



# Too much to lose

Potential impacts of invasive carp in  
Minnesota.

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# Minnesota Conservation Federation

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Since 1936 MNCF has been an advocate for the woods, waters, and wildlife of MN

MN state affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation

Member supported non-profit that focuses on engaging all Minnesotans with the outdoors, with a focus on fishing, hunting and related activities, along with conservation advocacy work

Member of STOP Carp Coalition

# What's the problem?

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- Invasive carp are moving up the Mississippi river
- Now is the time to take action
- The presence of invasive carp in Minnesota would
  - Fundamentally change the ecology of river systems in Minnesota.
  - Fundamentally change the way people interact with river systems in Minnesota.
  - Fundamentally change the economies built around river recreation and travel.

# Carp present a physical danger to people

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- Noise and vibration from boats and motors cause carp to leap out of the water
- Flying carp can injure people
- Dangerous interactions between carp and river users are common in areas where carp are present



# What waters of MN would be affected

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- Lower Mississippi and watershed
  - Closure of Upper St. Anthony Falls L&D protects the Upper Mississippi
- Lake Pepin
- St. Croix River and watershed
  - National Scenic Riverway, part of the National Park System
- Minnesota River and watershed
- Other areas of state that see a potential increase in boat traffic and recreation from displaced boaters



# What affect invasive carp have on the river

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- Outcompete native fish and game fish
- Root up plant life
- Put a hole in the food web, changing the ecology of the river for species other than fish



# What affect invasive carp have on the people

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- Invasive carp reproduce in numbers large enough to be visible and obvious
- Changing the image of treasured waterways
- Altering the appearance and smell of the river
- Compromises riverfront development projects
- Property values along the river can suffer



# What would be affected - the recreation

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- Fishing
- Hunting
- Recreational boating
- Watersports and activities
  - Waterskiing at Lake City 1922-?



# What would be affected - the business

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- Recreational boating is big business in Minnesota
  - 3.1 Billion dollar economy
  - Over 800K registered boats in MN
- Marinas, bait stores, fishing and hunting guides, canoe rentals, etc.
- The economies of cities and town along the river that have invested heavily in tourism bases activities and businesses



Bayport Marina- Bayport MN, St. Croix River

# The threat of invasive carp is unique

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Unlike other aquatic invasive species, carp STOPS water recreation when they are present

- We can waterski with zebra mussels

- We can fish in Eurasian Millfoil

Invasive carp removes native and game fish populations, boats from the water, and dollars from the economies built around river systems and river recreation

These fish present a real and present danger to Minnesota and require immediate action and intervention

# What can be done now?

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- There is an opportunity to act at Lock and Dam #5 near Winona MN
  - The design and features of the structure along with the current locations of breeding populations of carp make this site unique.
  - Creating a barrier to stop carp at this site will result in the protection of many of Minnesota's most treasured river resources

The time to act is now. Once here the carp will forever be part of our interaction with waterways across Minnesota.

# The problem is real...

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“We were fishing for smallies and I smacked a paddle on the water and three silver carp came up just like rockets and I caught one right to the chest and my feet – because you’re in a canoe and not expecting it – just went up and I landed straight on my back. I found out that a big silver carp to the chest really hurts.”

Dave Hosler of Pile Cast Fly Fishing, Indiana

“When you’re running these trails at 4 a.m. going duck hunting, I’ve been in places like this with ice on the water and you’re breaking ice with your boat and suddenly carp are coming up through the ice and jumping in your boat and hitting you in the head, And if you think that’s a rush during the daylight, you ought to try that at 4 a.m.”

Bill Cooksey- Tennessee Resident/ National Wildlife Federation Employee

“It’s impacting recreation, recreational use. It’s impacting the lake home values. It’s impacting all different types of things, including the health of the fishery. We’ve seen declines in crappie fishing success. We’ve seen the loss of different fishing tournaments – we can verify losing \$3 million worth of economic impact from fishing tournaments this past year just on the reservoir (Kentucky Lake) we’re sitting on right now.”

Mike Butler- Tennessee Wildlife Federation (2020)

# Thank you for your time

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