

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Memorandum on Protecting the Great Lakes From Invasive Carp

May 9, 2025

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of the Army, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Subject: Protecting the Great Lakes from Invasive Carp

My Administration is committed to protecting the Great Lakes—the world's largest surface freshwater system, and a highly valued shipping avenue, resource for fishing and recreation, and source of high-quality drinking water—from the economic and ecological threat of invasive carp. This threat affects every State that borders the Great Lakes: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Curbing this threat requires immediate and effective deployment of resources, infrastructure, and expertise. The Federal Government is prepared to do its part, but the States where preventative measures can be taken must cooperate.

For several decades, invasive species of Asian carp have steadily migrated and expanded from the Southeast northward through streams, rivers, and lakes in the Mississippi River and Midwest region. Asian carp, which can exceed 100 pounds in weight, spread rapidly by outcompeting native fish populations for food and space. They also reduce water quality. These invasive carp are nearing the entry point to the Great Lakes, which, if breached, would irreparably damage native fish species like walleye, yellow perch, and lake whitefish. This poses a significant risk to Great Lakes fishing, boating, recreation, and tourism, which support tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of commerce annually.

The Brandon Road Interbasin Project near Joliet, Illinois, was authorized for construction in the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 (Public Law 116–260) and would provide multiple layers of innovative technological deterrents designed to prevent invasive carp from reaching the Great Lakes. It is a joint project involving the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) and the States of Illinois and Michigan.

The Federal Government has provided \$274 million for this project, has undertaken design work, has started site preparation, and is ready to begin construction of deterrent measures. In February 2025, however, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker decided to delay the State's acquisition of property, which is necessary for construction to begin. Once Illinois acquires the land, it must also issue the Army Corps a State-level permit to begin construction.

My Administration fully supports preventing the spread of invasive carp. The State of Illinois, where the Brandon Road Interbasin Project is located, must cease further delay in cooperating with this effort, for the sake of its own citizens and economy and for the sake of all of the Great Lakes States.

I am directing my Administration to achieve maximum speed and efficiency at the Federal level. Specifically, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of the Army, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall determine and expeditiously implement the most effective mechanisms, barriers, and other measures to prevent the migration and expansion of invasive carp in the Great Lakes Basin and the surrounding region. This includes supporting the Brandon Road Interbasin Project, through deadline-oriented investments of taxpayer dollars, to ensure the State of Illinois does not stand in the way of its construction.

Specifically, for this project to remain on schedule so that it can effectively fulfill its purpose and constitute a worthy investment of taxpayer resources, the State of Illinois should acquire the necessary land to begin construction of the Brandon Road Interbasin Project by July 1, 2025, and the State of Illinois and any applicable localities should grant all permits or approvals required to facilitate Army Corps construction within 30 days of such permits or approvals becoming ripe for consideration by the State or locality and should streamline all permitting and environmental reviews to the maximum degree. Federal agency heads shall similarly streamline any permitting and environmental reviews and issue any requisite Federal permits or approvals as quickly as possible.

Additionally, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall prioritize support for infrastructure projects to remove invasive carp from the Upper Illinois Waterway near Lake Michigan and for maintenance on existing infrastructure to block invasive carp from reaching and entering the Great Lakes Basin.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, through their joint operation of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, shall prioritize support for research and management concerning the prevention, removal, and management of aquatic invasive species in the Great Lakes, including invasive carp. The Administrator of NOAA shall also prioritize this objective through the Great Lakes Aquatic Nuisance Species Information System and NOAA's research and information-sharing work related to the growth and spread of aquatic invasive species.

DONALD J. TRUMP

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

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Names: Pritzker, Jay R. "J.B.".

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