



March 22, 2023

Committee on Environment, Climate and Legacy  
Minnesota Senate Bldg, Room 1150  
95 University Avenue West  
St Paul, MN 55103

Re: Senate File 2037, Appropriation to Address Invasive Carp

Dear Chair Hawj and Members of the Committee:

The National Parks Conservation Association has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System for more than 100 years. On behalf of our more than 1.6 million members and supporters, including over 27,000 in Minnesota, **we write this letter of support for Senate File 2037.** This bill will address the threat of invasive carp in our waters and help protect two national parks – the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area and St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

For decades invasive carp (silver, bighead, black and grass carp) have been working their way up the Mississippi River toward Minnesota. Hundreds have been caught in the state so far, but they are not reproducing here yet. We have a small window of time to prevent a total takeover of our waterways if we act now.

**We have new solutions to prevent invasive carp from taking over our waterways.  
We must implement them now by passing Senate File 2037.**

Time is Running Out

In Minnesota, invasive carp have been recorded in the Mississippi River as far north as the Twin Cities metro and in the St. Croix and Minnesota rivers. While DNR reports that reproductive activity is still further downstream outside of Minnesota waters, carp populations often explode unexpectedly. Nobody knows when our stretch of the river will reach a tipping point of no return.

We have only a small window of time to stop invasive carp before they start reproducing in Lake Pepin, the metro Mississippi, the St. Croix and Minnesota rivers, and other treasured waterways, including the two river national parks.

Prevention Only, No Cure

There is no “cure” for invasive carp. Once these species dominate an ecosystem, government agencies spend millions of dollars trying to mitigate the damage with limited success. Tourism and recreation suffer as boating becomes dangerous and fishing conditions turn poor. The much more effective and cost-efficient option is to prevent carp from reaching as much of Minnesota as possible.

### Solutions at Hand

Invasive carp prevention and management requires the use of several tools and tactics, including installation of a deterrent at Lock and Dam 5 that could help block 99% of invasive carp from traveling upstream.

Right now, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources doesn't have enough funding to implement the right strategies at a sufficient scale.

#### **The bill will fund these strategies:**

- Installation of a deterrent system at Lock and Dam 5 to block upstream movement;
- Adjustments to lock gates to improve deterrent efficacy;
- Expansion of fish surveys, tracking and removal programs;
- Ecosystem resiliency efforts for native fish; and
- Continued research.

With this additional funding, the DNR can address this threat with a multi-pronged approach that will prevent invasive carp from taking over Minnesota's waterways and protect native fish and recreation.

We ask you to support the full appropriation for SF 2037. Thank you.

Sincerely,



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