

Invasion Issues with Pay Fishing Lakes

Pay Lakes or Fee Fishing Lakes has been identified by MRBP as a potential vector in the introduction and spread of AIS. Searches revealed approximately 400 of these facilities mostly in the Mississippi, Great Lakes, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic and Gulf Regions. This number however is likely a gross underestimation. Fish from both wild (commercially fished rivers, Great Lakes, Chesapeake Bay) and cultured sources are purchased for these facilities so a wide variety of AIS could potentially be moved. Very few states currently regulate pay lakes. In addition, these mostly “small time operators” likely do not know the rules on fish importation nor do they likely follow BMPs to prevent the spread of AIS. MRBP recommends that ANSTF fund a full assessment of pay or fee fishing lakes to determine the actual risks these relatively unregulated facilities pose.

- Would the ANSTF fund full evaluation of the risks associated with pay lakes?