



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 3 Fisheries Program's 2006 Asian Carp Projects



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Region 3 Fisheries Program is taking initial steps towards implementing a few of the 131 recommendations in the *Draft Management and Control Plan for Asian Carps in the United States*.



USFWS biologist collect samples from wild-caught Asian carps as part of the Wild Fish Health Survey.

The Carterville, Columbia, and LaCrosse Fishery Resources Offices (FRO), along with the Large Rivers Coordination Office and the LaCrosse Fish Health Center (FHC), are actively involved in a number of projects to improve efforts to prevent introductions and to manage and control populations of Asian carps in the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. The Carterville Fishery Resources Office also chairs the Asian Carp Working Group and has led the development of the draft national management and control plan for bighead, black, grass, and silver carps.

Major projects underway or planned to begin during 2006 include:

- In partnership with Southern Illinois University, Carterville FRO will investigate native fishes as potential alternatives to black carp for snail control in aquaculture ponds. Planned investigations include evaluations of different stocking densities of redear sunfish and initial tests of redear x warmouth and/or redear x green sunfish hybrids.
- Carterville FRO is assisting St. Louis Zoo's Department of Nutrition in the completion of nutritional evaluations of raw carp puree, development of necessary vitamin supplements to ensure nutritional adequacy, and palatability and physiological testing of the final product with a variety of piscivorous species.
- Carterville FRO is working with other members of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Dispersal Barrier Advisory Panel to develop an acoustic telemetry network in the upper Illinois River. The array of remote receivers will function as an early detection tool for Asian carps and allow for a better understanding of their movements and distribution in the upper Illinois River.
- LaCrosse FRO coordinates the annual Goby Round-up and Carp Corral in the Illinois River which tracks the dispersal of Asian carps towards the Aquatic Nuisance Species Dispersal Barrier and the Great Lakes. Several Region 3 Fisheries Offices and multiple other partners assist with this effort.
- Columbia FRO is working with a Master Trawl Builder to design a mid-water trawl designed specifically to capture Asian carps. The prototype trawl will be tested in the Illinois, Mississippi, and Missouri rivers to evaluate its utility and efficiency for capturing Asian carps in various habitats and populations densities.
- LaCrosse and Carterville FROs are working with Southern Illinois University to develop a GIS-based tool to evaluate potential spawning and recruitment habitats for Asian carps in the Mississippi River. The tool, which will be based on available data and published literature, will provide a means of focusing field studies to control feral populations of Asian carps.
- LaCrosse FRO is working to inform anglers about the potential for unintentional spread of Asian carps through bait bucket transfers.
- LaCrosse FHC is collecting and analyzing samples from Asian carps as part of the Wild Fish Health Survey.
- LaCrosse FHC is screening samples from a fish kill in the Illinois River for the presence of Spring Viremia of Carp Virus (SVCV).
- The Large Rivers Coordination Office and the Region 3 Fisheries Program Office are working on projects to summarize state regulations pertaining to the import and possession of live Asian carps.

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The transport and release of wild-caught baitfish is a potential pathway for the introduction of Asian carps into new waters.

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