

**Ministry of Natural
Resources and Forestry**

Office of the Minister

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Mr. Peter Turkstra
President
Key River Area Association
2 Webster's Falls Road
Dundas ON L9H 4W2

Dear Mr. Turkstra:

Thank you for your letter regarding grass carp eggs reported in the Sandusky River in Ohio. Ontario shares your cottage association's concerns regarding the threat invasive species pose to our biodiversity, economy and society. I would like to provide you with some information on what our government is doing to help combat the threat of invasive species like Asian carp.

On November 3, 2016, the *Invasive Species Act* came into effect in Ontario and along with it a regulation that prohibits and restricts certain species. All four Asian carp species are regulated as prohibited under the act. The regulation prohibits their propagation in the province, as well as their importation, transportation, deposit or release, purchase, sale, and lease or trade, unless they are dead and eviscerated.

Ontario also participates as a member of the bi-national Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee to coordinate invasive Asian carp prevention, detection, and monitoring activities. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and U.S. states bordering Lake Erie, including Ohio, to respond to sightings of grass carp, carry out Asian carp surveillance, and conduct studies related to understanding grass carp in Lake Erie. This includes the Sandusky River and Western Lake Erie.

At this time, the scope of the reproduction and survival of young invasive Asian carp in Lake Erie is not known. The location and timing where fish are spawning is also unknown. It is thought that these fish are using the Sandusky River, as well as other locations in the western basin of Lake Erie, for spawning and foraging. This area is very large and grass carp are present in low numbers, making their detection and capture difficult.

In 2015 and 2016, Ohio and Michigan used acoustic telemetry tags to track grass carp. This tagging data determines where fish are during different parts of their life cycle and helps better understand their habitat use and where they may be intercepted. My ministry, the DFO and U.S. states bordering Lake Erie are planning to coordinate work in the Sandusky River and the western basin of Lake Erie to use this tagging data in order to capture and remove grass carp.

If you have any further questions about my ministry's work, please contact Matt Smith, Natural Heritage and Invasive Species Biologist, Natural Heritage Section, at (705) 755-1265 or matt.j.smith@ontario.ca.

Again, thank you for writing.

Best,



Kathryn McGarry
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

c: Matt Smith