



Great Lakes Fishery  
Commission

## U.S. Committee of Advisors Terms of Reference

(Revised May, 2024)

### AUTHORITY

The 1955 *Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries* between Canada and the United States established the Great Lakes Fishery Commission consisting of a Canadian section and a United States section. The U.S. enabling legislation—the *Great Lakes Fishery Act of 1956*—states in part:

"Sec 4. (a) The United States section shall appoint an advisory committee for each of the Great Lakes, upon which committee each state bordering on the lake may be represented by not more than four members. In making such appointments, the United States section shall make its selection for each state from a list proposed by the governor of that state; and shall give due consideration to the interest of:

- (1) state agencies having jurisdiction over fisheries;
- (2) the commercial fishing industry of the lake;
- (3) the sport fishing of the lake; and
- (4) the public-at-large [interests not covered by 1, 2, and 3].

(b) A member of the advisory committee for one lake may also be a member of the advisory committee for one or more other lakes.

(c) The members of the advisory committee shall receive no compensation from the Government of the United States for their services as such members. Not more than ten members of all the committees, designated by the committees and approved by the United States section, may be paid by the Government of the United States for transportation expenses and per diem incident to attendance at the annual meeting of the commission or the United States section.



EST 1955 BY TREATY

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- (d) The members of the advisory committee for each lake shall be invited to attend all non-executive meetings of the United States section relating to that lake and at such meetings shall be granted opportunity to examine and be heard on all proposed recommendations, programs, and activities relating to that lake."

## **COMMITTEE PURPOSE**

To advise the U.S. section of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission by making comments, recommendations, and/or suggestions pertinent to the commission's duties, which are:

1. To formulate a research program designed to make possible the maximum sustained productivity of any stock of fish in the Great Lakes of common concern to the two countries, and to determine what measures are best adapted for such purposes;
2. To coordinate research made pursuant to such programs and, if necessary, to undertake such research itself;
3. To recommend appropriate measures to both governments on the basis of such research programs;
4. To formulate and implement a comprehensive program for the purpose of eradicating or minimizing the sea lamprey populations in the Great Lakes; and
5. To publish scientific and other information obtained by the commission in the performance of its duties.

Further, the advisory committee shall consider matters referred to it by the U.S. section and other matters which it believes are of concern to the Great Lakes fisheries and its fishery resource, whether environmental, biological or social. Advisors should strive to stay current on contemporary issues and bring forward emerging issues of interest to the protection and improvement of the Great Lakes fishery.

## **MEETING SCHEDULE AND ATTENDANCE**

Advisors are expected to attend the annual meeting of each Lake Committee in the spring and the annual meeting of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in early summer. All advisors are also invited to attend the non-executive meetings of the U.S. section and commission, and are further responsible for attending additional meetings (in-person or via electronic means) as called for at the discretion of the chair of the U.S. Committee of Advisors and/or the secretariat.



## **TERM OF MEMBERSHIP**

Members serve at the pleasure of the U.S. section. In the event a member is not contributing satisfactorily to the committee, the chair of the committee shall report to the U.S. section, which has the authority to remove advisors for cause. Cause could include failure to attend meetings, lack of participation in GLFC activities, or exhibiting conduct unbecoming an advisor, *inter alia*. The U.S. section shall review advisor participation and conduct and contact the individual member to discuss specific issues in this regard. In consultation with state agencies, chronically absent advisors may be asked about their continued willingness to serve or may be asked to cede their position on the committee.

Advisors are bound by all provisions of Rule 20 and Rule 21, including, but not limited to, and understanding that advisors will act in good faith, and that no Advisor shall make or participate in making a decision related to the exercise of their duties as an Advisor, if the Advisor knows or reasonably should know that, in the making of the decision, the Advisor would be in a Conflict of Interest or Conflict of Duties.

Any Advisor who has a real or apparent Conflict of Interest or Conflict of Duties, in a matter that is before a meeting of the Advisors shall disclose the Conflict of Interest or Conflict of Duties to the Chair and shall refrain from exercising any duty related to the matter, including recusal from any discussions, deliberations and, if applicable, votes or consensus decision-making on the matter.

Questions or any violation of Rule 20 or Rule 21 should be reported to the Executive Secretary at the earliest opportunity.

## **TRAVEL SUPPORT**

The commission, in conjunction with the U.S. and Canadian Committee of Advisors, has issued a "Guidelines for Advisor Travel." This document should be considered an addendum to these Terms of Reference, but may be modified at any time by the GLFC as needed. Individual advisors may request travel support in accordance with the guidelines. The secretariat will then determine the appropriate method and extent of support for each advisor.

## **VOTING**

All members (or alternates with written proxies) shall have one vote. Voting is by simple majority, but decisions should be consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, the concerns of different interests shall be described in the committee's report to the U.S. section. An individual's majority report may be received by the section separate



from or together with the committee's report.

## **OFFICERS, TERMS OF OFFICE, AND REPORTING**

The advisory committee shall elect a chair, upper lakes vice-chair, and lower lakes vice-chair. The upper lakes vice-chair will be an advisor representing either Lakes Superior, Michigan, or Huron. The lower lakes vice-chair will be an advisor representing either Lakes Erie or Ontario. Terms of office for the chair and vice-chairs shall be two years, beginning immediately after election at the advisory committee's annual meeting during odd-numbered years. However, the out-going chair shall present the committee's report to the U.S. section at the meeting following election of the new officers.

The chair shall call meetings and work with the vice-chairs in making vocal and written preparations for meetings. The chair and vice-chairs shall together develop U.S. advisor meeting agendas and ensure that any briefing materials are distributed to the committee. The chair (in consultation with the vice-chairs) shall, from time to time and at the request of the U.S. Section, provide input on routine, non-controversial matters (in lieu of consulting the entire committee). The chair shall facilitate the collection and consolidation of input from the Committee of Advisors on significant matters. The chair, with the assistance of the secretariat if requested, shall be responsible for communicating via email or other appropriate media, issues of interest to the advisors.

The vice-chairs, as appropriate, shall serve as chair in the chair's absence, assist in the preparation of meeting agendas, provide input on non-controversial matters from time to time, and otherwise assist the chair in executing the business of the committee. The vice-chairs shall work with the chair to develop recommendations, advice, comments and reports to the U.S. section.

## **INVITED TESTIMONY**

The committee may request expert advice, opinion, and special consultation.

## **FORMAL COMMUNICATIONS (RESOLUTIONS, POSITION STATEMENTS, LETTERS, PRESS RELEASES, ETC.)**

The committee shall communicate its interests to the U.S. section through means it deems appropriate. Official communications shall reflect the consensus of the committee or, when consensus cannot be reached, minority concerns reflected, pursuant to "voting" above.



The committee shall develop and revise as-needed, a process to submit, consider, and present to the U.S. section resolutions, letters, position statements, etc. This process shall be an addendum to these Terms of Reference.

## **ADVISOR LETTERHEAD**

There shall exist letterhead stationery for the U.S. advisors for use in communicating approved advisor policies, pursuant to “voting,” above. U.S. advisor letterhead shall be distinct from commission or Canadian advisor letterhead and shall note briefly the role of the advisors. The return address shall be to the attention of the chair at the chair’s current address. Any correspondence or document involving the letterhead must receive the explicit approval of the chair of the U.S. Committee of Advisors and must represent a formal position of the committee, pursuant to “Formal Communications and Position Statements,” above. Advisors may not use the letterhead for personal correspondence or for any matter not approved by the committee. The secretariat shall assist the chair in producing correspondence or documents involving the letterhead.

## **ROLE OF SECRETARIAT**

The Secretariat will supply support services to the advisors including, *inter alia*, meeting organization, meal/refreshment services (if applicable), development and dissemination of meeting agendas and briefing materials; organization of video- and tele-conferences; production and distribution of minutes; and development and communication of committee briefing books, recommendations, correspondences, resolutions, reports to the U.S. Section, and other elements normally consistent with the execution of a business meeting. The Secretariat will conduct these activities in a way that is economical, convenient to meeting participants to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the Commission’s Meeting Code of Conduct (<https://www.glf.org/meeting-reception-code-of-conduct.php>), and in accordance with its Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competence Commitment Statement (<https://www.glf.org/deic-statement.php>).

