



Talking Points on the Risk of Asian Carp in the Great Lakes

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- Bighead carp have been found recently both below (in December 2009; Moy et al. 2011) and above (in Lake Calumet in summer 2010) the electric dispersal barriers in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.
- Environmental DNA samples have collected both bighead carp and silver carp DNA above the electric dispersal barriers since 2009 (Jerde et al. 2011 and <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/AsianCarp/2011results.pdf>). Although collection of bighead carp and silver carp DNA in the CAWS does not necessarily indicate this DNA came from live fish, the most parsimonious explanation for the DNA is live fish (Jerde et al. 2011).
- The environmental suitability of the Great Lakes for bighead carp and silver carp is very high (Herborg et al. 2007). Neither species of carp appears limited by cold temperatures in the latitude of the Great Lakes for survival.
- Recent models of food consumption by bighead and silver carp indicate that some areas of the Great Lakes have sufficient food to support populations of these fish (Cook and Hill 2010). Regions of particular risk include Green Bay and western Lake Erie.
- At least three live bighead carp have been captured from Lake Erie (Cudmore and Mandrak 2011). These fish were large, in good condition, and growing quickly based on ageing structures (Morrison et al. 2004).
- At least 22 tributaries in U. S. waters of the Great Lakes basin are potentially suitable for spawning by Asian carp (Kolar et al. 2007). A recent analysis of U. S. tributaries to Lake Erie indicates that the Maumee, Sandusky, and Grand rivers are most likely to support successful spawning of bighead, silver, and grass carps (Kokovsky et al. 2012)
- In the Illinois River, bighead carp can move up to 14 km per day (Peters et al. 2006).

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