

17 NOVEMBER 2009

**PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE AVAILABILITY OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
EMERGENCY MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAINTENANCE OF THE CSSC FISH
DISPERSAL BARRIERS**

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Chicago Sanitary Ship Canal (CSSC) Dispersal Barrier Project was constructed to prevent the interbasin transfer of invasive aquatic species between the Mississippi River and Great Lakes Basins. The Dispersal Barrier project has 3 primary components that are in varying stages of operation and construction. Barrier I, has been operating at a low voltage since April 2002 and will be upgraded and made permanent in the near future. Barrier IIA is permanent and has been in operation since April 2009 but now needs to be shut down for required periodic maintenance. Barrier IIB is in the design stage and will be in construction and operation in the near future.

Required maintenance of Barrier IIA will ensure future proper barrier function and prevent future failure. Barrier IIA provides a barrier to dispersal of all sizes of fishes. When Barrier IIA is turned off for maintenance, fishes would be able to swim up to Barrier I. Based on current studies the lower operating voltage of Barrier I may not prevent the dispersal of fishes 6 inches or smaller. To reduce the risk of small Asian carps moving up stream of Barrier I it is recommended during the maintenance of Barrier II A that fishes in the CSSC be eradicated from the location of the Barrier System to the Lockport Lock which is 5.5 miles downstream.

ALTERNATIVES AND THE RECOMMENDED PLAN

A number of alternatives were considered for removing Asian carps from the vicinity of the Dispersal Barrier. The alternatives considered included physical methods such as nets, chemical and biological alternatives, no action, and change in barrier operation. The recommended plan includes the application of a 5% emulsifiable concentrate of rotenone at 5 locations in the Lockport Pool and the application of potassium permanganate to neutralize the rotenone at the Lockport Powerhouse. All dead or moribund fish will be removed from the canal and disposed of as part of this alternative.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The overwhelming majority of fishes in the canal are non-native fishes including a potential population of Asian carps. It was concluded the use of rotenone in the CSSC on these non-native fishes would not result in significant adverse effect on the quality of the human environment and this project would have only beneficial impacts upon the ecological, biological, social, cultural, and physical resources of the CSSC and provide protection to the biological integrity of the Great Lakes ecosystem.

PROCESS

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) is posted on the Chicago District Corps of Engineers web site at: <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil> . The draft EA will be available for review until **November 24, 2009**. You are invited to provide your comments by **November 24, 2009** on the proposed work, which will become part of the record and will be considered in the decision.

PLEASE SEND COMMENTS / CONCERNS TO:

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