



Opinion Research
Strategic Communication

Support for Preventing Asian Carp in Minnesota

Analysis of a survey of registered voters

July 2013

The BRS June 2013 study of Minnesota voters reveals an electorate that is aware of Asian carp, concerned about the threat they pose to Minnesota waterways, and supportive of closing the locks in the Twin Cities to stop the spread of these fish. Support for action crosses party lines, with majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and independents in favor.

A total of 404 interviews were conducted via landline and cell phone with a representative sample of registered voters in Minnesota from June 27 to 30, 2013. The margin of sampling error for a study of this size is ± 4.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Below are key findings and conclusions of the study. This memo contains an overview of the findings followed by illustrative charts and crosstab tables.

1. Most Minnesota voters are familiar with Asian carp.

Six in ten Minnesota voters report having heard a lot (32%) or some (31%) about “a fish called the Asian carp,” while another 22% say they have heard a little, and only 15% have not heard of Asian carp at all. Compared to other Great Lakes states, Minnesota voters are more likely to have heard about the carp than voters in Ohio (37% have heard a lot or some), about the same as their neighbors in Wisconsin (63%), and a little less than voters in Michigan (72%).¹

When those who had heard of Asian carp were asked where they learned about it, television and newspaper dominate the answers, followed by radio, the internet, and word of mouth.

- Television (offered by 72% of those who have heard of carp);
- Newspaper (43%);
- Radio (13%);
- Online (12%); and

¹ Michigan: n=600 voters; January 17 to 21, 2012; Wisconsin: n=801 general election voters; September 12 to 14, 2012; and Ohio n=804 general election voters; May 14 to May 18, 2012

- Word of mouth, family, friends, or neighbors (12%).

2. Information about Asian carp produces a high level of concern.

When informed that “the Asian Carp is a very large invasive species of fish that breeds rapidly and experts say will harm the other fish and ecosystems of waterways it enters,” six in ten (60%) Minnesota voters say they would be very concerned if the Asian carp got into lakes and rivers throughout Minnesota, while another 33% would be somewhat concerned and less than one in ten would be not very concerned (4%) or not at all concerned (3%). This is comparable to concern in Wisconsin (56% very concerned) and Ohio (57%) about carp entering waters near them, though a little less concerned than voters in Michigan (73%) are about the Great Lakes.

Politically, Democrats are the most concerned about the spread of Asian carp (64% say very concerned), but majorities of Republicans (53%) and independents (56%) also share a high level of concern about Asian carp.

3. Voters support lock closure and voluntary avoidance of the locks.

There are high and bipartisan levels of support for closing the locks and for asking recreational boaters to avoid opening them to prevent the spread of Asian carp, but less enthusiasm for using tax dollars to help businesses bypass the Twin City waterways.

- Sixty-three percent favor a proposal to “create a physical barrier to stop the carp by closing the locks, or gate, in the Mississippi river in Minneapolis,” including majorities of Democrats (66%), Republicans (66%), and independents (59%).
- Nearly as many (58%) favor a proposal to “ask recreational boaters to stop going through the locks in Minneapolis to avoid opening the gate and potentially letting carp through,” again including majorities of Democrats (62%), Republicans (61%) and independents (57%).
- Support is lower (42%), for using “tax dollars to help businesses use trucks and trains instead of boats to move goods through Minneapolis to avoid opening the gate and potentially letting carp through.” A majority of Democrats (53%) supports this proposal, though Republicans and independents do not.

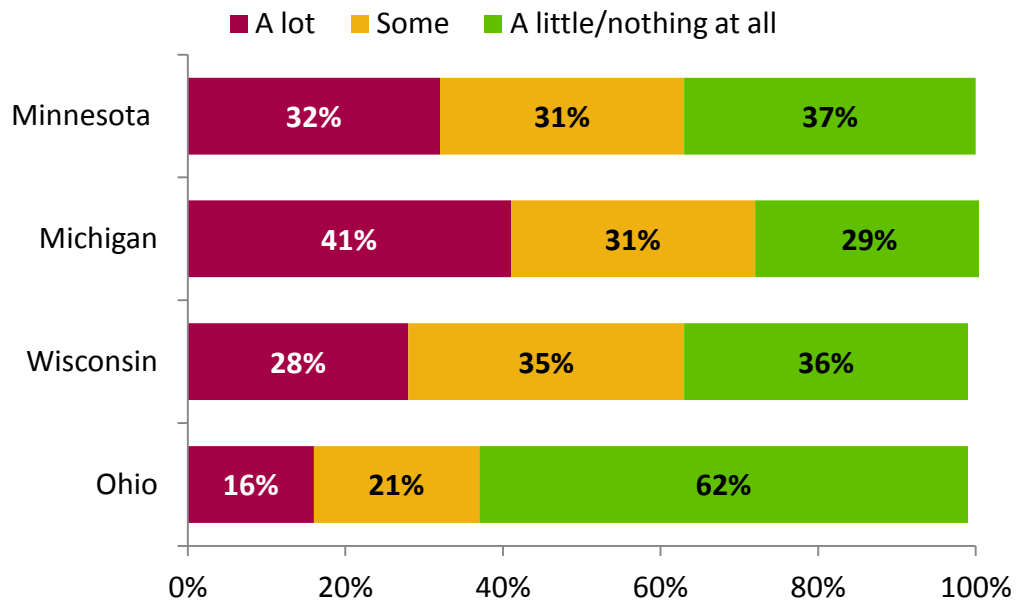
4. For members of Congress, the slight political impact of closing the locks will be more positive than negative.

A majority of Minnesota voters (55%) reports that it would make no difference to them if their member of Congress voted to “close the Minneapolis locks to prevent the carp from getting further up the Mississippi,” while this would make 26% more likely to vote for their member of Congress in the future and only 14% less likely to vote for that person. Across all demographic categories majorities say it would make no difference, but among those who have strong feelings there is more to gain than lose by supporting the lock closure.

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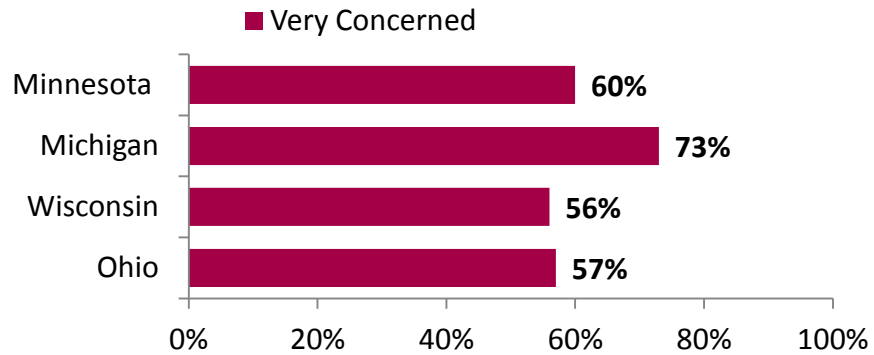
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Chart 1: Awareness of Asian Carp



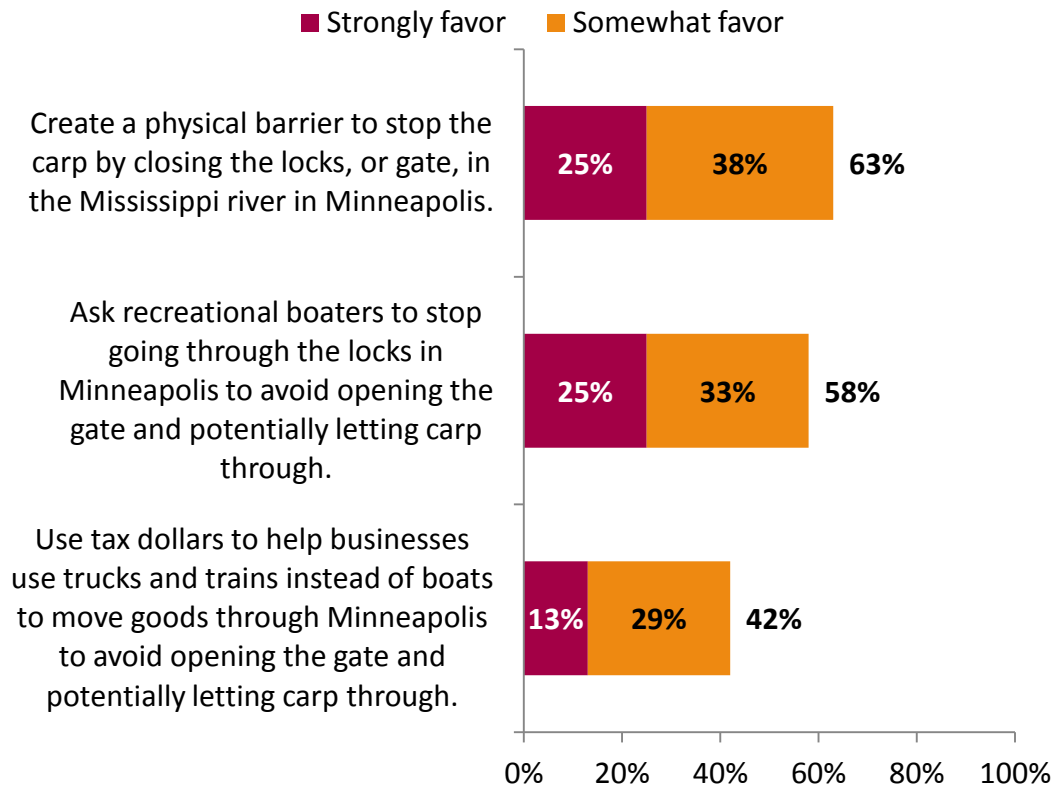
How much have you heard or read about a fish called the Asian carp? Is it a lot, some, only a little or nothing at all? Minnesota: N=404 registered voters, June 27 to 30, 2013 Michigan: n=600 voters; January 17 to 21, 2012; Wisconsin: n=801 general election voters; September 12 to 14, 2012; and Ohio n=804 general election voters; May 14 to May 18, 2012.

Chart 2: Concern about the Spread of Asian Carp



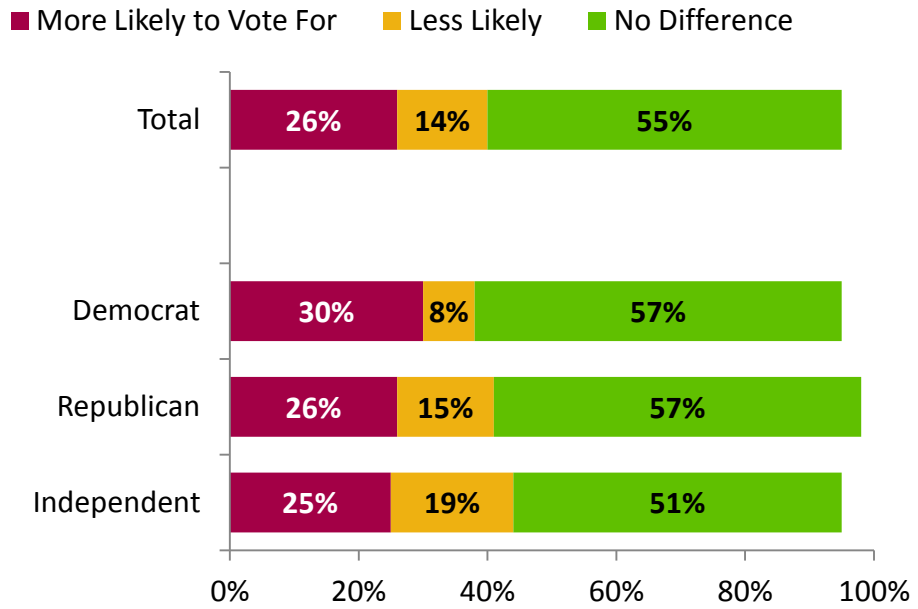
Minnesota: N=404 registered voters, June 27 to 30, 2013: The Asian carp is a very large invasive species of fish that breeds rapidly and experts say will harm the other fish and ecosystems of waterways it enters. If the Asian carp were to get into lakes and rivers throughout Minnesota, how concerned would you be: very, somewhat, not very, or not at all concerned? Michigan: n=600 voters; January 17 to 21, 2012: The Asian carp is a very large invasive species that breeds rapidly and experts say could destroy the other fish and ecosystems of Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes. If the Asian carp were to get into Lake Michigan, how concerned would you be -- very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned?; Wisconsin: n=801 general election voters; September 12 to 14, 2012: The Asian carp is a very large invasive species that breeds rapidly and experts say could destroy the other fish and ecosystems of Lake Erie and the other Great Lakes. If the Asian carp were to get into Lake Erie, how concerned would you be? Would you say that you would be very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned?; and Ohio n=804 general election voters; May 14 to May 18, 2012: The Asian carp is a very large invasive species that breeds rapidly and experts say could destroy the other fish and ecosystems of Lake Erie and the other Great Lakes. If the Asian carp were to get into Lake Erie, how concerned would you be? Would you say that you would be very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned?

Chart 3: Attitudes toward Prevention Proposals



Asian carp have been found in the Mississippi River just south of the twin cities. Here are some proposals to stop them from getting further into Minnesota waterways. For each, please tell me if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the proposal. Q. Create a physical barrier to stop the carp by closing the locks, or gate, in the Mississippi river in Minneapolis. Q. Ask recreational boaters to stop going through the locks in Minneapolis to avoid opening the gate and potentially letting carp through. Q. Use tax dollars to help businesses use trucks and trains instead of boats to move goods through Minneapolis to avoid opening the gate and potentially letting carp through. Minnesota: N=404 registered voters; June 27 to 30, 2013

Chart 4: Impact if Member of Congress Votes to Close the Locks



If your member of Congress voted to close the Minneapolis locks to prevent the carp from getting further up the Mississippi, would you be more likely to vote for that person, less likely, or does it not make a difference to you? Minnesota: N=379 registered voters; June 27 to 30, 2013

Table 1. Awareness of Asian Carp

Q1. How much have you heard or read about a fish called the Asian Carp? Is it a lot, some, only a little or nothing at all?

	A lot	Some	A little	Nothing
Total	32%	31	22	15
Men	44%	29	19	8
Women	21%	33	24	21
18-44	25%	28	24	24
45-64	36%	34	22	8
65+	40%	31	20	8
Democrat	29%	32	25	14
Republican	36%	27	20	17
Independent	33%	32	24	12
Twin Cities	32%	33	22	13
Greater Minnesota	33%	28	22	16

Table 2. Media Channel Informed about Asian Carp

Q2. (If a lot, some, or a little in Q1, n=346): Where have you heard about Asian Carp?
MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED

	Television	Newspaper	Radio	Online	Word of Mouth
Total	72%	43	13	12	12
Men	80%	46	15	16	12
Women	64%	39	11	8	13
18-44	56%	34	12	18	19
45-64	81%	47	15	9	10
65+	85%	51	12	9	8
Democrat	74%	33	14	10	15
Republican	75%	53	11	11	8
Independent	68%	45	15	15	11
Twin Cities	71%	47	15	15	8
Greater Minnesota	74%	39	12	8	18

Table 2. Media Channel Informed about Asian Carp (continued)

Q2. (If a lot, some, or a little in Q1, n=346): Where have you heard about Asian Carp?
MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED

	Fishing/ Hunting/ Environment Organization	Boat Launch/State Park/Etc.	Magazine	School	Other
Total	5%	2	4	1	1
Men	8%	3	5	--	1
Women	2%	2	2	2	1
18-44	9%	4	3	3	--
45-64	3%	1	5	--	1
65+	3%	1	2	--	1
Democrat	1%	2	4	2	1
Republican	7%	4	4	--	1
Independent	9%	3	5	--	--
Twin Cities	5%	3	4	1	2
Greater Minnesota	5%	2	3	1	--

Table 3. Level of Concern about Asian Carp

Q3. The Asian Carp is a very large invasive species of fish that breeds rapidly and experts say will harm the other fish and ecosystems of waterways it enters. If the Asian Carp were to get into lakes and rivers throughout Minnesota, how concerned would you be: very, somewhat, not very, or not at all concerned?

	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
Total	60%	33	4	3
Men	57%	33	7	3
Women	62%	34	*	3
18-44	49%	43	3	4
45-64	64%	31	3	2
65+	73%	20	5	2
Democrat	64%	30	4	2
Republican	53%	39	3	5
Independent	56%	37	5	2
Twin Cities	57%	35	4	3
Greater Minnesota	63%	32	3	3

Table 4. Support for Closing the Locks in the Twin Cities

Asian carp have been found in the Mississippi River just south of the Twin Cities. Here are some proposals to stop them from getting further into Minnesota waterways. For each, please tell me if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the proposal. Q4. Create a physical barrier to stop the carp by closing the locks, or gate, in the Mississippi river in Minneapolis.

	Net favor	Net oppose	Strongly favor	Somewhat favor	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	DK/REF
Total	63%	24	25%	38	18	6	12
Men	66%	25	25%	41	17	8	9
Women	61%	24	26%	35	19	5	15
18-44	56%	30	13%	43	25	5	14
45-64	68%	22	29%	39	16	6	9
65+	70%	19	43%	27	10	9	11
Democrat	66%	24	29%	37	19	5	10
Republican	66%	26	30%	36	20	6	8
Independent	59%	26	18%	41	16	9	15
Twin Cities	61%	25	26%	35	18	7	14
Greater Minnesota	66%	25	24%	42	19	6	9

Table 5. Support for Asking Recreational Boaters to Voluntarily Stop Going through Locks

Asian carp have been found in the Mississippi River just south of the twin cities. Here are some proposals to stop them from getting further into Minnesota waterways. For each, please tell me if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the proposal. Q5. Ask recreational boaters to stop going through the locks in Minneapolis to avoid opening the gate and potentially letting carp through.

	Net favor	Net oppose	Strongly favor	Somewhat favor	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	DK/REF
Total	58%	35	25%	33	24	11	7
Men	53%	43	24%	28	27	16	4
Women	64%	26	26%	38	20	6	10
18-44	56%	39	20%	36	29	10	5
45-64	61%	32	27%	34	22	10	7
65+	59%	33	32%	27	18	15	8
Democrat	62%	33	26%	36	24	9	5
Republican	61%	35	29%	32	24	11	4
Independent	57%	36	24%	33	23	13	7
Twin Cities	57%	36	23%	34	24	12	7
Greater Minnesota	61%	33	28%	33	24	9	6

Table 6. Support for Using Tax Dollars to Offset Business Costs to Bypass Locks

Asian carp have been found in the Mississippi River just south of the twin cities. Here are some proposals to stop them from getting further into Minnesota waterways. For each, please tell me if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the proposal. Q6. Use tax dollars to help businesses use trucks and trains instead of boats to move goods through Minneapolis to avoid opening the gate and potentially letting carp through.

	Net favor	Net oppose	Strongly favor	Somewhat favor	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	DK/REF
Total	42%	51	13%	29	25	26	8
Men	38%	59	15%	23	24	35	4
Women	46%	42	10%	36	26	17	12
18-44	41%	52	8%	33	26	26	7
45-64	42%	51	13%	29	26	26	7
65+	43%	46	21%	22	22	24	11
Democrat	53%	43	13%	41	20	23	4
Republican	35%	57	13%	22	29	28	8
Independent	38%	53	12%	26	26	27	9
Twin Cities	42%	50	14%	28	25	25	9
Greater Minnesota	42%	51	12%	30	24	26	7

Table 7. Impact if Member of Congress Votes to Close the Locks

Q7. [n=379] If your member of Congress voted to close the Minneapolis locks to prevent the carp from getting further up the Mississippi, would you be more likely to vote for that person, less likely, or does it not make a difference to you?

	More likely	Less likely	No difference	DK/REF
Total	26%	14	55	4
Men	23%	20	54	3
Women	29%	9	56	6
18-44	25%	13	60	2
45-64	26%	16	53	5
65+	28%	15	51	7
Democrat	30%	8	57	4
Republican	26%	15	57	2
Independent	25%	19	51	5
Twin Cities	27%	14	53	6
Greater Minnesota	25%	15	57	3