



Invasive Species Threat

Invasive species are a burden for Great Lakes communities. Each year, businesses and citizens spend millions of dollars in damages and control costs due to invasive species like the zebra mussel and sea lamprey. Invasive species foul beaches, harm commercial and recreational fishing, clog power plants and municipal water infrastructure, and disrupt the Great Lakes food chain – leading to the regional extinction of species.

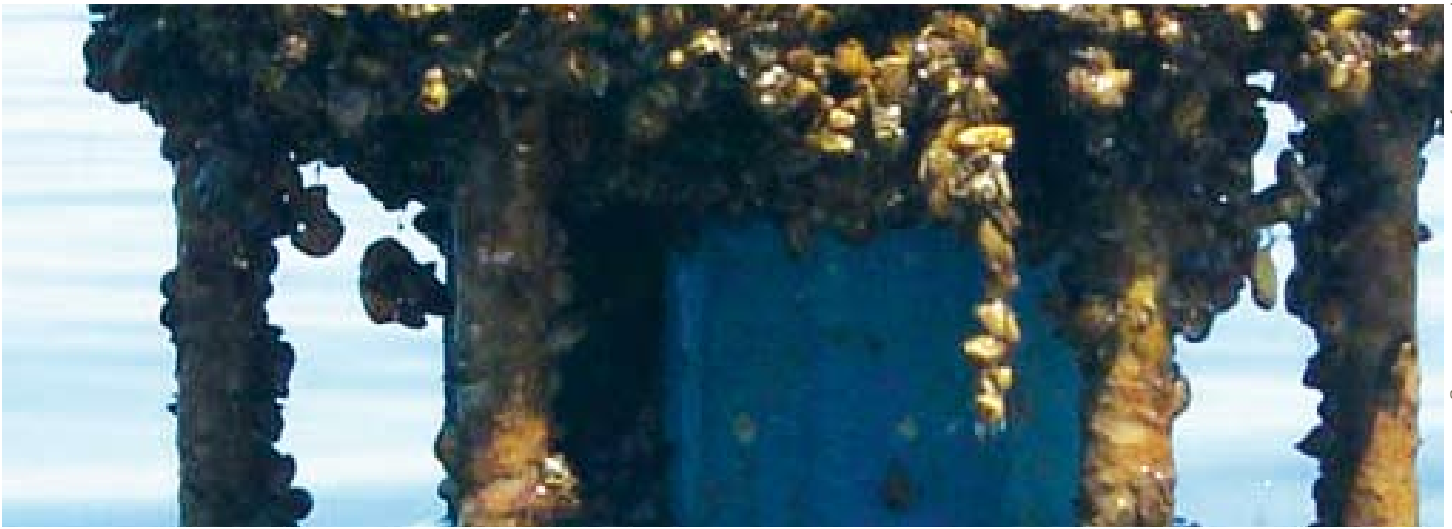
To date, more than 180 non-native species have entered the Great Lakes, and a new species is discovered every 28 weeks. The National Aquatic Invasive Species Act (S. 725) lays the foundation for preventing invasive species in the Great Lakes. Congress can pass the bill to protect our economy and way of life. The time to act is now.



Congress Must Act Now

Congress can slam the door on new aquatic invasive species by passing comprehensive federal legislation.

The National Aquatic Invasive Species Act is a major recommendation of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy, a historic plan put forward by more than 1,500 citizens, public officials, business representatives, scientists and conservationists.



The National Aquatic Invasive Species Act Will:

- Address prevention, research, outreach and education, early detection, rapid response, control, and management of invasive species in the Great Lakes and nationally.
- Address ballast water discharge – the No. 1 pathway for new invaders entering the Great Lakes – by requiring that all ocean-going vessels in the Great Lakes meet an environmentally protective standard by 2011.
- Require that ocean-going vessels officially defined as having “no ballast on board” implement practices that prevent new infestations of non-native species.
- Apply the best-performing ballast water management practices and rapid response plans to vessels that operate in the Great Lakes to control the spread of invaders already introduced.
- For the first time, establish a federal screening process for organisms proposed for importation and trade.
- Fully fund a permanent Asian carp barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to prevent the non-native fish from entering the Great Lakes and wreaking havoc on the economy and health of the region.

Congress Can Act Now

Congress can pass legislation to stem the tide of invasive species into the lakes. We have solutions contained in the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act. It is time to use these solutions to protect our economy, our health and our way of life.

The High Cost of Invaders

The cost to control aquatic and terrestrial invasive species and the damage they inflict upon property, agriculture, military bases, and natural resources in the United States is estimated at more than \$120 billion annually.

Invasive species causing the most damage include: zebra and quagga mussels, round and tube-nosed goby, and the sea lamprey. These and others contribute to the decline of lake perch, lake trout, and other important commercial fish.

One research paper estimates that invasive species cost the Great Lakes region more than \$5 billion per year.

The Healthy Lakes, Healthy Lives campaign is directed by the Healing Our Waters®–Great Lakes Coalition. The coalition consists of more than 90 zoos, aquariums, museums, and hunting, fishing and environmental organizations representing millions of people, whose common goal is to restore and protect the Great Lakes. Formed in 2005 with support from the Wege Foundation, Joyce Foundation, and others, the Healing Our Waters®–Great Lakes Coalition reflects a growing public awareness about the urgent need to protect the Great Lakes.

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