

GSARP Report June 17, 2022 – Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.

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Highlights Fall 2021 to date, 2022:

- After final review by the National Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, the Alabama Aquatic Nuisance Species Plan was approved during November, 2021. The plan can be accessed from our website at: **Alabama Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Plan** [Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan | Outdoor Alabama](#). This plan approval has initiated a proposal by ADWFF to receive grants funds which should allow secure of funds in summer 2022. This funding should allow Alabama to examine and document other invasive species throughout the state as well as provide needed educational materials.
- ADWFF hired an Aide to assist the new ANS program office in Athens, Alabama, during November, 2021. NOTE: We want to hire an ANS Biologist II in July-August 2022 (if you know of a good candidate or are interested yourself, please call me ASAP at above number)
- Since January 1, 2022, twenty-nine Silver Carp *Hypophthalmichthys molitrix* have been captured by ADWFF staff in Pickwick Reservoir using electrofishing and gillnets in random-stratified (fixed) and targeted sites. Pickwick Reservoir is the leading edge of the invasion front for Silver Carp in Alabama waters of the Tennessee River system. To date, 105 Silver Carp have been captured in this system since fall 2020.
- ADWFF staff continue field monitoring for invasive carps and CY 2022 collections targeted three species (i.e., Bighead, *H. nobilis*; Silver and Grass carps, *Ctenopharyngodon idella*). To determine relative abundance and distribution, gillnets and boat electrofishers were employed using standard methods in Alabama waters of the Tennessee River. Collections and surveys were made in three reservoir pools of the Tennessee River (Pickwick, Wilson and Wheeler) over 33 sample dates at 142 fixed and targeted sites. Silver Carp, ($n = 29$; length range = 722 – 1035 mm; weight range = 4.7 – 15.9 kg; mean weight = 10.80 kg) were captured only within Pickwick Reservoir. Plans for second half 2022 include continued sampling and development of an occupancy sampling strategy for the 3 lower reservoirs.
- On June 15, 2022, a single Silver Carp was found dead in the Montgomery pool (aka Lock E) of the Tombigbee River downstream from Bay Springs Lake located in Itawamba-Prentiss County, Mississippi. This sighting and prior findings of Bigheads and Grass Carp in Alabama waters of the Tombigbee River lend credence to recent discussions by multiple agencies on need for installing fish barriers at Bay Springs. This location is a man-made navigation reservoir at the head of the Tenn-Tom system, ultimately draining into Mobile Bay. Here, invasion of carps from the

Tennessee River through the Tenn-Tom could have devastating impacts on native fauna in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta and all connected inland/coastal waters therein.

- The infestation and control of Island Apple Snails (aka Giant Apple Snails), *Pomacea maculata* in Threemile Creek (Mobile, AL) continues to have management oversight by Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP). Other known populations persist at Hog Bayou industrial ponds near Chickasaw Creek (Mobile CO), Orange Beach (Baldwin County) pond, and two private ponds in Pike Road Alabama (Montgomery County).
- Mobile Area Water and Sewer Board has recently re-opened Big Creek Lake to anglers and boaters on a limited basis due to ongoing issues with *Salvinia molesta* which has been treated by MAWSS since 2021. Big Creek Lake serves as the primary water source for the City of Mobile.
- Since spring of 2021 two Silver Carp have been captured and positively identified within Wilson Reservoir. Additionally, two Bighead Carp (Male = 42.2 Kg; Female = 35.8 Kg) were captured in one commercial fisherman's gillnet in Guntersville Lake off Brown Creek. These are the only two recent reports of invasive carp outside of Pickwick Reservoir in the Tennessee River.
- Asiatic Loach (*Amphiliidae*) have been found in Clear Prong (west side of Coosa River, a tributary to Muddy Prong), a location close to a 2010 infestation site in Kelly Creek.
- Since 2021, small numbers of Smallmouth Bass *Micropterus dolomieu* have been found in Smith Lake, a large reservoir in the Sipsey River system. Though native to the Tennessee River, these popular sport fish are invasives in this system.