



Greetings Chair Hartwell and member of the LSOHC,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the potential use of Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council funding in moving forward with work to install a barrier to stop invasive Silver, Bighead, and Grass carp from moving upstream of Lock and Dam 5 located in SE Minnesota.

As Executive Director of the Minnesota Conservation Federation I have been actively involved in the STOP Carp coalition since 2020. This coalition includes representatives from a number of conservation groups and scientists from the University of Minnesota. Representatives from the MN DNR have spent time with the coalition keeping us abreast of developments in the DNR's strategies to address the concerns that the arrival of these invasive fish present. I have testified about the problem at the Minnesota legislature and recently I took part in the MN DNR's Strategic Decision Making process that focused on the issues presented by the proliferation of Silver, Grass, and Bighead carp in Minnesota.

If we do not act with urgency, Minnesotians alive today will be able to watch in real time as these fish destroy aquatic ecosystems and disrupt economies that have come to rely on waters free of jumping carp that present a risk to human life as they violently leave the water in reaction to vibrations from boat motors or even the slap of a kayak paddle.

The Minnesota River up to the dam at Granite Falls, the Mississippi River up to St. Anthony Falls including Lake Pepin, and vast stretches of St. Croix river stands to be forever changed by the introduction of these invasive fish. Water skiing, an activity invented at Lake City Minnesota, may end up being too dangerous when carp are leaving the water in the wake of a boat. Duck hunters motoring to a blind in the early morning hours will have to dodge carp in the dark. Folks simply enjoying the banks of the river will experience a changed environment when dead carp wash up on the shore creating undesirable sights and smells. These are all realities faced by people living in areas of the country that have established populations of invasive carp.

I urge all members of the LSOHC to vote in support of an allocation of surplus Legacy funding to support the installation of an invasive carp barrier at Lock and Dam 5.

Regards,

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