

Success Story: Eagle Marsh Pathway Closure



Asian carp have one less pathway to the Great Lakes, thanks to the completion of a project by the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC). The project—a barrier at Eagle Marsh Nature Preserve in Fort Wayne, Indiana—is intended to keep Asian carp from transferring between the watersheds of the Wabash River in Indiana and the Lake Erie watershed in Ohio, through the Maumee River.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in its Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) identified the wetland as a significant pathway for the potential of Asian carp migration to the Maumee River and from there to Lake Erie. Working closely with the USACE, NRCS designed a berm that was built at the Eagle Marsh site to restrict Asian carp entry into the Great Lakes.

The berm is 1.7 miles long and averages 7.5 feet high. Construction took about three months and used 177,000 cubic yards of compacted fill. The project cost about \$4.4 million and used WRP funds from NRCS to construct the

berm on the easement and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funds for work outside of the WRP site.

The project required the involvement of many agencies, including Little Rivers Wetland Project, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources and Conservation Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Geological Survey, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The first phase closure consists of the entire berm, with the exception of a small notch (350 feet long) that will be built to the approximate 50-year flood elevation. A mesh screen was installed the length of the notch up to the top of the berm at both ends to prevent alteration of the flood crests, with a screen opening that will block Asian carp at elevations that exceed the 100-year, 1 percent chance flood event. The second phase will remove the screen and fill in the notch but cannot be completed until all flood risk in the area has been mitigated.

