

Chicago Area Waterway System Aquatic Invasive Species Stakeholder Group

2019 Work Plan

January 2019

Introduction

The goal of the Chicago Area Waterways System (CAWS) Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Stakeholder Group (Group) is to contribute to efforts to develop and move forward with implementation of a viable and sustainable plan to prevent the two-way movement of AIS through the CAWS, while maintaining other beneficial functions of the system.

The primary function of the Group is to serve as a forum for the exchange of information on matters related to structural and non-structural controls to prevent the movement of AIS through the CAWS, and the relationship between control measures and other major interests, including business, shipping, water management, recreation, ecology and urban development.

This work plan summarizes information exchange mechanisms and topics and identifies *priority focus areas* for the Group for calendar year 2019. The work plan builds off of work discussions and interactions in 2018, including the webinar and in-person meeting in December 2018 which focused on the Brandon Road Chief's Report. The work plan is intended only to guide group activities; the Group can modify the work plan at any time based on new developments or new ideas.

Meeting Frequency and Format

During 2019 the Group will meet in person as needed, possibly up to three times. Meetings will include updates and presentations on topics of interest to the Group, with attention to priority topics (see attached Table). It is expected that most meeting agendas will include updates from ACRCC, USACE, Illinois DNR, MWRD, the Technical and Policy Committee, and Group members, as well as facilitated discussions among the Group. It is anticipated the meetings will be led by members of the Steering Committee, with active involvement and participation by meeting attendees.

At times, it may be necessary for information to be exchanged outside of in-person meetings. The Steering Committee and/or the Group Administrative Agent may circulate information via email and/or may arrange a conference calls or webinars to discuss matters that need short-term action or where Members can benefit from a topic-specific presentation.

Potential Meeting Topics

It is expected that the Group will exchange information on topics that are consistent with those listed in Section 5c of the Operating Principles, including but not limited to such topics as:

- a. *Controls at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam.* The Chief's Report will be finalized in 2019; it is anticipated that discussions may be useful on progress, schedule, congressional authorization, funding and initiation of work on Pre-Construction Engineering & Design. Discussions may also be useful on non-federal sponsorship arrangements.
- b. *Near-term and longer-term efforts to prevent 2-way AIS movement through the CAWS.* The Group may discuss concepts for 2-way controls, relevant considerations, and implementation ideas. In this way Group Members can be informed and ready to provide input to the Corps or other agencies at the appropriate time.
- c. *Information/Updates on AIS locations and populations.* The Group may hear presentations and discuss information on the populations and movement of Asian Carp and other AIS. 

- d. *The status and efficacy of structural and non-structural control methods and technologies for preventing the movement of AIS.* The Group may hear about and discuss existing and emerging technologies or approaches for restricting movement of AIS.¹
- e. *Beneficial economic uses of the waterways, such as waterborne transportation.* Information may be exchanged regarding waterborne shipping/transportation activities and economics, and relationships between these sectors and AIS controls.
- f. *Risk analyses.* The Group could seek to exchange information about the basis for the risk analysis included as an Appendix in the Brandon Road Chief's Report, and if there are information gaps or areas that need further analysis or investigation. This may include updates on invasive species of concern that could move between Basins, or potential impacts on the Great Lakes if key AIS migrate into the Basin.
- g. *Economic impacts.* The Group may exchange information about the economic impacts of Asian Carp populations in the Upper Mississippi Basin (and possibly in Lake Michigan) and about the economic impacts of control measures that have been proposed, and attempt to identify information gaps and areas that need further analysis or investigation.

The attached table identifies Priority Focus Areas for 2019. Additional topic areas of interest to the Group may be suggested to the Steering Committee over the course of implementation of this work plan.

Group Administration and Processes

During 2019, as needed, the Group will address administrative and process issues, including:

New Group Administrative Agent

Beginning in 2019 the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Council (NIRPC) will assume the role of Group Administrative Agent, taking over from the Great Lakes Commission. NIRPC will operate under a contract with GLC for the first half of 2019, and will seek funding for Group operations and administer the Group budget beginning in the second half of 2019. NIRPC will keep Group members up-to-date on budget issues, and will be responsible for any contracts or other expenditures that are arranged for, as well as Group operation logistics (including meeting planning). NIRPC will also convene regular conference calls for members of the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee Membership

The Steering Committee has been important for planning meetings and organizing the activities of the Group. One of the functions of the Steering Committee in 2019 will be identifying Steering Committee members or Group members to facilitate meetings. The Operating Principles identify that members can drop off the Steering Committee and that new members can be added. During 2019 the Steering Committee will review membership and determine if updates would be warranted or beneficial. The Steering Committee will invite Group members to volunteer to serve as new Steering Committee members if/when needed. Existing Steering Committee members can self-identify if they need to drop off, and when. The Steering Committee will present on proposed updates to Steering Committee membership during meetings of the full Group, and seek concurrence. In accordance with Section 4d of the Operating Principles, the terms of the members of the Steering Committee will be staggered to the extent feasible to avoid full turnover of all members of the Steering Committee at a single point in time.

Group Membership

As provided for in the Operating Principles, members may withdraw from the Group and new members can be added when appropriate. NIRPC will maintain a list of active Group members, including Ex Officio members.

¹ It is noted that the Technical and Policy Committee often focuses on control technologies during its meetings. The Group will seek not to duplicate the work or the discussions of the Technical and Policy Committee, but will seek to be aware of the Committee's investigations and discussions as the technologies and their efficacy and costs are relevant to the overall planning of AIS controls. Where possible and appropriate, Group meetings will be scheduled in conjunction with Technical and Policy Committee meetings so members can conveniently attend both meetings.

Members or external individuals can nominate a person or organization to be added to the Group. The Steering Committee will discuss and propose membership changes and present to the Group and seek concurrence during meetings of the full Group.

Attachment

Priority Focus Areas CAWS AIS Stakeholder Group

During 2019 the Steering Committee and the Group Administrative Agent will develop meeting agendas, and arrange other interactions such as webinars or conference calls, as needed, with focus on the following topics identified as being priority focus areas for the Group.

	PRIORITY FOCUS AREA	SCHEDULE	DESIRED OUTCOME(S)
Top Tier Focus Areas (Highest Priority)			
A.	Implementation of the Brandon Road Chief’s Report, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressional authorization • Funding for PED • Non-Federal sponsorship arrangements • Schedule updates • Relevant Federal budgetary or legislative actions 	On-going throughout 2019	Members have greater or more up-to-date understanding of progress moving ahead with controls at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam, and can provide input or otherwise take actions reflecting the goals and views of their organization. Note it is not expected an outcome will be a <i>position</i> on what is the best or most appropriate option.
B.	Options for limiting 2-way AIS movement through the CAWS. Feasibility of options discussed in GLMRIS. Any new ideas? What are possible ways to catalyze planning for 2-way controls?	Presentations and facilitated discussions in summer or fall 2019	Members have greater or more up-to-date understanding of measures that could be implemented in the CAWS to control 2-way movement of AIS. Having this information may help Members better understand options and associated pros and cons, and help Members decide what actions they might want to take or advocate for. Note it is not expected an outcome will be a <i>position</i> on what is the best or most appropriate option.
C.	Populations and locations of Asian Carp and other AIS. Is the adult population of Asian Carp moving upstream? Are there other species we should be concerned about (including migrations to or from the Great Lakes)? The Group could benefit from more information/data on non-Carp AIS.	Update(s) summer and/or fall 2019. This could include updates from IDNR, ACRCC, or other members or Ex Officio members with information relevant to the Group	Members have a current understanding of population dynamics and are better able to assess what they think the risk may be. Having this information may help members better understand the present situation and potential risks and decide what actions they might want to take, propose, or support. As appropriate, Members may brainstorm on contingency measures for key nonstructural controls if GLRI funds are not available
D.	AIS control methods and technologies, structural and non-structural.	Updates from the Technical and Policy Group each in-person meeting.	Members have a basic understanding of control options and their expected effectiveness and costs, and greater ability to assess, suggest or advocate for plans or control options.

Additional Significant Topics			
E.	Waterborne Transportation and Safety. What is the economic value of waterborne shipping and transportation? What materials are shipped? How might AIS controls affect these sectors, including the safety of transportation workers?	Presentation in Fall 2019 or early 2020	Members have a good understanding of the nature and scale of waterborne shipping and transportation on the CAWS and connected waterways and the extent to which AIS controls would affect these sectors. Having this information will help Members shape ideas and their views about the impact of AIS control options.
F.	Water Quality and Hydrology	Presentation in Fall 2019 or early 2020	Members have a good understanding of how AIS control measures would affect water quality, recreational uses of waters, and flooding. Having this information will help Members shape ideas and their views about AIS control options.
G.	Economic Impacts (excluding shipping and transportation, which is covered in a different focus area). What do we know (or not know) about the economic impacts of Asian Carp populations? What do we know about the economic impacts of control measures? Are there important impacts associated with other AIS, moving to or from the Great Lakes? What information gaps remain?	Perhaps form an Ad Hoc workgroup in Summer 2019	Members have an understanding of the economic impacts of AIS populations moving into new ecosystems, and the economic impacts of control measures. For example, what would be the short-term and long-term employment impacts of implementing AIS control solutions? How would commercial or recreational activities be affected by inter-Basin migration of AIS?
H.	Risk analyses. What is the basis for the risk analysis provided with the Brandon Road TSP, How does it compare with other risk analyses that have been completed by other agencies? What information gaps remain?	Perhaps form Ad Hoc workgroup Summer 2019	Members have a better understanding of the methods, data sources, and findings of the Brandon Road risk analysis, and other methods, approaches, or data sources used in other analyses. This will help Members assess and provide feedback and ideas into the next steps of Brandon Road planning work, and provide input/comments on future risk analyses, including those related to 2-way controls.
I.	Biological impacts. What is the latest or best information on how biological communities in the Great Lakes Basin would be affected by the introduction of Asian Carp? Are there other important species impacts associated with 2-way migration of AIS?	Updates from ACRCC and others as appropriate	Members have a grounded understanding of the biological impacts of AIS moving between basins, with a short-term outcome (during 2019) of having the best available information on how Asian Carp would affect biological communities in the Great Lakes if they successful migrate into this ecosystem. Having this information may help Members decide what actions they might want to take or advocate for. Group members are also interested in the possible biological impacts of other AIS that could migrate to or from the Great Lakes Basin.

