

1991

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION

1991 NEWS BRIEF

- ▶ U.S. Congressmen Dennis Hertel (MI) and Robert Davis (MI) held a hearing before the House Subcommittee on Oceanography, Great Lakes and the Outer Continental Shelf to study the status of sea lamprey management on the Great Lakes. The hearing featured testimony by Commissioner Buzz Besadny, Carlos Fetterolf (GLFC), Doug Jester (MDNR), John Popowski (USFWS), Norville Prosser (Sportfishing Institute), and Bruce Shupp (NYDEC). Live lampreys, placed in an aquarium, illustrated the testimony.

COMMISSIONERS

Canadian Section:

F. William H. Beamish
Gail Beggs
David A. Good
Paul Sutherland, Vice-Chair

U.S. Section:

Robert L. Athey, alternate
C.D. (Buzz) Besadny
James Cady
Constance B. Harriman
Charles C. Krueger, Chair

SEA LAMPREY MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH

- ▶ The commission approved reactivation of the Sea Lamprey Barrier Task Force to: review and update the 1988 Barrier Dam Task Force report; expand the development and use of various types of sea lamprey barriers throughout the convention area; develop strategies for best use of barrier technology; and develop a multi-year plan for research and development of barriers and fish passages.
- ▶ The commission sponsored a workshop on endocrinology.
- ▶ The commission approved funds for the development of *Support Tools for the IMSL Protocol*.
- ▶ The commission agreed to fund five "mini-workshops" to generate new ideas on alternative controls.
- ▶ The Hammond Bay Biological Station received funds from the commission to study the breakdown products of bisazir.

FISHERY MANAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENT, AND RESEARCH

- ▶ The commission requested a report from the Ruffe Task Force on the potential for ruffe to disrupt fish stocks, the likely impediments to ruffe range expansion, other waters containing ruffe, and the feasibility of a ruffe control program.
- ▶ The commission earmarked funds for the lake trout task area to purchase egg traps for use in interagency research, as directed by the task co-chairs.
- ▶ Dr. Barbara A. Knuth (Cornell U) received funds to assess social factors pertaining to management of lake trout rehabilitation and on providing consultation services to fishery managers.

PUBLICATIONS

Status of Walleye in the Great Lakes: Case Studies Prepared for the 1989 Workshop, edited by Colby, Lewis, and Eshenroder. (SP 91-1)

Lake Michigan: An Ecosystem Approach for Remediation of Critical Pollutants and Management of Fish Communities, edited by Eshenroder, Hartig, and Gannon. (SP 91-2)

The State of Lake Ontario Fish Community in 1989, edited by Kerr and LeTendre. (SP 91-3)

COMMITTEE ACTION, RESOLUTIONS, AND REPORTS

LAKE COMMITTEES

- ▶ The Council of Lake Committees requested that the commission write the owners of the vessel *Incan Superior*, a Duluth-Thunder Bay shipper, and stress the need to avoid transport of ruffe in ballast water. The council agreed to write the USFWS concerning the development of epizootic epitheliotropic disease-free (EED) broodstocks and concerning the need for the production of pure EED virus in adequate amounts for development of a field diagnostics test.
- ▶ The Lake Erie Committee focused principally on difficult and complex issues associated with walleye and yellow perch fisheries. The committee agreed on the necessity for conservative harvest strategies but could not reach consensus on total allowable catch. Subsequent to sea lamprey control, a dramatic increase in adult lake trout survival was detected.
- ▶ The Lake Huron Committee reported a sharp decline in major forage species (smelt, alewife, bloater chub) but populations were still at higher levels than those of the 1970s. The committee recommended commission action to study and control sea lampreys in northern Lake Huron and to determine chinook survival from sea lamprey attack.
- ▶ The Lake Michigan Committee reported that fish diseases caused serious losses in Great Lakes hatcheries and in the wild in Lake Michigan and were impacting the lake trout rehabilitation program and chinook salmon populations in the lake. In response to spring die-offs and big declines in catches, the committee established a Chinook Salmon Technical Committee.
- ▶ The Lake Ontario Committee reported the implementation of a lakewide midwater trawling program and the incorporation of the program into existing programs. The committee reported a decrease in survival of adult and juvenile lake trout and a very sharp increase in harvest of lake trout by anglers in U.S. waters. The presence of zebra mussels was documented over much of the lake.
- ▶ The Lake Superior Committee recommended support for the pending *U.S. Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act*. The committee noted that the Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries (SGLFMP) has been the "guiding light" which changed lake committee activities for the better.

BOARD OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS

- ▶ With respect to the Introductions Task, board Joe Leach (OMNR) and Ed Mills (Cornell U) submitted a manuscript to the *Journal of Great Lakes Research*, made a presentation at the AAAS, and held a workshop.
- ▶ Placed a high priority on producing a long-range plan to inform granting agencies about research needs.

GREAT LAKES FISH DISEASE CONTROL COMMITTEE

- ▶ Agency reports indicated EED did not appear in any fish hatchery in 1990 which carried out a complete disinfection and destroyed all infected brood stock.
- ▶ Bacterial kidney disease (BKD) remained a basin-wide problem. Several states attended a workshop to organize and coordinate efforts to deal with the chinook losses (BKD implicated in these losses) in the wild of Lake Michigan.
- ▶ Recommended that non-salmonids be inspected for salmonid diseases prior to their shipment to a salmonid hatchery.

HABITAT ADVISORY BOARD

- ▶ Presented the commission with a proposed statement on contaminants which sought to formalize the commission's position, addressed the concerns, and answered the IJC's question about continued stocking of lake trout and salmonids.
- ▶ With respect to RAPs, the board noted that fish and wildlife habitat concerns and input by management agencies had improved but needed to be more pro-active. The board encouraged agencies and the lake committees to stay involved in RAPs.

COMMUNICATIONS

- ▶ The commission conveyed its support for a provision of the *Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act* that would fund U.S. Coast Guard ballast management initiatives.
- ▶ The Commission sent a letter to the USFWS requesting a plan of action for study and management of EEDV.

1991 BUDGET

The commission received the following funds from the United States and Canada (in U.S. dollars):

	United States	Canada	Total
Sea Lamprey Management and Research	\$6,016,600	\$2,878,595	\$8,895,195
Administration and General Research	\$424,400	\$424,400	\$848,800
Total	\$6,441,000	\$3,302,995	\$9,743,995