

PREVENT: TRADE IN LIVE ORGANISMS PATHWAY

Tracking regional consistency in regulatory policies to restrict the sale, possession and transport of priority aquatic invasive species.

One way to measure progress towards effective regional management of the trade in live organisms pathway is through the implementation of consistent regulated species lists across federal, provincial and state governments. These lists identify plants and animals for which certain activities are illegal in a jurisdiction, e.g., importation, sale or possession. However, inconsistencies in regulated species lists may result in an invasive species being legal to sell in some jurisdictions, creating an opportunity for introduction into the region.

The need for consistent policies between Great Lakes jurisdictions to prevent invasive species introductions is recognized as a regional priority by the [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, Annex 6 of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement](#), and the [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force](#).

In 2013, the [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers](#) identified a list of sixteen “least wanted” aquatic invasive species that are considered a grave threat to the region’s economy and ecology. Five additional species were added to the list in 2018 (denoted by a * in the below table). The governors and premiers called for specific steps to manage these least wanted AIS, including taking executive action within each state or province to prohibit or restrict the transfer of these high-risk species. They also called for regional collaboration to harmonize related state and provincial policies. The least wanted species are:

Least Wanted Species

Fish	Aquatic Invertebrates	Plants
Silver carp	Yabby	Hydrilla
Bighead carp	Killer shrimp	Brazilian elodea
Grass carp	Golden mussel	Parrot feather
Black carp	New Zealand mudsnail*	Water chestnut
Northern snakehead	Marmorkreb*	European frog-bit*
Zander		Yellow floating heart*
Wels catfish		Water soldier
Stone moroko		
Tench*		

Since the announcement of the least wanted list in 2013, many jurisdictions have made substantial progress to regulate the sale, import, and possession of these species. The figures below reflect the jurisdictions (out of 10; 8 states and 2 provinces) that expressly prohibit each of the “least wanted” species. Some states may regulate species through a blanket restriction,

such as prohibiting the sale of all non-native crayfish. The state of Illinois notably utilizes a “white list” approach where a blanket restriction applies to all species except those expressly allowed for sale in the state. The below figures are not intended to capture the status of species under those blanket restrictions and only show species that are specifically named as regulated in a state or province.

- [Fish](#)
- [Invertebrates](#)
- [Plants](#)

NUMBER OF JURISDICTIONS THAT EXPRESSLY PROHIBIT EACH OF THE "LEAST WANTED" SPECIES

Fish Species

	2008	2012	2018
Silver carp	8	10	10
Bighead carp	8	10	10
Grass carp	6	9	10
Black carp	8	10	10
Northern snakehead	8	10	10
Zander	1	3	9
Wels catfish	0	1	7
Stone moroko	0	0	6
Tench*	1	3	5

The number of “least wanted” species regulated in at least half of the Great Lakes jurisdictions increased from only 5 in 2008 to 19 in 2017. There are now 5 “least wanted” species that are regulated in all 10 jurisdictions (up from 0 in 2008). Species with an asterisk (*) indicate species that were added to the Least Wanted list in 2018.

NUMBER OF JURISDICTIONS THAT EXPRESSLY PROHIBIT EACH OF THE "LEAST WANTED" SPECIES

Aquatic Invertebrate Species

	2008	2012	2018
Yabby	1	2	7
Killer shrimp	0	0	5
Golden mussel	0	0	5
New Zealand mudsnail*	1	2	4
Marmorkreb*	0	0	0

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NUMBER OF JURISDICTIONS THAT EXPRESSLY PROHIBIT EACH OF THE "LEAST WANTED" SPECIES

Plant Species

	2008	2012	2018
Hydrilla	2	4	7
Brazilian elodea	1	4	7
Parrot feather	1	4	7
Water chestnut	2	4	7
European frog-bit*	2	3	7
Yellow floating heart*	1	3	6
Water soldier	1	1	5

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Number of "Least Wanted"
Species Regulated by Each
Jurisdiction

	2008	2012	2018
IL	4	4	18
IN	5	11	14
MI	12	12	20
MN	11	13	16
NY	4	5	14
OH	6	6	14
ONT	5	5	16
PA	5	5	6
QBC	0	8	8
WI	0	15	18

The proportion of "least wanted" species that are regulated by each jurisdiction has continued to increase. The possession and sale of most of the original (2013) least wanted species are now restricted across most Great Lakes states and provinces.

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