2010—06

INVASIVE SPECIES & THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER GORGE IN TWIN CITIES

BACKGROUND:

This request is based on decreased barge traffic and the unique capability of the Saint Anthony and #1 (Ford) dams to slow or prevent the spread of invasive species.

Barge traffic through the Twin Cities locks has decreased by 50% in the last 5 years to well below the US Army Corps of Engineers viability threshold of 1 million tons per year (686, 470 tons). Barge traffic is less than 3% of the traffic through the Melvin Price Lock near St. Louis. The Port of Minneapolis has essentially closed. The major use of the locks is for sand and gravel which are locally available around the Twin Cities.

Shipping volume has fallen below the critical 1-million-ton mark that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers uses to determine whether a lock is viable. Shipping through the Twin Cites locks represents a federal tax subsidy of approximately $20,000 per ton. (William Barton's rough estimate from available data 2-2010)

There has been no grain /agricultural products shipped through the Twin Cities locks in the last five years. There has been no oil in the last five years and shipment of coal ceased in April of 2009 with the shutdown of the Excel Energy Riverside Coal Power Plant reducing tonnage by ~90,000 tons per year. Sand and gravel that is available literally all around the Twin Cities area makes up the major product shipped through the Twin Cities locks. The shipment of sand and gravel last year decreased by 51% (466,040 tons) compared to the last five years average. Scrap Iron shipment through the Twin Cities locks averages 73,132 tons per year over the last six years. (USACOE Lock Commodities Report)

Bighead and Silver carp have continued to migrate up the Mississippi River from Louisiana and have been caught just below the Hastings lock and dam. The carp have steadily made their way northward up the Mississippi, becoming the most abundant species in some areas of the River.

"This is a National problem that is on the brink of becoming an environmental crisis of tremendous significance." MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES *Feasibility Study to Limit the Invasion of Asian Carp into the Upper Mississippi River Basin March 2005*

"1.4 million Minnesota anglers spend an amazing $2.5 billion on their sport." USFWS

"…exotic fish species are associated with an estimated $1 billion per year economic loss." (Pimentel et al., 2000).

The introduction of Aquatic Nuisance Species fish species has the potential to alter ecosystems and food webs (Pflieger, 1997) and cause extinction of some species (Taylor et al., 1984).

It is estimated that 44 species native to the Untied States are threatened or endangered by non-indigenous species. (Wilcove and Bean, 1994 in Pimentel et al., 2000).

Fifty-one (51) Mississippi River fish species have been listed on state and federal threatened and endangered (T&E) lists. Many of these species naturally occur in the Upper Mississippi River. MN DNR

The federal government is spending billions of dollars for Mississippi River ecosystem management and restoration. USACE, UMR-IWW System Navigation Feasibility Study Final Integrated Feasibility Report and PEIS (September 2004) UMRM act 1986, HREP, LTRMP, NESP

"1) Spread of Wild Populations via Interstate Waters … NEW RECOMMENDATION: Pursue restoration of a physical fish barrier to prevent Asian carp from migrating upstream past St. Anthony Falls in the Mississippi River." *Preventing the Introduction of Asian Carp into Minnesota* MN DNR 2007

The only Mississippi Structures that are overflow dams capable of providing a physical barrier to invasive species are the two St. Anthony Falls dams, Ford Dam #1, Dam #19 and Dam #27.

Therefore be it resolved the Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America in convention April 11, 2010 requests that the US Army Corps of Engineers assess the Twin Cities lock and dam system operation and costs to determine viability and invasive species barrier potential.

Submitted by: Walter J. Breckenridge Chapter