods, and closed off smaller waterway connections to the Great Lakes.
- Constructed a third electric fish barrier in the Chicago Waterway for extra protection in the primary path of concern for carp migration into Lake Michigan.
- Established Asiancarp.org to provide up-to-date information about Asian Carp efforts.
- Utilized emergency authority provided through Section 126 of Energy and Water Development Act of 2010 to block flood waters from the Des Plaines River with a 13-mile fish barrier and a permanent block in the Illinois and Michigan Canal to keep Asian carp from crossing into the Chicago Waterway.
- Installed a 1,500 foot fish barrier fence at Eagle Marsh, near Fort Wayne, IN, to block advancement of Asian carp from the Wabash to the Maumee and Lake Erie.
- Identified 18 other potential pathways at risk across all the Great Lakes states for the potential transfer of aquatic invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins

- Began implementing the Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act following the President's signing of the bill on December 14, 2010. This legislation prohibits live bighead carp from being shipped or imported into the United States.
- Coordinated Federal agencies to deploy larger field crews to conduct electro shock and netting operations, and increased eDNA testing capacity to 120 samples a week.
- Increased collaboration across all levels of government by integrating the Great Lakes states into the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee and our Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework actions.

New projects in the 2011 Framework include:

- Validation of eDNA as an effective tool for monitoring and tracking Asian Carp through analysis and refinement of the eDNA processes to determine the number and distribution of positive detections of Asian carp .
- Development of eDNA genetic markers to more accurately and efficiently detect Asian carp concentrations.
- Expansion the USFWS lab in LaCrosse, WI to increase capacity of eDNA testing in all of the Great Lakes.
- Development of alternate trap and net designs for Asian carp.
- Development of rapid genetic-based methods to detect Asian carp to allow for faster results than eDNA.
- Evaluation of the affect of removing Asian carp food sources by reducing phosphorus and nitrogen from waste water treatment plant discharges into the CAWS/Upper Illinois Watershed.
- Assessment of the impact of steel hulled barges on the electric barriers.
- Evaluation of a permanent separation between the Wabash-Maumee watersheds.

Key ongoing projects include:

- Continuation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS), including study of aquatic nuisance species controls and hydrologic separation of the basins.
- Development of permanent blockages for aquatic invasive species pathways throughout the Great Lakes states.
- Evaluation of electric barrier effectiveness through fish tagging and utilization of sonar equipment.
- Deployment of an enhanced, more efficient system to monitor, sample and capture Asian carp.
- Enforcement of carp inspections at bait shops, fish processors, fish markets and retail food establishments.
- Enabling American commercial fisherman to develop markets for Asian carp, reducing Asian carp population in the Illinois River and creating jobs.
- Public engagement through outreach and enforcement.
- Collaboration with stakeholders groups, commercial fishermen, industry and recreational boaters to mitigate the damage Asian carp inflict upon waterway users.
- Investment of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds in research and development of long term fish management strategies for Asian carp, eDNA sampling, and habitability assessments.
- Improvement of hydro gun techniques to herd or eradicate and test as a barrier when locks are opened.
- Development of biological interference to reduce Asian carp breeding.
- Establishment and continual updating of www.asiancarp.org as a comprehensive source for information about Asian carp activities.

Next Steps

Federal agencies will continue to work together and in collaboration with state and local agencies in this unprecedented proactive strategy to protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp. The Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework is a flexible plan, allowing for new partners or new actions to be added as appropriate.