



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

July 10, 2013

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
ATTN: Prairie du Sac Fishway
Nick Utrup, Project Manager
2661 Scott Tower Drive
New Franken, WI 54229

Dear Mr. Utrup:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed fish passage (Fishway Prescription) for Wisconsin Power and Light Company's Prairie du Sac Hydroelectric facility. We appreciate the opportunity to share our perspectives and concerns with this Prescription requirement.

As you know, the Prairie du Sac facility operates under a 30 year license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). When the license was issued in June of 2002, it did not require installation of a fish passage. In July of 2002, however, the Secretary of the Interior submitted the Fishway Prescription that essentially added a requirement to that license to install the fish passage. This passage would open long-closed migration pathways for lake sturgeon, paddlefish, and other native species. At the time, Asian Carp were not known to be in the lower Wisconsin River. Today, however, they live just below the Prairie du Sac dam.

We would like to acknowledge the desire to promote good, sustainable fisheries in Wisconsin waters, especially in the Wisconsin River. We must also acknowledge that the dam as it exists today is a complete and impenetrable barrier to the Upper Wisconsin River and the Great Lakes Basin. We are very concerned that the Fishway Prescription will open this barrier, greatly increasing the threat of Asian Carp infestation upriver from the dam.

With the proposed pooling of fish in the prescription "collector", we are also concerned about the increased pooling of viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) in the contained fish grouping. Although manual human sorting of the fish is proposed, there is always room for human error, and the cost seems unnecessary. Why modify this currently impenetrable barrier and risk the devastation that could come with possible Asian Carp infestation?

It is our understanding that expanded fish stocking in the Wisconsin River would be far more cost-effective and offer greater opportunities for fishery success. It would also significantly reduce the likelihood of Asian Carp breaching the barrier and infesting the Upper Wisconsin River.

The possible impact of Asian Carp moving upriver from the Prairie du Sac dam would be catastrophic. Not only would the fisheries in the ecosystem of the upper reaches of the Wisconsin River be threatened, the likelihood of Asian Carp reaching the Great Lakes Basin would be much greater. In addition, the direct impact on our state's vibrant tourism industry, centered around the Wisconsin Dells, would be devastating. Wisconsin cannot afford to jeopardize its fisheries or its tourism industry – both of which are critical to counties north of the dam. Ultimately, we are talking about the health of the Great Lakes Basin.

We respectfully request that you recommend that the Secretary of the Interior reconsider and reevaluate the Prescription at the Prairie du Sac Hydroelectric Dam through a thorough and comprehensive environmental assessment. It is essential that this dam remain a complete and impenetrable barrier protecting the Upper Wisconsin River and the Great Lakes Basin from Asian Carp and other potentially invasive species.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



JON ERIENBACH
State Senator
27th Senate District



FRED CLARK
State Representative
81st Assembly District



JULIE LASSA
State Senator
24th Senate District



LUTHER OLSEN
State Senator
14th Senate District



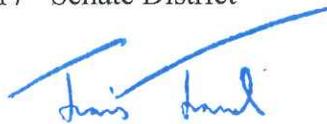
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7th Senate District



TRAVIS TRANEL
State Representative
49th Assembly District



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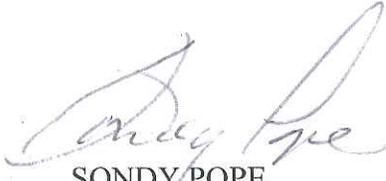
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47th Assembly District



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State Representative
42nd Assembly District



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State Representative
65th Assembly District



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State Representative
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MANDY WRIGHT
State Representative
85th Assembly District



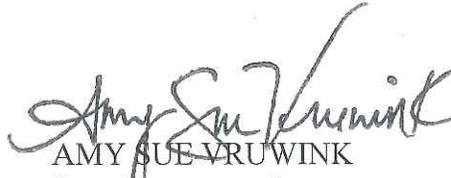
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State Representative
54th Assembly District



PETER BARCA
State Representative
64th Assembly District



JANIS RINGHAND
State Representative
45th Assembly District



AMY SUE VRUWINK
State Representative
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State Representative
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ED BROOKS
State Representative
50th Assembly District