



October 6, 2025

GRETCHEN WHITMER
CHAIR
Governor of Michigan

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KATHY HOCHUL
Governor of New York

JOSH SHAPIRO
Governor of Pennsylvania

TONY EVERS
Governor of Wisconsin

DAVID NAFTZGER
Executive Director

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works
170 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate
Committee on Environment and
Public Works
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chair, U.S. House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, U.S. House
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Capito, Chair Graves, Ranking Member Whitehouse, and Ranking
Member Larsen:

The Governors of the Great Lakes States call on the U.S. Congress to provide full federal funding for operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and replacement (OMRR&R) costs for the Brandon Road Interbasin Project. The Brandon Road Interbasin Project is critical infrastructure with major regional and national significance. This project is intended to prevent invasive carp from migrating up the Mississippi River and entering the Great Lakes St. Lawrence River Basin, which could devastate the ecosystem that supports fisheries for tribal, commercial, and recreational interests and harm local and regional economies. The successful completion and ongoing operation of the Brandon Road Interbasin Project is a national priority and one that is of significant national interest as the tools and methods deployed at this location could serve to inform invasive carp management throughout the Mississippi River basin, including the Missouri River stretching to the Dakotas and the Ohio River extending to the east.

Invasive carp, including bighead, silver, and black carp, pose an imminent threat to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River ecosystem and economy because of their ability to reproduce rapidly and outcompete native species. Once established, invasive carp would be difficult to eradicate or control, thereby joining sea lamprey, zebra mussels, and other aquatic invasive species (AIS) that federal, state, and local governments as well as businesses in the region spend many millions of dollars each year to mitigate and control.

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The Great Lakes St. Lawrence region is home to more than 100 million people and 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater. It is a major economic region with a \$9.3 trillion economy. Overall, the introduction and rapid spread of invasive carp to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin would result in major environmental and economic impacts that harm native species, water quality, fisheries, recreational boating, and property values.

Invasive carp are established in the Illinois River and portions of the Mississippi River and pose a clear threat to the Great Lakes. The Brandon Road Interbasin Project in Illinois is situated at a strategic pinch point and will provide important new defenses against invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes.

The federal government has previously recognized the importance of stopping invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes. As you know, the U.S. Congress authorized the project in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020 and authorized an increase of the federal cost share to 90 percent for all project costs in WRDA 2022. In 2022, \$225.8M in construction funds were appropriated in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law with an additional \$47.88M of construction funds appropriated in the FY2023 budget.

At the same time, the Great Lakes Governors have demonstrated a strong commitment to protecting the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin from invasive carp. In 2020, the State of Illinois and the US Army Corps of Engineers signed an agreement to complete the pre-construction engineering and design (PED) phase. The States of Illinois and Michigan provided the 35% non-federal cost-share (\$10.1 M) for this phase. In 2023, Michigan and Illinois appropriated \$64 million and \$50 million, respectively, to meet the nonfederal requirement to begin construction of the project.

We applaud the Congress for providing project construction costs to date. Yet even with the currently authorized 90:10 federal/non-federal cost-share, the additional non-federal requirements for OMRR&R in perpetuity will create a long-term obligation that an individual state should not be expected to assume. This is especially true for a major infrastructure project that benefits eight states, many tribal nations, and the United States as a whole.

We welcome the opportunity to work with you to support the inclusion of full federal funding for the remaining operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and replacement costs of the Brandon Road Interbasin Project in the 2026 Water Resources Reform and Development Act, or other legislation as appropriate.

Thank you for your continued partnership in our shared efforts to protect the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin. By working together, we will create jobs, expand economic opportunities, and ensure a healthier environment for all the people of our nation.

Sincerely,



Gretchen Whitmer
Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors
Governor of Michigan



Mike DeWine
Vice-Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors
Governor of Ohio



JB Pritzker
Governor of Illinois



Tim Walz
Governor of Minnesota



Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York



Josh Shapiro
Governor of Pennsylvania



Tony Evers
Governor of Wisconsin