

## **Grothman Bill H.R.380 - To amend the Federal Power Act to require the consideration of invasive species when prescribing fishways, and for other purposes.**

- Mr. Chairman Rush, Ranking Member Upton, and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me the chance to speak in favor of amending the Federal Power Act to require the Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary of Interior to consider the threats posed by invasive species before mandating a new fish passageway be built through a dam.
- My bill is bipartisan and enjoys the support of Congressman Mark Pocan also of Wisconsin.
- Our home state currently faces an invasive species threat that may affect the entire Great Lakes Region.
- Invasive species are not just a problem in Wisconsin but are causing serious large-scale environmental and economic problems across the country. According to the Department of the Interior, the prevalence of invasive species is estimated to cost the U.S. economy over \$100 billion annually, including impacts to business and industry, recreation, and public health.
- A hydroelectric dam in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin, offers a case in point.
- The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has ordered the installation of a fish passageway located at the hydroelectric plant in Prairie du Sac dam. Asian Carp, which is an invasive species that can grow nearly three feet in length, have been found at the base of this dam.
- Fish passageways can serve an important role of preserving and enhancing the populations of desirable, native fish by allowing them a way to travel safely, timely, and effectively around dams.
- However, invasive species use these same fish passageways to invade rivers and lakes and devastate native species and their habitats.

- Installing a fish passageway at the Prairie du Sac dam could allow the Asian Carp to migrate upstream to the Wisconsin River, Lake Wisconsin and eventually the Great Lakes.
- Currently, the dam acts as a physical barrier to upstream movement of Asian Carp and other invasive species. None of the invasive species established in the Mississippi River Basin are currently known to exist upstream of the dam.
- In fact, Asian Carp have been captured by Wisconsin Officials below the dam as recently as 2014.
- The presence of these invasive species in the lower Wisconsin River raises concerns that these fish could penetrate past the protective wall of the dam and travel upstream if a fish passage is installed.
- If they do indeed move upstream through the Wisconsin waterways, and eventually into the Great Lakes, there would be significant adverse effects to the environment, native fish populations, and the recreation industry of Wisconsin.
- This bill would simply ensure that federal officials have to consider this threat before prescribing and finalizing fishway conditions like the one in Prairie du Sac.
- We believe that there are viable non-fishway alternative approaches which can both support the maintenance of native fish populations, while also eliminating the risk of spreading invasive species into protected waterways.
- Allowing for greater flexibility and discretion from Department of Interior, with respect to considering non-fishway alternatives will protect watersheds and local economies in the Great Lakes region from the detrimental effects of invasive species.
- I would like to thank the Committee again for holding this hearing and am happy to answer any questions you may have.