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March 13, 2013

Senator John Marty  
Room 323 State Capitol  
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55155-1606

Subject: Reducing the threat of Asian carp

Dear Senator John Marty:

Members of the Upper Mississippi Waterway Association are concerned over the direction of efforts to reduce the threat of Asian carp and the lack of factual information relating to these efforts.

We share the growing concern about the impact Asian carp could have on our region and the need to take effective action. Based on discussions at the recent Asian carp summit, it appears Minnesota is arguing for closure of the Upper St. Anthony Falls lock, before fully understanding the economic impact and effectiveness of this action.

Our members understand that at a time of great concern and urgency there is often a desire to make decisions as quickly as possible in hopes that desired results will follow. Closing the St. Anthony Falls lock will not effectively solve the Asian carp problem that threatens the majority of Minnesota's waters, but it will cause significant negative impacts on the economy.

The Mississippi River is a critical natural resource that supports wildlife and connects us to nature. It also supports approximately 1.6 million jobs and \$284 billion in annual economic activity in Minnesota.

A recent study and report by the Metropolitan Council looked at all the uses and impacts associated with closing the lock in Minneapolis -- beyond just recreation and tourism. Their report indicates that closing the St. Anthony Falls Lock would result in the annual loss of approximately 84 jobs, \$5.3 million in wages, \$9.3 million in value-added, and \$14.4 million in economic output at a time when Minnesota is facing countless financial challenges.

Barges are easily the most efficient and effective way to transport freight that uses less energy and reduces pollution, congestion and other community impacts. Yet because so many companies would no longer be able to use barges to move goods, the shift to other transport options would result in an increase of 21,316 truck trips on crowded Minneapolis streets and highways during the work week. Utilities that depend on barge access would be forced to find new locations for coal storage. Businesses and others who depend on barge transport would be forced to pay these additional costs.

## State Perspective

As troubling as these facts are, the report does not include a review of the capacity of manufactures, processors and energy-related businesses to adapt to changes in the supply chain, the lack of available sites for coal and fertilizer storage and distribution on the Mississippi and Minnesota river systems, the potential impact of additional truck traffic on specific routes, or the public sector involvement in siting and permitting.

While supporting the political expediency of lock closure will give legislators a fleeting claim they did "something" to address the Asian carp issue, the reality is that this action would not do anything to prevent the spread of carp into the St. Croix, the Minnesota, or other waterways connected to the Mississippi River south of the Twin Cities. The money and time that would be required to buy out and relocate businesses would be better invested in efforts that would do more to reduce the threat of carp.

## Coon Rapids Dam

Minnesota DNR's review of this dam states the existing physical barrier that utilizes the natural fall and velocity of water over an existing spillway is already 89 percent effective. The ongoing \$17 million project to modify upstream pool-level operating procedures will increase the effectiveness of this barrier to approximately 99.9 percent, according to DNR.

## Alternatives

1. In addition to efforts in Coon Rapids, we support installing a barrier at the mouth of the Rum River in Anoka. This would provide additional, redundant protection for Mille Lacs Lake that will address the challenges from carp without taking jobs and opportunities from families and our economy.
2. Dam #11 (Dubuque, Iowa), located 312 river miles downriver from Minneapolis, is deemed to be an effective carp barrier, especially since no "repopulating" carp have been confirmed upriver from the dam. In addition to protecting upriver fisheries, a barrier at Lock and Dam #11 would do more to protect the environmental integrity of the Lower St. Croix River as a National Scenic Riverway. The Water Resources Development Act of 2007 authorized the work, making this ready for work to start.

The Upper Mississippi Waterway Association shares your concern about the spread of invasive species. As the urgency to address this issue grows, the false promise of a simple solution becomes more attractive. Yet our economy, our families and our region demand your attention to reality. We need to make sure that we protect the river's ecosystem while growing and sustaining a viable river transportation corridor.

Sincerely,



Greg Genz  
President

Cc: Senate Environment and Energy Committee  
Senate Environment, Economic Development, and Agriculture Division  
House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee  
House Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture Finance Committee