



# The Spreader

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## Battling the Asian Carp at Brandon Road

This is an update on the construction project underway at Brandon Roads Lock on the Illinois River. The efforts to stop Asian Carp from advancing to Lake Michigan are being focused on the locks which will be rebuilt to contain at least three different types of repelling devices. In order to put these new systems in place the lock bottom must be blasted deeper into the bedrock to accommodate the new equipment. While the locks are being readied, several groups of engineers have been experimenting with different types of sound barriers, electric currents, bubble curtains, and nets to determine what the best levels of current, bubbles, or sound will keep the fish away. The following report is from Jim Hubbell, our Illinois Board Member.

### Brandon Road Lock—Drained for Construction



The Brandon Road Interbasin Project has continued to evolve with a focus on effectiveness and efficiency which has resulted in estimated project savings of \$500 million and a reduction of two years in the construction schedule. The Brandon Road Lock was drained last summer, and a tagged Silver Carp was discovered in the downstream approach channel. This underlines the urgency of the project.

The Illinois river winds 327 miles before connecting Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River. Asian carp were first captured in the lower Illinois river in 1988. Since then, they have spread like wildfire, decimating native species. All of north America should be alarmed by the advance of Asian Carp. The lakes are a focus, but really what is at stake is also the rivers feeding the lakes. These fish will seek out the rivers because they are warmer and shallow, making it easier to spawn and feed. Although not a complete apples to apples comparison, compare the 2023 total catch of 81 walleye in Illinois with millions caught in Wisconsin. Walleye have been starved out in Illinois by the carp.



## Brandon Road Lock—Construction Workers



Model of the Flushing Lock to be constructed.



The principal weapon for locating carp is the DNA water sample which determines if the carp have been or are present in that area. In June 2021, 100 samples of DNA found that carp were present near the mouth of the Milwaukee and Kinnikinnic rivers which empty in Lake Michigan. In September 150 samples had positive detection. A week of electrofishing did not produce a single fish however.

DNA testing and analysis have been used since 1984. Anything that comes from the body contains DNA which can identify the host. It can be on the ground, in the air, in water, or in sediment. Environmental DNA testing was developed in 2009 which allows for rapid and cost effective collection of information about species distribution and abundance. It is especially useful in remote locations, rugged topography, under water, and in extreme weather conditions. For fish, eDNA is more cost effective for detection compared to electrofishing, netting, snorkeling, tagging, or other methods. Developed by Notre Dame University in 2009, The US Fish and Wildlife service has sampled 40,000 samples across great lakes basin.

Pleasure boaters can travel freely from infested areas to the lakes. Although they are not taking samples, they can carelessly be DNA distributors. It is important to emphasize how we must prevent the spread of hitchhiking invasive species. Remove any visible aquatic plants, animals, and mud from equipment before leaving the water. Remove water from all equipment including motors, live wells, bait containers, boat hulls, and bilges. Throw away unwanted bait, worms and fish parts in the trash. Don't throw purchased bait or packing material into the water. Dry everything or wipe down before reuse.

It is easy to predict an increase in Lake Michigan positive tests in 2024. The locks have been closed for two years. Larger pleasure boats south of Brandon Road have been collecting DNA on their bottoms, The trip to Lake Michigan through the Chicago Sanitary Canal is a no wake area which means the bottoms wont "scrub" until lake turbulence, when entering the lakes. causes carp DNA to drop like a snowstorm. Its everybody's responsibility to make sure this doesn't happen.

## Automatic Identification System Report—Tom Dogan

LMYA Commodore Thomas Dogan reports from attending a USCG Navigation Safety Advisory Council meeting April 2—3 at SUNY Maritime College in New York City that he has been selected for the AIS workgroup. The AIS system is used by all navigators on today's waterways. AIS will soon be used to mark all the alternative energy source structures (windfarms). Future amazing capabilities of chartplotters are:

1. Superior to the DSC ( Digital Selective Calling) process because it transmits vessel information continuously, with no user input required.
2. AIS transmits digital sentences to enhance navigation. Any danger to a mariner can be displayed.
3. Automatic chart uploads including Notice to Mariners information. In Real Time, things such as a boat parade, fireworks display, space shuttle launch can be marked on the charts.
4. Physically existing navigation markers (buoys) are not replaced by AIS but will be enhanced by Visual Aids for better navigation possibilities.
5. After storms, if physical marker buoys have been displaced or destroyed, the Virtual Aid to navigation can quickly be activated to avoid errors for ships. Satellites will beam down virtual markers instantly.
6. One Radio beacon can transmit several virtual markers as many as 50 or more to mark multiple targets.

## Michigan Events in 2024

St. Joseph : Lake Bluff Artisans Fairs—June 1, July 20, August 17, August 31  
Friday Night concerts– Howard Bandshell—July 19 through August 30  
Lest we forget Reenactment—June 22  
Makers Trail Festival– Bridgman—June 8  
Krasi Art Fair on the Bluff—July 13 & 14

South Haven: Harborfest—June 14-15  
Antiques & Classic Boat Show—June 15  
Queen’s Cup– June 28, 29  
Light Up the Lake Fireworks—July 4  
Blueberry Festival—August 8-11  
Rock the Boat , Michigan Maritime Museum—August 23  
Salute to Vets—August 16-17

Saugatuck : Venetian Festival—July 26 & 27

Muskegon : Burning Foot Beer Festival—August 24  
Great Lakes Surf Fest—August 12

Grand Haven : Rock the Coast Event—July 19 & 20  
Coast Guard Festival—July 26—August 4

Ludington : Badger Carferry from Manitowoc Wis—June 4-Sept 1  
Jaycees Freedom Festival—July 3 & 4  
Offshore Classic Fishing Tournament—July 15-21  
Suds on the Shore Festival—July 17

Manistee : Forest Festival—July 3—7  
Arcadia Daze—July 26—28  
Hops and Props Manistee—TBD  
Manistee Ghost Ship—Saturdays in October 7:30 to 10:30

Submitted by Gaye Blind, Michigan Rear Commodore, LMYA

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