



## Special Report

### Critical, time sensitive information to protect our Great Lakes Fishery

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## Our Great Lakes fishery resource depend on Sea lamprey control But, your help is needed NOW – your legislator needs to hear from you

The Great Lakes fishery is worth \$7 billion to the regional economy each year. Sea lamprey control is a major reason for that economic value. Control is achievable, but it must be sustained. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is requesting \$22.8 million in fiscal 2012 to carry out its program to protect and improve the Great Lakes fishery.

The President’s FY 2012 budget includes \$18.7 million for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, a 14% reduction from fiscal 2010. This level of funding would jeopardize the \$7 billion Great Lakes fishery and the economic benefits and jobs associated with the fishery.

We understand the critical need to get our country back on sound fiscal footing; but this program pays for itself. It’s not an entitlement and it’s not an earmark; it’s an investment that returns mega-dividends. We need to convey this to our federal legislators and Washington bureaucrats.

The Commission carries out essential fishery management activities in the Great Lakes basin. State, provincial, and tribal governments depend on the commission’s program to support the hundreds of millions of dollars they contribute to sustain the sport, commercial, and tribal fisheries, comprising species like trout, salmon, walleye, yellow perch, and sturgeon.

Major funding reductions would eliminate large portions of the sea lamprey control program, resulting in an immediate, significant economic and ecological impact on the Great Lakes region and setting back fishery restoration by decades. It’s our fishery, it’s our resource, and nobody cares about it like we do, but they should and must.

Congress must provide the necessary funds for the commission to control sea lampreys throughout the Great Lakes basin, particularly in areas where sea lamprey abundances are too high. Funding continuity will allow the commission to continue to use innovative alternative sea lamprey control techniques.

Most notably pheromones, allow the Commission to complement the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative by helping to restore healthy fisheries that provide billions of dollars in economic return and implement the Commission’s fishery research program, which contributes to measures used by state, tribal, provincial, and federal fish management agencies.

But, your help is needed now! See the sample letter below, and send it or modify it to your own words and thoughts.

**But contact your legislative representatives now.**

## Sample letter to send to Congress to protect Lamprey control

### Contact your legislator to prevent funding cuts in Lamprey treatment

Representative/Senator NAME

ADDRESS 1

ADDRESS 2

ADDRESS 3

Attention: Great Lakes Legislative Aide

Dear Representative/Senator NAME:

I am writing to urgently request your support to protect the Great Lakes. I live in CITY, STATE and I am a (recreational fisherman, commercial fisherman, charter boat operator, etc.). I am also a member of XXXX which represents XXXXXXXX. ).

It is my understanding that congressional funding for the sea lamprey control program administered through the Great Lakes Fishery Commission may be significantly cut in the current and upcoming fiscal year. The sea lamprey is perhaps the most destructive invasive species in the region; its relentless pursuit of key species of fish in the Great Lakes threatens to destroy the multi-billion dollar Great Lakes fishery that is a lifeline for so many in this region. Your action is needed to ensure the Great Lakes Fishery Commission is fully funded so that sea lampreys can be stopped.

Funding for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, which operates under a treaty with Canada, is provided through the State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill, under the heading "International Fisheries Commissions."

Major funding reductions to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's program would eliminate crucial components of the sea lamprey control program, resulting in an immediate, significant economic and ecological hardship on the Great Lakes region. Without sea lamprey control, the

Great Lakes fishery would not exist. It's as simple as that. Beginning in the early 1930s, sea lampreys decimated the Great Lakes fishery by killing large numbers of trout, whitefish, and other important species.

The implementation of the sea lamprey control program through the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in the mid-1950s rescued the fishery and, as a result, resurrected local economies and communities. The region now sustains a \$7 billion fishery annually and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs related to the fishery, tourism, navigation, and other economic drivers. If sea lamprey populations are not continually monitored and controlled, history will be repeated and the sea lampreys will again destroy the fishery taking jobs and economic well being with it. The Great Lakes region simply cannot afford to put its most valuable resource at risk.

While sea lamprey populations can be controlled, they are resilient creatures and need only a small window of opportunity to overtake an ecosystem. Implementing the proposed budget cuts to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission will provide such a window for the sea lamprey to once again decimate the fishery. If control is reduced, even for a short time, sea lamprey response will be immediate, devastating, and difficult if not impossible to reverse.

Please do not allow the Great Lakes fishery to be destroyed. We are fortunate that the worst of the lakes' invasive species can be controlled. Our communities and our livelihoods rely on this magnificent resource. **Please support full funding for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and its sea lamprey control program.**

Sincerely,

XXXX

## House Bill Proposes Severe Budget Cuts for FY2011

The House of Representatives voted to pass [H.R. 1](#), the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011. This legislation, which funds the federal government for the remainder of the 2011 fiscal year, contains several riders and budget cuts that will severely impact the sportfishing industry, including a significant reduction in NOAA budget, the removal of funding for the Klamath Dam Removal and Sedimentation Study and a 28% cut in the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

Funding for continued lamprey control also is on the chopping block. Federal legislators are making a \$3 million cut in the \$23 million program, a cut that could have a devastating effect on the battle to contain these critters.

ASA submitted extensive comments on H.R. 1 to House members prior to the vote and will work with Members of the Senate to minimize the negative impacts of this legislation on the sportfishing industry. [Click here to view a copy of ASA's letter.](#)

## Wisconsin Public hearings for commercial trap net changes March 14 & 16

MADISON – Proposed changes to rules governing when and where commercial fishers can set trap nets in southern Lake Michigan, and how such nets should be marked in that water as well as in Lake Superior, are the topic of public hearings in mid-March in Sheboygan and Bayfield.

The proposed changes respond to two related citizen petitions filed last summer after the fishing gear of a recreational fishing boat became entangled in a commercial trap net marker buoy line in Lake Michigan near Sheboygan, says Mike Staggs, fisheries director for the DNR.

The boat capsized and one of the fishermen subsequently died of a heart attack. This incident raised awareness of a long-standing controversy regarding where and when commercial trap nets should be allowed in southern Lake Michigan. Currently [commercial trap nets](#) are prohibited from June 29 through Labor Day, except in two designated areas.

To address the petitions, the rules would:

- Add the month of June to the summer period when no more than three trap nets may be used south of 44°52'30" by each licensed commercial fisher in Lake Michigan.
- Change the times and locations when and where commercial trap nets may be used during the summer. Commercial trap nets would be allowed in areas within 5 nautical miles north and south of

harbors at Two Rivers, Manitowoc, or Sheboygan only from Labor Day to May 31.

- Revise net-marking requirements for Lake Michigan by requiring that staffs be marked with reflective tape and that the staff marking the inside or shallow lead end of the net be marked with a flashing light and a 48-inch diameter float.
- The proposal would also affect commercial fishers on Lake Superior. It would establish net-marking requirements for Lake Superior that are identical to the net-marking requirements used on Lake Michigan: an amber light and a 48-inch diameter float.

The proposed rules and fiscal estimates may be reviewed and comments electronically submitted through the Wisconsin Administrative Rules website or may be obtained from Bill Horns, DNR Fisheries Management, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921 or email: [William.Horns@wisconsin.gov](mailto:William.Horns@wisconsin.gov).

Written comments on the proposed rule may be submitted via email or U.S. mail to William Horns at the above address. For more information contact Bill Horns at (608) 266-8782.

The hearings will be held:

- **March 14, Sheboygan** - 5 p.m., University Theatre, University of Wisconsin-Sheboygan, 1 University Dr.
- **March 16, Bayfield** – 5 p.m., Bayfield Lakeside Pavilion, 2 East Front St.

## Public urged to attend Ontario wind-farm open houses

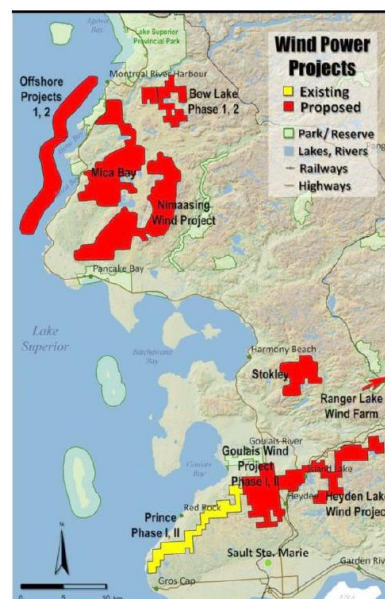
Meetings set for April 4 & 5, in Goulais and Sault Ste. Marie

Will the great outdoors still be so great when the landscape is dotted with wind turbines? That was one of the questions on many of the minds of about 100 people who attended a public information session hosted March 3 by Save Ontario Algoma Region (SOAR) and Sault MP Tony Martin.

One man speaking at the meeting at Alexander Henry High School said he goes to Lake Superior Provincial Park for the pristine wilderness, not to look at a horizon industrialized by wind turbines.

One of SOAR's founders, Gillan Richards, said that support for the organization is coming from far afield as cabin owners in Michigan and other parts of Ontario contact the group to voice concerns and support. These supporters are saying the wild vistas are a vital part of their experience at their camps and it just won't be the same with wind towers dotting the horizon.

Some say it won't even be worth coming up here.



- + Bow Lake
- + Mica Bay
- + Nimaasing
- + Stokely
- + Ranger Lake
- + Heyden
- + Goulais (Confed Power)
- + Goulais (Lucinda Project)
- + Northland Lake
- + Prince

### WHAT IS AT RISK?

**Our Cultural, Natural, and Economic Heritage**  
Algoma, ON area Wind Farm Projects

(For an enlarged map, see Page 6)

But the Ontario government is sticking to its guns and plowing ahead with Bill 150, the Green Energy and Green Economy Act, which Richards says is badly flawed. Sault MP Tony Martin agrees with Richards because the act doesn't allow for sufficient input from people affected by the developments. "It doesn't mean we're against renewable energy or in favour of nuclear power," Martin said. "It just means we want to make sure the democratic process is followed."

The Sault MP said it's important that people's health, the environment, economic and social factors be considered as well as the merit of each of the projects. Most importantly, the cumulative impacts of these developments must be considered before any more of them are allowed to go ahead, he said. But some SOAR members feel they won't see any support from their MPPs.

Richards said that area MPPs David Oraziotti and Mike Brown are finding it very difficult to represent their constituents in this because they are members of the Liberal Party of Ontario - the party that that created the Green Energy and Green Economy Act and refuses to recognize that the legislation is flawed. The act allows large-scale industrial alternative energy developers to bypass environmental assessments and other requirements for permits to develop and operate their wind energy projects.

The government is subsidizing developers, said SOAR member and environmentalist Joanie McGuffin. The Ontario government has entered into agreements to buy power from these developers for the next 10 to 20 years. People at the meeting said that these factors are going to push up the cost of electricity for people in Ontario.

"Ontario is producing more electricity than it uses and is having to sell it to the U.S. and Quebec at a loss," said Martin. He also said that provincial and federal energy plans that focus on encouraging conservation are needed more than subsidies and tax breaks for foreign-owned companies that stand to profit hugely from the generation of electricity from wind in Northern Ontario.

"Should we not be more careful? Should we not learn from what we did in the Alberta tar sands?" asked SOAR member Rob North. "Who are the winners going to be and who will be the losers?" North said companies like DP, an Ireland-based company wanting to develop a wind farm in Goulais River, will win a lot.

McGuffin pointed out that we in Northern Ontario stand to lose the vistas made world-famous by Group of Seven artists and the tourism associated with those vistas. She said we stand to lose the heritage coastline and all that it means to us. "These could so easily be lost by simply doing nothing," added Richards.

Martin and members of SOAR encouraged people at the information session to attend two open houses planned for the proposed Bow Lake wind farm and to ask informed, thoughtful questions. "They will be counting heads and they are required to write down all the questions asked and responses given," Richards said. "So will we."

She said there was no opportunity for input like this before the Prince Wind Farm went up and it's important to show the premier that people are concerned about these developments and their cumulative impact. "Don't be afraid to go to both meetings and bring other people with you," she said. "Even ask the same questions at both meetings."

The first open house is scheduled for Monday, April 4 from 5 to 8 p.m. at Mountain View Public School on Mahler Road in the community of Goulais River. The second is scheduled for Tuesday, April 5 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Water Tower Inn, 360 Great Northern Road in Sault Ste. Marie.

For more information on the Bow Lake project visit the DP Energy project [website](#).

To learn more about SOAR, visit the group's [website](#)

## Commission Urges Immediate Passage of Bill to Stop Asian Carp and Other Invasives

### Bill would accelerate separation of Mississippi and Great Lakes basins

ANN ARBOR, MI – The Great Lakes Fishery Commission applauded the introduction of the *Stop Asian Carp Act of 2011*, a bill designed to stop the spread of Asian carp and other invasive species via the Chicago Area Waterway System.

The legislation, introduced last week by Senators Debbie Stabenow (MI) and Dick Durbin (IL) and Representative Dave Camp (MI), would require the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, within a year and a half, to prepare an action plan that outlines the feasibility and the best means of achieving ecological separation of the once-naturally-

separated Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds. Such separation is essential if the movement of Asian carp and other invasive species between the two basins is to be stopped.

The Chicago Area Waterway System, a series of canals and rivers in and near Chicago, is a manmade connection of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. The waterway is a vibrant transportation corridor, a route for pleasure boats, and a water management system; any study, as is the case with this bill, must take transportation, economic, and water management factors into account. The Great Lakes Fishery

Commission (and many others) has repeatedly identified separation as the only viable way to permanently address the invasive species problem caused by that direct link between the two basins. In March, 2010, citizen advisors to the commission—from both Canada and the United States—passed a joint resolution making the same recommendation. The legislation complements efforts underway by the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative to investigate ways to achieve separation.

“This important legislation directs the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to apply their considerable engineering expertise to answer a complex question: how do you achieve ecological separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi basins in the Chicago Area?” said Commissioner Michael

Hansen, a professor at the U. of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. “This legislation, if enacted, would significantly expedite the process to identify the ways to achieve separation.”

Hansen added: “We must support every effort to keep Asian carp and other invasive species out of the Great Lakes. Invasive species harm the ecosystem and the economy. They threaten the \$7 billion fishery and they undermine tourism, jobs, and prosperity. This bill acknowledges the importance of invasive species prevention and sets us on a course to achieve ecological separation with all haste.”

To read Commissioner Hanson’s full letter: [www.glf.org/fishmgmt/Hansentestimonyaisancarp.pdf](http://www.glf.org/fishmgmt/Hansentestimonyaisancarp.pdf).

## **\$50,000 Fine for Importing Live Asian Carp into Canada Southern U.S. interests selling live carp in violation of Lacey Act**

A Markham, ON man has been fined \$50,000 for possessing and transporting live invasive fish – the largest fine for an Asian carp conviction in Ontario.

Feng Yang, the owner of a fish importing company, pleaded guilty to one count of possessing live invasive fish. He was fined \$50,000, forfeited over 4,000 lbs of seized bighead and grass carp and received a three-year probation order that prohibits him from possessing any invasive species. This is Yang’s second conviction. In 2006, he was fined \$40,000 for possessing the same invasive species.

The court heard that, on November 4, 2010, a joint forces operation between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Canada Border Services Agency resulted in the seizure after officers from both agencies inspected incoming shipments of live and fresh fish. An inspection of Yang’s vehicle found live bighead and grass carp in the tanks on the truck.

The fish had been transported from the southern U.S., allegedly on their way to the Asian community in the Greater Toronto area. There is a long tradition of carp in Chinese culture and culinary tastes, and a booming demand in Toronto. Asians like to buy their fish alive. Their culture places some value on buying two fish - eating one and releasing the other alive to bring good luck.

“We have a very weak system in the U.S. when it comes to importation and movement of species that could be harmful to ecosystems and the economy,” said Marc Gaden, spokesman for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. The debate over how to protect the Great Lakes has focused on Chicago-area waterways infested with bighead and silver carp that have migrated up the Mississippi River and its

tributaries since escaping from Deep South fish farms in the early 1970s.

Also, anglers who dump unused bait fish into waterways might release Asian carp minnows mistaken for other species. Authorities are educating bait shop operators and their customers about the danger. The Illinois DNR last month announced that a survey of Chicago-area bait stores turned up none of the unwanted carp.

Conservation groups have urged the Feds to strengthen the Lacey Act, a 111-year-old law that prohibits importing potentially dangerous non-native species. Congress added the bighead carp in December. The silver carp was added in 2007. The grass carp is not listed, but it’s among prohibited species in Ontario. The law needs an overhaul because listing species takes too long, Gaden said. The bighead carp was proposed in 2003 but the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delayed action because of resistance from Southern aquaculture interests, he said.

It has been illegal to possess live invasive fish including, bighead, grass, black and silver carp in Ontario since 2005 because of the significant threat they pose to the province’s lake systems. As part of the ongoing efforts to protect Ontario’s environment from importing invasive species, the Ministry of Natural Resources will continue to work with the Canada Border Service Agency to monitor compliance with the legislation.

To report a natural resource violation, call 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667) toll-free any time or contact your ministry office during regular business hours. You can also call Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

### Asian carp seized at border, Indiana Company fined \$20,000

A Peru, Indiana Fish Importing company caught bringing live Asian carp into Canada was fined \$20,000 March 7 in Samia court. Sweetwater Springs Fish Farm pleaded guilty to possession of an invasive species without a license, in violation of the Fisheries Act.

Agency resulted in the inspection and seizure of a transport truck at the Blue Water Bridge in Point Edward, ON. Officers found 6,000 lbs of live bighead carp packed in ice. Several were placed in water and they began moving, the court was told.

The court heard that on February 18, a joint forces operation between the MNR and Canada Border Services

### Enlarged Map of Algoma, ON area Wind Farm Projects



- + Bow Lake
- + Mica Bay
- + Nimaasing
- + Stokely
- + Ranger Lake
- + Heyden
- + Goulais (Confed Power)
- + Goulais (Lucinda Project)
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