

## **Preventing the Importation and Interstate Transport of Invasive Species**

*Whereas* the imported Asian carps (black (*Mylopharyngodon piceus*), silver (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*), and bighead (*H. nobilis*)), are well established in the Mississippi River basin, continue to be propagated in that basin's aquaculture industry, and pose a danger to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River ecosystem through intentional and unintentional transport of live specimens into the basin; and

*Whereas* the imported northern snakehead (*Channa argus*) established in the Potomac River and local breeding populations in parts of the Mississippi River basin also pose a danger to the ecosystem through intentional and unintentional transport of live specimens into the basin;

*Whereas* interstate transport of bighead, black, and silver carp, and the snakehead has been made illegal under the federal Lacey Act with primary responsibility for enforcement lying with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and

*Whereas* the eight Great Lakes states have enacted regulations prohibiting the possession and/or the transport of live specimens of these species; and

*Whereas* the Lacey Act did not require the Asian carps or snakehead species to be screened for potential invasiveness before being imported into the United States, and still does not require the US Fish and Wildlife Service to screen organisms, or authorize the agency to preventively regulate, species proposed for importation for potential invasiveness or disease; and

*Whereas* the Lacey Act is 111 years old and broadly recognized as ineffective; The injurious species listing process is extremely slow, taking four years on average to regulate an invasive species. Species like the Asian carps and snakehead typically are listed only long after they've been imported, spread and caused substantial damage, and often only after Congressional intervention.

*Whereas* the U.S. Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission strongly support immediate improvements in federal authority to prevent imports and transportation of potentially invasive species, and regional coordination of appropriate law enforcement agencies to greatly enhance the protection of the Great Lakes from an invasion of Asian carp or other imported invasive species in the future; now

*Therefore be it resolved* the committee of U.S. Advisors recommends that the commissioners and secretariat of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission urge the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop preventive pre-import screening and enforcement legislation and regulations that assesses the risk associated with non-native organisms proposed for trade before importation, and employ all necessary steps to prevent new invasive species or diseases from being imported into and moved throughout the United States through conventional or internet-based trade, and

*Therefore be it resolved* the committee of U.S. Advisors recommends that the Great Lakes Fishery Commission immediately task the Law Enforcement committee to educate non-fishery local law enforcement agencies on invasive species identification and regulations and recommends the commission work with other agencies to educate the public about the movement of injurious species, and

*Therefore be it resolved* the committee of U.S. Advisors recommends that the Great Lakes Fishery Commission Law Enforcement committee, in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources take the lead in international (Canada-U.S.) and inter-basin (Mississippi River-Great Lakes) coordination of law enforcement activities related to the transport of live Asian carps, snakehead, and other aquatic injurious species, and

*Therefore be it finally resolved* the committee of U.S. Advisors recommends that the Great Lakes Fishery Commission work with Canadian and U.S. agencies to codify commensurate screening and law enforcement approaches in both nations.

Passed unanimously  
June 2, 2011