

Update from EPA to ISAC- October 28, 2015

Item #1: Information on outreach campaigns

In response to the request from ISAC for information about regional and national invasive species outreach campaigns conducted by agencies, EPA has provided some materials. We suspect that much of what we provided about the activities of the Great Lakes Panel on ANS will overlap with information from those involved with ANSTF. We also included a table of projects funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative that deal with invasives and education. While these are not campaigns “conducted” by EPA, they are supported via grants by the GLRI that is supported by EPA.

Questions: Bill Bolen, bolen.bill@epa.gov

Item #2: Court ruling on EPA’s Vessel General Permit

Earlier this October, there was a court ruling that EPA’s 2013 Vessel General Permit violated the Clean Water Act because it did not require use of best available technology to control discharges of invasive species from the ballast water of ships. The court ruled that it was the wrong approach to adopt the International Maritime Organization standards for technology-based effluent limits without considering if there were better onshore technologies capable of meeting more stringent limits. Also, the court ruled that the exemption from effluent limits for vessels that travel only within the Great Lakes was not defensible. In talking with the office that writes the VGP, their initial take is that when they write and issue the permit again (in December 2018), they will have to address the elements of the permit that the court found problematic. What it means in terms of specific permit requirements will take quite a while to sort out.

Questions: Jack Faulk, faulk.jack@epa.gov

Item #3: Asian carp on the move

Some interesting (largely dismaying) new findings are emerging about short- and long-distance movement of Asian carp in the Mississippi River basin and in the Chicago Area Water System. First, as of September this year, young-of-the-year were observed about 50 miles further north than they had been in 2014. That means small carp are now about 90 miles from Lake Michigan. Second, there are some non-carp fish capable of getting past electric barriers constructed in the Chicago area lock-and-dam system. These fish can surge through with barges traveling to Lake Michigan, and show a potential vulnerability of the electric barriers to movement of small fish.

Questions: Bill Bolen, bolen.bill@epa.gov