



Inventory of Available Controls for Aquatic Nuisance Species of Concern

Chicago Area Waterway System

Results of the Public Comment Period

BACKGROUND

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is conducting the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) to explore options and technologies that could be applied to prevent aquatic nuisance species (ANS) transfer through aquatic pathways within the United States between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. The GLMRIS is authorized by Section 3061(d) of the Water Resource and Development Act of 2007 which states as follows:

. . . [USACE] in consultation with appropriate Federal, State, local, and nongovernmental entities, shall conduct, at Federal expense, a feasibility study of the range of options and technologies available to prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins through the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and other aquatic pathways.

On December 21, 2011, the GLMRIS Team released an interim product, the *Inventory of Available Controls for Aquatic Nuisance Species of Concern – Chicago Area Waterway System* (ANS Control Paper). The ANS Control Paper is an inventory of available options and technologies (ANS Controls) that may be applied to prevent ANS transfer via aquatic pathways. The Control Paper can be found on the GLMRIS project Web site at glmrис.anl.gov.

In the December 21, 2011 *Federal Register*, the GLMRIS Team posted a public notice announcing the release of the ANS Control Paper, the times and dates of two public conference calls, and a public comment period which extended through February 17, 2012. On January 10, 2012 and February 8, 2012, the GLMRIS Team hosted public conference calls to discuss the paper and to field the public's questions regarding the paper. The comment period's purpose, as stated in the notice, was to 1) determine whether relevant ANS Controls were missing from the inventory and 2) seek comments on the identified ANS Controls. Comments were submitted by mail, via an online comment form, or by e-mail and are available on the project Web site at <http://glmrис.anl.gov/involve/anscomments/>.

This document summarizes comments received during the public comment period and identifies additional information that has been added to the ANS Control Paper.



COMMENT SUMMARY AND ANS CONTROL ADDITIONS

During the public comment period, the GLMRIS Team received 195 comments. This summary discusses comments that are responsive to the comment period's purpose.

The following ANS Controls were identified in comments pertaining to the ANS Control Paper: hydrologic separation; controlled harvest or overfishing; water guns; acoustic, bubble, or electric barriers (examples of sensory deterrent systems); native predators (biological controls); vertical drop barrier; UV light; and alteration of water quality. In addition, the public suggested—as a means of preventing the transfer of ANS via aquatic pathways—manipulating water levels of a water body to cause freezing conditions. In response to the comments, the GLMRIS Team updated the ANS Control Paper and added sections in the *Lethal Temperature* Fact Sheet related to 1) freezing, 2) carbon dioxide pellet (dry ice) blasting, and 3) desiccation.

In addition, the team expanded the discussion of predatory fish in the *Biological Controls* Fact Sheet to include molluscivorous fish and added a new sub-section to the *Benthic Barrier* Fact Sheet regarding the use of silt as a type of benthic barrier.

The GLMRIS Team received comments that sought to have the study expedited; discussed impacts of ANS transfer and establishment; or other issues related to GLMRIS. These topics are included in comments submitted during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping period. See the “Stay Involved” tab on the project Web site for more information regarding GLMRIS NEPA scoping. The GLMRIS Team acknowledges these topics are important to stakeholders and will continue to take them under consideration as the study is completed.

CONCLUSION

Through the release and public review of the ANS Control Paper, the GLMRIS Team has confirmed the team has sufficiently inventoried the available ANS Controls. Additionally, the paper identifies for stakeholders which ANS Controls are being considered for further evaluation.

The GLMRIS Team's future work includes developing screening criteria consistent with study objectives and screening the inventoried ANS Controls to determine which warrant further consideration. The Team will formulate plans comprised of one or more of the screened ANS Controls in consideration of the study's problems and opportunities. The Team will evaluate the plans in consideration of the four criteria established by the U.S. Water Resources Council's *Economic and Environmental Principles for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies*: completeness, effectiveness, efficiency and acceptability, which includes compliance with applicable laws and policies. The GLMRIS Team will then compare the alternative plans.

The GLMRIS Team invites the public to follow the progress of the study on its website glmr.is.anl.gov, its Facebook page and via Twitter.