



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Rock Island District

# BRANDON ROAD INTERBASIN PROJECT



QUARTERLY UPDATE

September 2024

## The PROJECT

Brandon Road Lock and Dam near Joliet, Illinois, has been identified as the critical pinch point where layered technologies could be used to prevent movement of invasive carp populations into the Great Lakes.

The Brandon Road Interbasin Project is a complex ecosystem protection effort designed to prevent upstream movement of invasive carp and other aquatic nuisance species into the Great Lakes from the Illinois Waterway. Construction is planned in three increments:

### Construction Increment I:

(A) Automated Barge Clearing Deterrent, Leading Edge Bubble Deterrent, Leading Edge Acoustic Deterrent Array, Leading Edge Support Facilities, and Upstream Boat Launch (B) Site Prep, Channel Rock Excavation

### Construction Increment II:

Electric Deterrent, Wide Acoustic Deterrent Array, Complete Control Building, Right Descending Bank Wall Connect to Lower Guidewall, Flushing Lock, Downstream Boat Launch

### Construction Increment III:

Complete Engineered Channel

Non-structural measures, implemented in conjunction with other federal agencies, could include public education and outreach, monitoring, integrated pest management, manual or mechanical removal, and research and development.

#### Disclaimer:

The articles and material provided in this newsletter are for general informational purposes only; nothing in them is to be considered legally binding. The Corps of Engineers makes no representations, attestations, guarantees or warranties, express or implied, regarding the information contained herein.



*Loren Wobig, director of the Office of Water Resources for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, uses a map to show how the Brandon Road Interbasin Project fits into the current layout of the lock and dam site during Michigan Department of Natural Resources Director, Scott Bowen's first visit to the project site.*

## Project Status Update

Over the past several months, significant progress has been made on the Brandon Road Interbasin Project. A significant milestone was reached in July when the states of Illinois and Michigan signed a vital intergovernmental agreement which allowed the Departments of Natural Resources from both states to sign a project partnership agreement with the USACE Rock Island District, moving the project into the construction phase. This agreement paved the way for \$274 million in federal funding, including \$226 million from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and \$114 million in state funding to be allocated for the first of three construction increments of the \$1.15 billion project.

With the partnership agreement in place, contracts for fabrication, continued design, leading-edge deterrents, and bedrock removal are now being prepared for solicitation. The team has been actively engaging with the navigation industry, hosting several workshops to gather input and minimize the impact on the river system.

In an effort to increase efficiency and reduce impacts to navigation during construction, the team is working to align the rock removal portion of Increment I-B of the project with a previously scheduled maintenance and repair closure at Lockport Lock and Dam in early 2025. This will allow rock excavation from the river channel downstream of the Brandon Road Lock to take place when navigation is already halted for the closure upstream

at the Lockport site. Additionally, construction of Increments I-A and I-B will no longer require the building of a coffer dam and dewatering of the entire downstream approach channel, referred to as "in the wet" construction methodology.

Looking ahead, the team is heavily focused on keeping the project timeline on track for a groundbreaking in early 2025. Design of Increments II and III is a top priority as they will be needed for the next round of contract development. Real estate acquisition and environmental compliance needs have also been at the forefront of the team's efforts as they work to ensure the project meets all state and federal requirements and impacts to the environment are limited.

## In this issue

Project Status Update

Ready for Construction

Invasive Carp Detected

## NEW BRANDON ROAD INTERBASIN PROJECT VIDEO



A comprehensive project overview video was recently unveiled on the Brandon Road Interbasin Project website. Through the use of satellite imagery and digitally rendered structures, the video offers a detailed visualization of the multi-layered technologies being designed to prevent the upstream movement of invasive carp.



## Increments I-A and I-B Ready for Construction

Given the complex nature of the Brandon Road Interbasin Project, design and construction has been strategically divided into multiple increments to optimize the potential for an expedited construction start, upon completion of design and availability of funding. Increment I was further subdivided into parts A and B, allowing for the critical leading-edge deterrents, designed to block the upstream movement of invasive carp, to be constructed as soon as possible.

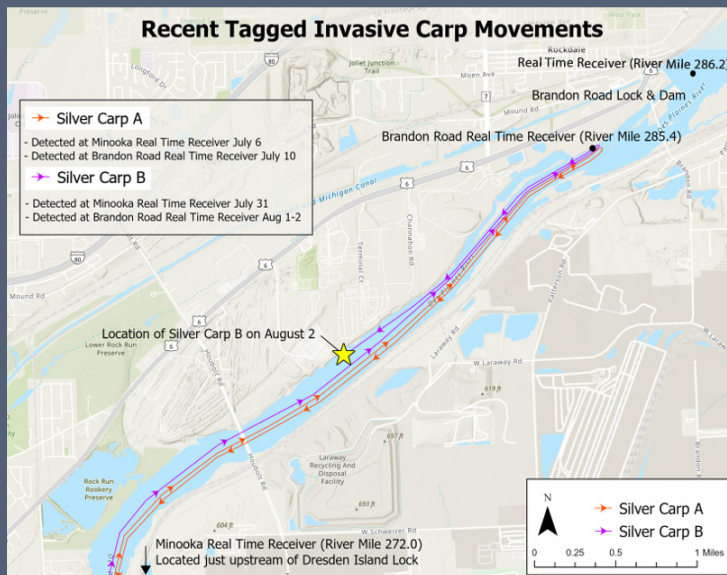
Thanks to the unwavering dedication of a skilled team of professionals, Increments I-A and I-B are now fully prepared for construction and are expected to be awarded before the end of the year.

Once the contract is awarded, construction is projected to take three years, after which the leading-edge deterrents, including the Automated Barge Clearing (ABC) deterrent and the bubble and acoustic arrays that serve as physical and physiological barriers for juvenile and adult fish, will become operational.

This first stage of the project also includes site prep areas that will provide access, staging, and storage for construction materials and equipment, an upstream boat launch that will allow access for monitoring and emergency response vessels, and channel rock excavation that will provide depth for the engineered channel in Increment II of the project.

## Two Silver Carp Recently Detected Near Project Site

As part of the non-structural measures being implemented for the Brandon Road Interbasin Project, a team of specialists from the Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee's Monitoring and Response Work Group have taken a proactive approach by installing real-time receivers at strategic locations both upstream and downstream of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam to monitor the invasive carp population in the area. These advanced receivers, equipped with the capability to detect tags embedded in fish, have already proven valuable by identifying two invasive silver carp swimming in the area downstream of the Brandon Road Lock. The map to the right shows the estimated path of the fish, based on dates they were detected. Due to Carp B not being detected a second time at a the Minooka site nor at the receiver upstream of the lock, a mobile tracking unit was sent out to determine its location. Carp B was detected by the mobile unit on August 2 (noted by the yellow star on the map) confirming that it had moved downstream. This real-time monitoring is a critical component of the project's success, allowing a rapid response to any potential threats and providing valuable data for the ongoing efforts to protect the Great Lakes ecosystem.



## Completed EVENTS

JULY 2024

*Intergovernmental Agreement Signed between Illinois and Michigan*

*Project Partnership Agreement Signed between USACE, Illinois & Michigan*

*States and Provinces Forum*

AUGUST 2024

*Navigation Large Group Workshop*

## Upcoming EVENTS

OCTOBER 2024

*Facilitated Partnering Meeting #6*

Submit Comments  
Online Anytime



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its project partners invite public input. Comments regarding the Brandon Road Interbasin Project can be submitted online to the project team at anytime by visiting:

<https://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Public-Comment-Form/>  
or scanning the QR code above with a mobile device.

## Stay CONNECTED



SCAN ME