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February 17, 2012

Mr. David Wethington
GLMRIS Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
111 North Canal, Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606

RE: Inventory of Available Controls for Aquatic Nuisance Species of Concern – Chicago Area Waterway System

Dear Mr. Wethington,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the *Inventory of Available Controls for Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) of Concern – Chicago Area Waterway*. The Northwest Indiana Forum (Forum) is a not-for-profit, regional economic development organization servicing members in Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Starke, Jasper, Newton and Pulaski counties in Indiana. Our focus is the retention and creation of quality employment opportunities that sustain and enhance our environment and quality of life for the residents of Northwest Indiana. Protection of the environment while enhancing the region's global competitive position is a priority for our members.

Many of our members have water transportation needs for receipt of raw materials and delivery of final products utilizing the Chicago Area Waterway system and Lake Michigan. Waterborne transportation is widely recognized as an energy and environmentally efficient mode of delivery. Recognition by U.S. EPA on the continuing air quality improvements in Northwest Indiana with air quality attainment status, it is important that continued reliability of waterborne transportation mode for Northwest Indiana industries be maintained rather than requiring an increased use of rail and truck transportation modes.

However, Forum members recognize and have experienced the serious nature and impact of invasive species to Lake Michigan. To that end, the Forum supports the GLMRIS efforts to identify and study options, controls and technologies to prevent the transfer of ANS that can be implemented.

It is imperative that during the course of the study and evaluation process full attention be given to including the study of negative impacts to navigation, marine safety (recreational and commercial), flooding and water quality in the screening criteria when making a determination to conduct further analysis. Additionally, detailed investigation into the economic feasibility of an option and/or technology must be given serious consideration. It is important that the general public fully understands not only these impacts but the realistic timeline associated with implementation. An option that would require decades to implement and uncertain funding sources will not be of benefit to the intention and desired outcome of reducing the risk of ANS impacts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on the ANS control paper and related process. The Forum looks forward to continuing to work with the Corps of Engineers on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kay L. Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kay L. Nelson

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