

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

4/18/2013

The Honorable Michael K. Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Moran:

As you craft the Fiscal Year 2014 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you provide robust funding to support efforts, by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and specifically the Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Conservation programs, to address the impact of Asian carp and their threat to commercial and recreational fishing in our national waters.

Aside from a beloved pastime, fishing's contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product is \$61.7 Billion annually. Anglers support 828,133 American jobs. This economic sector is under threat by a species of fish imported in the 1970s to clean aquaculture ponds. In the wake of flooding, Asian carp escaped confinement and began their march Northward up the Mississippi River, establishing populations and pushing out native species along the way. They branched off into the nation's mighty rivers, including the Ohio, Illinois and Missouri Rivers and tributaries. Because of their rate of breeding and extreme adaptability, Asian carp has the potential to inhabit every aquatic region in the Lower 48 states.

To date we have taken a primarily defensive approach to the problem; focusing on closing pathways adjacent to the Great Lakes. This is a laudable goal and our efforts toward it should be maintained. With that said, for the majority of geographic areas affected by carp, lock closure is not a viable option because transportation of freight up and down the river is at the heart of our economies. We must adjust our approach to this economic reality.

Rather than reactive, we should adapt an aggressive posture towards the problem. Adequate funding for the USFWS is necessary in order to perform two complimentary actions. First, funding is necessary to extend the effectiveness of the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC). The ACRCC needs the flexibility to expand their focus outside of the Great Lakes geographic region and apply the lessons they have learned, along with best practices, to the river basins surrounding the Great Lakes.

Second, the USFWS needs the necessary resources to update and implement, in coordination with the US Geological Survey, National Park Services and Army Corp of Engineers, their 2007 Management and Control Plan for Bighead, Black, Grass, and Silver Carps in the United States. The plan called for a broad-based basin wide approach. It would prevent future unauthorized introductions, control expansion of current populations and reduce to levels of insignificant effect feral populations of Bighead, Black, Grass and Silver carp. By UFWS estimates, the plan would cost \$14 million per year over 20 years to implement in an effort to maintain, and promote, fishing's status as a \$61.7 billion industry.

As members whose constituencies are adversely affected by carp migration, we view this as a good investment and appreciate your consideration of our request.

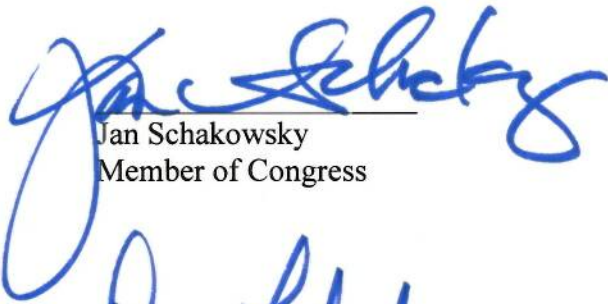
Sincerely,



Tim Walz
Member of Congress



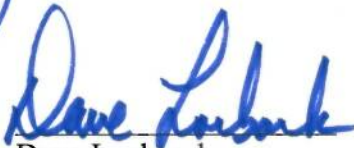
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
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