



Asian Carp: A Shared Threat Ontario's Response

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Overview of Ontario's Great Lakes Fishery

- ❑ In 2005:
 - direct recreational fishery expenditures amounted to \$215 million Canadian
 - expenditures of \$228 million Canadian related to the purchase of other items connected to the recreational fishery
- ❑ approximate gross value of the commercial fishery in the Great Lakes in Ontario varies from \$180 to \$215 million Canadian per year
 - 80% of that value lies in Lake Erie

Early Years

- ❑ Scoping the Threat:
 - At least 5 bighead carp have been captured in Lake Erie between 1995-2003
 - A few grass carp captured in GL watersheds
 - No evidence of reproduction
 - In 2004, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) completed a national risk assessment, and determined that the main pathway for Asian Carp (from *within* Canada) was the live food fishery
- ❑ Taking Action:
 - In 2005 banned the possession and sale of some live invasive fish species including the 4 Asian carp species as well as others (snakehead and goby)

Enforcement

- ❑ Enforcement of the ban on live Asian Carp is a high priority
 - Consists of 3 main activities: education, inspection and enforcement
 - Handing out written materials in English, Mandarin and Cantonese at the retail and wholesale outlets
 - In 2009 - 141 market and 58 wholesaler inspections
 - Since 2004 16 charges laid
 - Non compliance rate has been relatively low
 - Recent seizure at the border indicates the threat from the live food fish trade is still high

An International Concern

- ❑ The potential spread of Asian carp between the two watersheds is not purely a U.S. domestic issue
- ❑ Ontario participated (staff and funding) via DFO in international collaboration in the application of rotenone in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC)
- ❑ Ontario submitted a brief (amicus curiae) to the U.S. Supreme Court supporting Michigan's motion for a preliminary injunction
- ❑ Ontario sent a "concerns" letter to Michigan and it was included as part of their testimony at the House of Representatives subcommittee hearings on February 9th
- ❑ MNR continues to work together with Canada and U.S. federal and state agencies to slow the spread of all aquatic invasive species through sharing of information, science and participation on bi-national forums

Current Activities

□ Emergency Preparedness:

- Informed by similar initiatives in other jurisdictions including Pennsylvania and Illinois, MNR will be working with our provincial and federal partners on a “table top” exercise to test our state of readiness for a confirmed case of Asian carp in the Ontario waters of the Great Lakes.
 - Have hosted a multi-agency workshop to identify gaps and barriers
 - Will be hosting a table top exercise later in the fall which will focus on multi-agency coordination, jurisdictional authority as well as a review of current policy, legislation and procedures
- Participated in the development of the IJC Rapid Response Framework
- Developing a Invasive Species Action Plan as a framework for Invasive species
- Federal government’s recent investment in a Great Lakes basin wide risk assessment on Asian carp

□ Gaps:

- There is a need for more regional or localized risk assessment capabilities
- There is a need for stronger and more targeted legislation on invasives

Next Steps

- ❑ Take action on the outcome of the table top exercise by eliminating:
 - Identified gaps in policy/procedures and legislation/regulations
 - Identified barriers to rapid response action (eradication/control) and identify options to effectively remove those barriers within jurisdictions
- ❑ MNR continues to support the DFO initiative for enhanced monitoring
- ❑ Ontario will continue to work with our Federal and United States agency colleagues and learn together.
- ❑ Can not lose sight of the threats from other invasive species and the vectors or pathways that may allow them to enter our environment