

# **Senator Duckworth strongly opposes Trump budget cuts eliminating critical Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**

March 16 2017 3:51 PM



**WASHINGTON** – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), the senior Democrat on the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife, spoke out in opposition to the Trump Administration’s proposed cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) budget at a Senate hearing yesterday, expressing concern that it would eliminate programs that are needed to protect and preserve the Great Lakes from toxic pollution and invasive species like Asian carp. The budget the Trump administration proposed today would gut the EPA and eliminate funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Video of Duckworth at the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works Hearing is available [here](#).

**“Maintaining the health of our Great Lakes is key to protecting our environment, which demands that we work to mitigate the threat of invasive species like the Asian Carp and toxic pollution,”** said Senator Duckworth. **“When our lakes grow overrun by invasive species, our environment and our economy suffer. The Trump Administration’s irresponsible budget cuts to programs like the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative would threaten not only our wildlife, but also thousands of jobs and the livelihood of millions of Americans.”**

The state of the Great Lakes – one of the world’s largest fresh water systems – is also key to the region’s public health and economic prosperity. The Lakes currently provide over 40 million Americans with drinking water and support over 1.5 million jobs, generating billions of dollars a year in economic revenue. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has funded over 3,000 projects since 2010 to address the threats of invasive species, harmful algal blooms, and toxic pollution. It also helps prevent polluted runoff from farms and cities and are our most important line of defense against Asian Carp. For every dollar invested in the initiative, two dollars are returned in the form of increased fishing, tourism, and property values. The initiative is expected to generate \$50 billion in long-term economic benefits to the region.

Duckworth recently signed a [bipartisan letter](#) to EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt urging him to fully fund the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in light of the Trump Administration’s proposed budget cuts to the Initiative, which has been key to stopping the invasion of harmful species such as Asian carp. These fish pose a serious threat to the food supply and habitat of native fish in bodies of water throughout the Midwest, including the Great Lakes.