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Common carp: Control of this invasive species demands the support of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force

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The common carp, *Cyprinus carpio*, is not only the most widely distributed and damaging invasive fish in North America but also one that likely can be controlled with very modest federal support. This species was introduced by the United States Fish Commission in the 1870's. Within a few decades it came to dominate the fish biomass of vast expanses of our inland waterways where through its habit of rooting deeply into the sediments for food, it turns clear inland waters into turbid sloughs devoid of rooted plants. Thousands of acres of refuge areas for waterfowl have been all but destroyed while hundreds of lakes with carp populations cannot meet basic E.P.A. water quality standards. Despite this, the common carp has not been the subject of any systematic study in North America, and federal, state, and private groups spend tens of millions of dollars in an attempt to rid key waterways of this species across the country. With the exception of an occasional rotenone treatment, few of these desperate efforts are successful. This is particularly disturbing because our research in Minnesota indicates that the common carp problem can be successfully addressed at reasonable cost in many locations. I will review three reasons why modest federal support for common carp is justified. First, formal recognition of the problems caused by the common carp (in the form of a simple statement acknowledging the common carp problem) would greatly help carp research and control groups in their efforts to raise funds and generate support. Second, extremely modest organizational support would enable nationwide dissemination of carp-control technologies that do exist so all citizens can benefit. Third, while other countries (Australia and New Zealand) have policies for managing carp, the United States lags in this area – we'd like to reverse this and have the US move to the forefront with a successful control program for the first invasive fish it introduced. We propose that the ANSTF adopt a simple resolution advocating the need to control common carp and allocate a few thousand dollars to help coordinate local efforts so they can be maximally productive.

*Peter is a professor at the University of Minnesota and an expert in the area of sensory manipulation of fish behavior, a topic on which he has over 100 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. After 16 years of study his group identified a migratory pheromone for use in controlling sea lamprey in the Great Lakes which has remarkable potency. Now, Peter's group focuses on the common carp and is the process of starting the first ever integrated control program for an invasive teleost fish. Today he will share thoughts on that issue.*