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**Great Lakes Governors Applaud Congressional Action  
to Help Keep Asian Carp Out of the Great Lakes Basin**  
**“By working together as a region, we can do great things for the Great Lakes.”**

**Chicago, Ill.** (October 7, 2004) – Capping months of State-Federal efforts, the Governors of the eight Great Lakes States today applauded the United States Congress for joining them in supporting an effort to prevent introduction of giant Asian carp and other aquatic invasive species into the waters of the Great Lakes Basin. The Governors in particular applauded Members of the Great Lakes Congressional Delegation and U.S. EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt, as chair of the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, for spearheading the legislative effort.

The U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate voted on Wednesday to authorize a total of \$6,825,000 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to construct an electric dispersal barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. The barrier will create an electric field to prevent Asian carp from moving through the canal, into Lake Michigan and throughout the entire Great Lakes Basin. The project’s total cost, to be shared by State and Federal governments, is estimated at \$9.1 million.

Stopping the introduction and spread of non-native aquatic invasive species is one of the Great Lakes Governors’ nine shared priorities for Great Lakes restoration and protection. “The coordinated State and Federal efforts that have been extended to protect the Lakes from the Asian carp are an example of regional cooperation that can further our shared agenda for protecting and restoring this national treasure,” said Governor Bob Taft of Ohio, co-chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors.

“Members of Congress have joined us in recognizing the grave threat posed by invasive species such as Asian carp, which could lead to overwhelming economic and ecological losses for the Great Lakes States,” said Governor Taft. The Great Lakes States are prepared to contribute up to \$575,000 in additional funds toward costs for the barrier, he said.

“By working together as a region, we can do great things for the Great Lakes,” said Governor Jim Doyle of Wisconsin, co-chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors. He added, “It is through a joint effort of the Great Lakes Governors, the Great Lakes Congressional Delegation, and with the support of the Administration that we have been able to achieve our goals.”

Taft and Doyle also called for increased federal funding through reauthorization of the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act (NAISA) to focus on preventative measures that

preclude the movement of Asian carp and other aquatic invasive species to and from the Great Lakes.

Asian carp, the most recent in a series of aquatic invasive species to threaten the Great Lakes ecosystem, are large, voracious fish imported into the Mississippi River Valley in the 1960s as a means of cleaning vegetation and snails from commercial fish-farming ponds. Carp that escaped these ponds during floods have migrated up the Mississippi River and into the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, coming within a few miles of Lake Michigan and, potentially, into all the waters of the Great Lakes Basin. A temporary electric barrier was built in the canal several years ago as a demonstration project and has proven effective, but it must soon be replaced with a permanent carp-control system to ensure continuous protection.

Aquatic invasive species are non-native fish and aquatic animals that are accidentally or deliberately introduced into the Great Lakes, often from the ballast water of ships entering the lakes from overseas ports. Examples of such species that have entered the Great Lakes in recent years include the zebra mussel, round goby and sea lamprey.

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