

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2202

July 7, 2010

The Honorable Mitch Daniels
Governor of Indiana
Statehouse
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

Dear Governor Daniels:

I am deeply concerned about statements made recently by staff in the Indiana Department of Natural Resources regarding the threat of Asian carp entering the Great Lakes via the Wabash River and Little Wabash River. Public statements by the Department staff downplay the threat the carp pose, contrary to what my staff has been told by federal and state agencies.

On Wednesday, June 30, Congressional staff members were briefed about the presence of Asian carp in Indiana's Wabash River by representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as by staff from the Indiana and Illinois Departments of Natural Resources. On that call, staff were told that Asian carp were found alarmingly far up the Wabash River, as close as 20 miles away from a potential connection point with the Great Lakes Basin. They were told that in the event of a flood in the area near Fort Wayne, Indiana, the waters of the Little Wabash River could connect with the Maumee River, which could allow these carp into the Great Lakes Basin.

Following a statement I issued calling for immediate action to address this threat, an Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) spokesperson was quoted by the Associated Press as saying, "We have no evidence that they have migrated or moved into the areas people are saying." However, the EPA has confirmed that carp have been found 20 miles away from the potential connection point with the Maumee River which flows into Lake Erie.

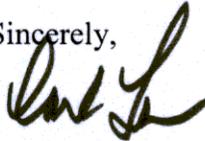
The Indiana DNR also issued a press release on July 2 about Asian carp in the Wabash River. The release states that the Asian carp have been found below the dam that creates Roush Lake and that "Asian Carp would be unable to pass beyond this barrier to the upper stretches of the Wabash River." This statement is misleading, as carp have been discovered spawning this year in the Little Wabash River, which connects to the Wabash River bypassing that dam, making carp passage unaffected by the dam. While the carp may have not moved past the dam on the Wabash River, they have unimpeded access up the Little Wabash River where a flood could allow their passage to the Great Lakes.

The release states that the "Indiana DNR has long been aware of the potential connection through study of floodway mapping." My staff has been told that the flood threat is real and that the area in question has flooded eight times in the last four years.

The release further states after a study has been completed regarding the potential floodway connection, the Indiana DNR "will quickly turn to planning efforts on preventative measures to deter Asian carp movement into the Maumee River watershed." Given the serious threat that Asian carp pose to the Great Lakes and the alarming findings of Asian carp in the Little Wabash River in a location that could connect to the Great Lakes Basin, we strongly plead with you not to allow a study to delay the immediate and decisive action necessary to stop the carp.

This matter is of the utmost importance and urgency. I would greatly appreciate your attention to this issue and clarification of these statements. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl Levin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carl" being more prominent than the last name "Levin".

Carl Levin

cc: The Honorable Jennifer Granholm, Governor of Michigan
The Honorable Lisa Jackson, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
The Honorable Marcia McNutt, Director, U.S. Geological Survey
Mr. Rowan W. Gould, Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency