MONITORING AND RESPONSE WORK GROUP
MONTHLY ACTIVITY UPDATES
NOVEMBER 2025

CONTRACTED COMMERCIAL FISHING BELOW THE ELECTRIC DISPERSAL BARRIER

IDNR

Introduction

Contracted Commercial Fishing Below the EDBS uses contracted commercial fishers to reduce invasive carp abundance and monitor for changes in range in the Des Plaines River and upper Illinois River downstream of the EDBS. By decreasing invasive carp abundance, we anticipate reduced migration pressure towards the barrier, lessening the chances of invasive carp gaining access to upstream waters in the CAWS and Lake Michigan. Monitoring for upstream expansion of invasive carp should help identify changes in the leading edge, distribution, and relative abundance of invasive carp in the IWW. The "leading edge" is the furthest upstream location where multiple Bighead Carp or Silver Carp have been captured with conventional sampling gears during a single trip or where individuals of either species have been caught in repeated sampling trips to a specific site. Trends in catch data over time may also contribute to understanding invasive carp population abundance and movement between and among pools of the IWW.

Dresden Island	**November 2025**
Yards of Net	32,125
Bighead Carp	5
Grass Carp	0
Silver Carp	97
Invasive Carp Caught	102
Invasive Carp Dresden Above I55	7
Invasive Carp Dresden Below I55	23
Invasive Carp Rock Run	72
IC/1000 yards	3.2

Marseilles	**November 2025**
Yards of Net	4,700
Bighead Carp	1
Grass Carp	0
Silver Carp	600

Invasive Carp Caught	601
IC/1000 yards	128
Invasive Carp Pounds	7,924

Starved Rock	**November 2025**
Yards of net	65,000
Bighead Carp	7
Grass Carp	19
Silver Carp	25,581
Invasive Carp Caught	25,607
IC/1000 yards	394
Invasive Carp Pounds	197,615

BARRIER MAINTENANCE AND FISH SUPPRESSION

IL DNR, USACE

Introduction

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) operates three electric dispersal barriers (Barrier 1, Barrier 2A, and Barrier 2B) for aquatic invasive species in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC), collectively referred to as the EDBS. USACE has operated electric barriers in the CSSC since 2002. Over the years, several operational and procedural improvements have been implemented to improve the effectiveness and continuously deliver an uninterrupted flow of electricity to the water to deter fish. USACE fisheries team conducts biweekly electrofishing monitoring for invasive carp in Lockport and Brandon Road Pools.

November 2025 Highlights

The barriers are currently operating at the following parameters (December 11th, 2025) but are subject to change:

Barrier	Operation Parameters	Status
1D	Full water: 5 Hz, 4 ms, 400 V = ~1.3 V/in Benthic: 5 Hz, 4 ms, 100V	Operational
IIA	Narrow Pulsers ½: 34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 2000 V = 1.7 V/in	Ready Standby
IIA	Wide Pulsers 3: 34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 800 V= ~1.0 V/in	Ready Standby
IIB	Narrow Pulser ½: 34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 2000 V = 1.7 V/in	Ready Standby- (for electrical field work)
IIB	Wide Pulsers 3: 34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 800 V= ~1.0 V/in	Ready Standby
IN	34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 1050 V = ~1.7 V/in	Operational
IS	34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 1000 V = ~1.7 V/in	Operational

There were no barrier outages in November 2025.

Traditional Monitoring

During the month of November, there were no invasive carp traditional monitoring efforts conducted by USACE biologists.

SUMMARY EVALUATION OF BIO-ACOUSTIC FISH FENCE DETERRENT

USFWS, USGS

Introduction

This project will test the effectiveness of a Bio-Acoustic Fish Fence (BAFF) at deterring Silver Carp and Grass Carp from crossing the BAFF and from crossing through the Barkley Lock on the Cumberland River, KY. This sound, bubble, and light deterrent is designed to have a greater effect on invasive carp than on native species. This deterrent could be part of a multi-deterrent approach to prevent movement through a lock chamber where the lock is the only option for fish to move upstream (e.g., Brandon Road Lock and Dam) or in combination with a yet to be developed deterrent that slows passage through dam gates during open river while the BAFF deters fish from passing via the lock chamber (e.g., Starved Rock Lock and Dam).

November 2025 Highlights

The agencies did not submit a response for the Nov monthly report.

INVASIVE CARP ENHANCED CONTRACT FISHING REMOVAL PROGRAM

ILDNR

Introduction

In September 2019, the Enhanced Contract Fishing Program was initiated in the Peoria Pool of the Illinois River. In 2022, the area was expanded to include the LaGrange and Alton pools. The program offers Illinois-licensed commercial fishers $.10 per pound for invasive carp caught in any of these pools and sold to fish processors or other buyers for at least $.07 per pound. To date, a total of 70 fishers have entered into contracts to catch invasive carp from these pools, with 38 currently under contract. From inception through November 2025, 32,228,527 pounds of invasive carp have been caught among all three pools. Of these total catches, 2.62% are Bighead, 87.88% are Silver, and 9.50% are Grass carp.

November 2025 Highlights

The table below summarizes the total pounds of invasive carp caught through enhanced contract fishing.

YEAR	Total Lbs.**	Bighead	Silver	Grass
2019 *	**518,132**	**24,813**	**310,297**	**183,022**
2020	**2,882,724**	**176,195**	**1,980,175**	**726,355**
2021	**3,345,973**	**209,526**	**2,517,416**	**619,031**
2022	**5,249,161**	**200,396**	**4,615,097**	**433,669**
2023	**8,410,107**	**95,532**	**8,024,643**	**289,932**
2024	**6,336,449**	**90,865**	**5,821,067**	**424,517**
2025 Part Year	-	-	-	-
January	87,108	0	72,025	15,083
February	479,791	0	415,750	64,041
March	657,157	2,228	606,351	48,578
April	684,091	7,809	632,634	43,648
May	864,539	10,480	837,906	16,153
June	387,079	5,608	357,547	23,924
July	432,323	2,130	388,310	41,883
August	592,344	8,561	512,564	71,219
September	567,664	6,314	536,199	25,151
October	419,736	1,534	395,402	22,800
November	257,751	1,921	255,830	0
2025 Part Year Subtotal	**5,485,983**	**46,585**	**5,054,199**	**385,199**

YEAR	Total Lbs.**	Bighead	Silver	Grass
GRAND TOTALS	**32,228,527**	**843,910**	**28,322,894**	**3,061,723**

* September 2019 program inception.

** No Black carp reported as these are reported through the Black Carp Bounty Program.

INVASIVE CARP CONTRACTED FACILITATION PROGRAM

ILDNR

Introduction

In July 2025, the Contracted Facilitation Program was initiated in the three pools of the Illinois River where the Enhanced Contract Fishing Program currently operates – the Peoria, LaGrange, and Alton pools. The program's goal is to help reduce the cost of transporting invasive carp caught in the three pools to processing facilities. The program offers Illinois fish processors and other buyers $0.05 per pound to purchase invasive carp caught in the three pools from commercial fishers. To date, four processors have entered into contracts to buy under the program. A total of 2,264,231 pounds of invasive carp have been caught. Of these total catches, 0.92% are Bighead, 93.00% are Silver, and 6.07% are Grass carp.

November 2025 Highlights

The table below summarizes the total pounds of invasive carp caught through Contracted Facilitation Program.

YEAR	Total Lbs.**	Bighead	Silver	Grass
2025 Part Year	-	-	-	-
July*	442,392	2,130	415,749	24,513
August	561,249	7,836	499,735	53,678
September	571,160	6,314	530,015	34,831
October	436,728	2,650	409,561	24,517
November	252,702	1,921	250,781	0
2025 Part Year Subtotal	**2,264,231**	**20,851**	**2,105,841**	**137,539**
GRAND TOTALS	**2,264,231**	**20,851**	**2,105,841**	**137,539**

* July 2025 program inception.

** No Black carp reported as these are reported through the Black Carp Bounty Program.

USFWS ILLINOIS WATERWAY HYDROACOUSTICS

USFWS

Introduction

The purpose of USFWS hydroacoustic monitoring in the upper Illinois Waterway (IWW) is to enhance invasive carp management by reporting spatial and temporal patterns of fish abundance. Having a greater understanding of the temporally varying abundances and spatial distributions of fishes in the vicinity of the electric dispersal barrier system (EDBS) is important to barrier management as it allows operational and maintenance decisions to be made while considering potential risk factors. These surveys will provide abundance estimates of fish targets ≥12 inches, as well as geospatial distribution, and fish target depth information which will also assist commercial fishers in targeting areas with high abundances of large fish targets. When hydroacoustic estimates of length and depth of targets is paired with corresponding telemetric data, managers can make inferences about possible fish species and implement further management decisions. Hydroacoustic surveys conducted at the EDBS may produce targets that are detected across replicate surveys and may identify the same target. USFWS hydroacoustic barrier surveys are conducted monthly, and pool scans are conducted annually in the fall. Additional barrier and pool scans can be conducted upon request. Further details regarding the methods of data collection and use of hydroacoustic data can be provided upon request.

November 2025 Highlights

The results of the mobile hydroacoustic fish surveys are presented below:

- Hydroacoustic barrier scan on November 24th, 2025, identified 49 targets within and just below the EDBS.
- Figure 1 shows the average targets detected across all three replicate surveys.
- No hydroacoustic pool scans were completed in the month of November.

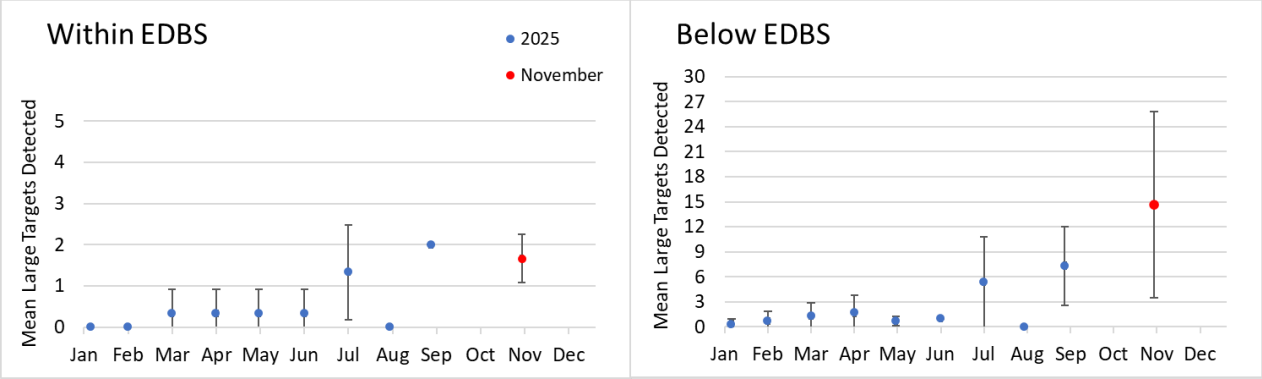

Figure 1. Comparison of the mean and standard deviation for three replicate surveys from the current mobile surveys with previous surveys from 2025.

SUPPORT FOR EARLY DETECTION OF INVASIVE CARP IN THE UPPER ILLINOIS WATERWAY

USFWS Wilmington

Introduction

The purpose of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Wilmington Substation's early detection monitoring (EDM) is to detect juvenile and adult invasive carp (Bighead, Silver, Black, and Grass Carp) at the invasion front. A combination of traditional boat electrofishing, electrified dozer trawling, mini-fyke netting, and gill netting are used in main-channel border, side-channel, and backwater habitats in the Marseilles, Dresden Island, Brandon Road, and Lockport Pools of the upper Illinois Waterway (IWW), and lower Kankakee River. Rarefaction analysis is performed annually to ensure an extremely high probability that sampling efforts are detecting any changes in invasive carp population status. The application of fishing gears across pools and habitats, utilizing fixed and random sites, is assessed annually based on the results of this analysis. The USFWS Great Lakes EDM Program is an adaptive management tool focused on invasive species detection.

November 2025 Highlights

- Thirty-seven Silver Carp (740 mm – 980 mm TL [Total Length]), one Bighead Carp (1191 mm TL), and two Grass Carp (885 - 940 mm TL) were captured in the Marseilles Pool during November 2025.
- No small-bodied (< 153 mm TL) invasive carp were captured by EDM in November 2025.
- No large-bodied (≥ 153 mm TL) invasive carp were captured outside their known range by EDM in November 2025.

Table one summarizes the USFWS invasive carp EDM from November 2025 for each pool monitored under the project.

Table 1. Summary of USFWS EDM effort during November 2025.

-	Marseilles	Dresden Island	Kankakee	Brandon Road	Lockport	Des Plaines
Electrofishing Effort (hours)	5	0	0	2.5	2.25	0
Electrofishing Sites	20	0	0	10	9	0
Dozer Trawl Effort (hours)	1.67	0	0	0	0	0
Dozer Trawl Sites	20	0	0	0	0	0
Mini-fyke Effort (net nights)	21.08	0	0	0	0	0
Fyke Net Effort (net nights)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gill Net Effort (yards)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gill Net Sites	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small Carp Captured	0	0	0	0	0	0
Large Carp Captured	40	0	0	0	0	0
Species Richness	44	0	0	20	9	0
Total Catch	7622	0	0	578	1022	0
Most Abundant Species	Mimic Shiner	N/A	N/A	Emerald Shiner	Emerald Shiner	N/A

MONITORING INVASIVE CARP REPRODUCTION IN THE ILLINOIS WATERWAY

INHS

Introduction

This project monitors for invasive carp reproduction in the IWW and major tributaries (Kankakee, Fox, Vermilion, Mackinaw, Spoon, and Sangamon rivers). Ichthyoplankton sampling will be conducted to assess the extent, timing, and magnitude of invasive carp reproduction in the IWW, monitor for Black Carp reproduction, and quantify relationships between invasive carp adult abundance, reproductive output, and recruitment. Samples will be collected from late April through October, with more frequent sampling effort during periods when temperature and flow conditions are considered optimal for invasive carp spawning.

October - November2025 Highlights

INHS completed monitoring for invasive carp reproduction during the last week of September. During October – December, identification of collected eggs and larvae was completed, with data QA/QC ongoing. Invasive carp eggs were identified in samples as far upstream as the Marseilles Pool, whereas invasive carp larvae were identified in and downstream of the upper Peoria Pool in 2025. No evidence of invasive carp reproduction was identified upstream of the Dresden Island L&D during 2025. Analysis of data collected during 2025 is ongoing and results will be reported as soon as they are available.

DES PLAINES RIVER OVERFLOW MONITORING

USFWS

November 2025 Highlights

The agency did not submit a response for the Nov monthly report.

SEPTEMBER SUMMARY OF THE TELEMETRY SUPPORT FOR THE SEICARP MODEL

USFWS

Introduction

This project provides support for the inter-agency telemetry array deployed in the Illinois River basin. The 2025 plan of work for USFWS placed 150 acoustic transmitters in Silver Carp and Bighead Carp across the Peoria, Starved Rock, and Marseilles Pools. Forty-five of these tags were implanted in bigheaded carps in Marseilles Pool to support detection efforts by agency partners outside USFWS. USFWS maintained 18 receivers across the Peoria and Starved Rock Pools in 2024. In 2025, two additional receivers were added to Starved Rock Pool. The data gained from the additional tagged fish and additional receivers will improve the accuracy of MRWG modeling work, allowing improved estimates of current levels of exploitation and bolstering estimates of large-scale pool-to-pool movement. The receiver names and locations in the telemetry array are listed in table 1 and figure 1.

November 2025 Highlights

The agency stated there were no updates for November 2025.

TELEMETRY MONITORING PLAN

USACE

Introduction

The telemetry monitoring plan includes tagging fish with individually coded ultrasonic transmitters in the Upper IWW. The acoustic network is comprised of stationary receivers supplemented (when necessary) by a mobile hydrophone unit to collect information from acoustic transmitters (tags) implanted into Bighead Carp, Silver Carp, and surrogate species. Acoustic receiver coverage within the Upper IWW primarily focuses on the EDBS, with secondary coverage surrounding lock and dams and emigration routes, such as tributaries and backwater areas. As of 2025, USACE operates 41 receivers between the confluence of the Cal-Sag and CSSC and the Dresden Island Lock and Dam.

November 2025 Highlights

In November 2025, all receivers in the network were downloaded and all detection data was sent to USGS for inclusion in the RAFT database. There are currently 4 receivers upstream and 8 receivers downstream of the Electric Dispersal Barrier in Lockport Pool, 5 receivers in Brandon Road Pool, and 24 receivers in Dresden Island Pool. No fish were tagged in the month of November.

ALTERNATE PATHWAY SURVEILLANCE IN ILLINOIS – LAW ENFORCEMENT

IL DNR

Introduction

This project enforces laws enacted to prevent the expansion and/or introduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS) within the waters of the State of Illinois and jurisdictions throughout the Great Lakes basin. The IL DNR Invasive Species Unit (ISU) specializes in closely regulating water-related industries that are likely to be a source of future introductions or expansion of AIS into state waters. Industries include sport and commercial fishing, aquaculture, fish transportation, bait, pet, aquarium, fish stocking, and live food markets.

November 2025 Highlights

Two fee fishing area inspections were completed in Northeastern Illinois as part of the IDNR's random commercial inspection program. Inspections of the records and facilities didn't identify any deficiencies, and all species purchased for stocking were legal native species. A fish truck delivering live fish to food markets in Chicago's Chinatown was inspected and found to be in compliance with all applicable regulations. The owner of a New Jersey aquarium supply company was issued a citation for the unlawful sale of two Illinois-prohibited aquatic plants, Egeria densa and Parrot feather. The business owner was previously notified that both aquatic plants were illegal to sell and ship to Illinois through the Great Lakes Law Enforcement Committee's basin-wide enforcement initiative targeting the illegal trade of "least wanted" aquatic invasive species. The products were advertised and sold on Etsy and shipped via the United States Postal Service.

INVASIVE CARP POPULATION MODELING TO SUPPORT AN ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

USGS, USFWS

Introduction

This project will develop objective, data-driven models to inform decisions concerning invasive carp control efforts in the Illinois River. This project supports ongoing modeling efforts to provide recommendations about the magnitude and spatial allocation of fishing effort and deterrent barriers to reduce the risk of Silver Carp and Bighead Carp introduction and establishment in the Great Lakes.

November 2025 Highlights

The agency stated there are no updates for the modeling work group at this time.

INVASIVE CARP STOCK ASSESSMENT IN THE ILLINOIS RIVER

IL DNR

November 2025 Highlights

The agency did not submit a response for the Nov monthly report.

BLACK CARP BOUNTY PROGRAM

ILDNR

Introduction

In 2015, the Black Carp Bounty Program was created to increase the number of black carp specimens made available for research to provide improved information on the status and characteristics of these carp in the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Knowledge of black carp geographic distribution, population characteristics, and diet are needed to inform development of management strategies to control black carp abundance, impacts, and further range expansion.

Nearly all black carp detected in the Mississippi River and tributaries are caught and reported by commercial fishers, largely due to the difficulty in sampling black carp in large rivers and limited agency and university sampling efforts focused on this species. The Black Carp Bounty Program was created to provide a reward of $100 per fish to provide incentive for commercial fishers to target black carp in the wild, report any black carp that they catch to agency biologists, and donate the fish for black carp research.

November 2025 Highlights

The table below summarizes the total number of Black carps caught since transition of the program from Southern Illinois University to IDNR to Tetra Tech.

Month	# of Fish
2023 *	11
2024	116
2025 Part Year	-
January	10
February	6
March	4
April	9
May	20
June	15
July	21
August	16
September	11
October	15
November	4
2025 Part Year Subtotal	131
GRAND TOTALS	258

* Records start July 1, 2023.