

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road · Saint Paul, Minnesota · 55155-4037

Office of the Commissioner

651-259-5555



September 19, 2011

Mr. David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 95
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

Thank you for the opportunity to present a funding request to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for a sound/bubble barrier to deter Asian carp from the St. Croix River. We have been reviewing options for a barrier with technical experts and potential contractors, and conclude the following:

- Asian carp pose an immediate and serious threat to Minnesota's lakes and rivers, tourism, and recreation.
- Sound/bubble barriers are the best available technology aside from a permanent physical barrier for deterring Asian carp in our waters.
- Such barriers have been effective in laboratory and small scale field experiments in reducing the number of Asian carp passing through the barrier.
- Barriers can be designed to concentrate fish for removal or management control, should populations become established.
- Barriers are untested in large river systems.
- Barriers will not stop or deter all Asian carp.
- Barriers can have negative impacts to native species.
- Asian carp populations could become established regardless of the barrier.

While there are significant unknowns associated with these barriers and they may later prove to be less effective than desired, we believe it is critical to take action now to prevent the establishment of Asian carp in Minnesota waters. These technologies represent our best opportunity to slow the spread of Asian carp in areas without permanent barriers while long-term control methods are developed.

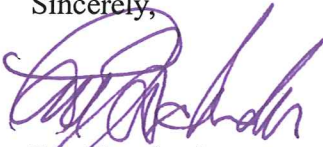
Due to the urgency of this issue, we are simultaneously pursuing multiple funding options while completing further analysis of the feasibility and cost effectiveness of these barriers. It will take at least several months to complete the necessary environmental assessments, permitting, and other reviews necessary to move forward with a barrier, which coincides well with the appropriation schedule for FY13 LSOHC funding.



Currently we estimate the cost of this project at \$10 million which would be for the installation and operation of a sound/bubble barrier at the mouth of the St. Croix River at Prescott. If, during our feasibility analysis we determine it does not make sense to construct a barrier we would withdraw the request for funding or turn the appropriated dollars back to the Outdoor Heritage Fund. We will also be looking for opportunities to seek other state and federal funding in the coming months, which would reduce the potential need from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Because these systems are untested in large river systems, other states and federal agencies working to prevent Asian carp impacts would benefit from this work and we intend to aggressively pursue cost share through these and other sources.

Protecting our rivers from these invasive species is a top priority of our Department, and we thank the Council for considering this request.

Sincerely,



Tom Landwehr
Commissioner

Copy: Bill Becker