



STATE OF ILLINOIS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
CAPITOL BUILDING, 207 STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

BRUCE RAUNER
GOVERNOR

December 17, 2018

Dear Governor Snyder,

Thank you for following up on our September conversation and for your offer to provide \$8 million in funding toward Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs associated with the Brandon Road Project. We appreciate the offer, and your ongoing support for efforts to fight Asian Carp.

We both have the same goal – to keep Asian Carp out of the Great Lakes. Together, our administrations partnered to organize our respective Congressional delegations to reduce the nonfederal sponsor's O&M related obligations and move up the Brandon Road timeline and related Chief's Report. Additionally, we have partnered to ask Congress to continue and enhance Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding that is critically important in our ongoing efforts. With the support of all Great Lakes states, our administration signed on as nonfederal sponsor when the project was stalled and has since worked closely with the US Army Corps of Engineers to advance the Brandon Road project. This partnership not only signaled our mutual interest in the project, but our lasting commitment to keeping Asian Carp from the Great Lakes.

We agree that every appropriate effort should be made to prevent the entry of Asian Carp into the Great Lakes. That is why, more than 20 years ago, Illinois began working diligently and with great success to organize local, state, federal and provincial governments to fight the spread of aquatic invasive species like Asian Carp. Due to these efforts, Asian Carp have not advanced from their current location – the Dresden Island Pool – since they were first documented in 1990. Furthermore, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources reports having removed 93% of the Asian Carp from the Dresden Island pool since 2012.

Rather than rest on past successes, it is important we focus our efforts today and in the future on reducing the risk of Asian Carp entering the Great Lakes. While we respect your offer to provide \$8 million toward operation and maintenance, this approach does not reflect the sense of urgency stressed in your letter. According to the Army Corps of Engineers, even under an accelerated timeline, the earliest possible date for the first dollar to be allocated toward operation and maintenance is 2028. In fact, the final project design is still 4 years away and will be required before any substantial fair share funding agreement could ever be responsibly discussed by Great Lakes states. We do not believe it is appropriate – especially given our lame duck status – for us to accept funds and bind Illinois to a project that is not final, and whose true costs are years from being calculated.

Given this reality and the sense of urgency that accompanied your offer, we hope you will consider our counteroffer. Let's continue to work together on changing the risk and probability of Asian Carp entering the Great Lakes today. The best way to do this, according to updated modeling, is to enhance commercial fishing strategies in the upper Illinois River as well as the Alton, LaGrange, and Peoria pools. We are asking you to join us in focusing our agreement and your offer of funds on this effort, because it can dramatically reduce the Asian Carp risk prior to Brandon Road construction which is not scheduled to begin until October 2022.

According to scientists at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, an investment of \$8 million dollars would allow us to more than double the current contractual commercial fishing and monitoring efforts in the upper Illinois River system and allow for expanded efforts and a significant reduction in Asian Carp breeding and Juvenile populations in upper Illinois River and the Alton, LaGrange, and Peoria Pools. As a result of this partnership, small fish – specifically those of 3-inch in length or less – would be reduced further with the harvest and removal of the spawning adult population from the lower river, over 100 miles from Lake Michigan. As you know, fish of this size remain the biggest threat to the existing electric barrier dispersal system, which is why enhancing commercial fishing today is so important.

Let's act now by executing an intergovernmental agreement between our two states (initial draft attached) to make a momentous positive impact on the Asian Carp fight and ensure continued protection for the Great Lakes while additional measures at Brandon Road are engineered and designed. In the meantime, we will commit to you that we will encourage the incoming administration to seriously consider your fair-share funding formula, applied to both construction and operations and maintenance, after they are fully briefed on the issue and project.

We sincerely hope we can work together today, through this agreement, to signal our continued partnership at keeping Asian Carp from Lake Michigan today. I look forward to your approval of this proposal and the opportunities it creates to help protect the Great Lakes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Rauner".

Bruce Rauner
Governor, State of Illinois