

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

*between the Great Lakes Commission,
Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and the
Great Lakes Regional Office of the International Joint Commission*

**This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made and entered
on this 6th day of March 2024 (here referred to as the "Effective Date") between:**

Director, Great Lakes Regional Office, International Joint Commission,
100 Ouellette Ave., 8th Floor, Windsor ON N9A 6T3, Canada.

Executive Director, Great Lakes Commission,
1300 Victors Way, Suite 1350, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, USA.

Executive Secretary, Great Lakes Fishery Commission,
2200 Commonwealth Blvd., Suite 100, Ann Arbor, MI 48105, USA.

WHEREAS the Great Lakes Regional Office (GLRO) was established by the International Joint Commission pursuant to Article 8 of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) to support and assist it in exercising the responsibilities assigned to the International Joint Commission under the GLWQA.

WHEREAS the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) was established by the Great Lakes Basin Compact of 1955 and legislative action by the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio and Wisconsin, and the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Canadian provinces of Ontario and Québec joined the GLC as associate members via a Declaration of Partnership in 1999. The GLC promotes the orderly, integrated, and comprehensive development, use, and conservation of the water resources of the Great Lakes basin.

WHEREAS the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) was established in 1955 by the Canadian/U.S. Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries and coordinates fisheries research, controls invasive sea lamprey, and facilitates cooperative fishery management among state, provincial, tribal, and federal agencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, the IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC intend as follows:

A. Purpose

- a. The purpose of this MOU is to set up a good-faith foundation between the IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC for future collaborative efforts that are mutually beneficial. The IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC intend to work together in a cooperative and coordinated manner to advance the shared interests of each office. This MOU is designed to detail the specifics of the working relationship between the IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC on Great Lakes issues of mutual interest. These currently include, but may not be limited to, the decadal science plan project, science vessel coordination, periodic conferences and forums involving the Great Lakes Executive Committee (GLEC), annual binational Great Lakes Day events and other projects of mutual interest as determined by the offices.

- b. This MOU does not obligate the IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC to supply funds or personnel. This MOU does not bind any of the offices to any legal obligations. This MOU does not limit, alter, or otherwise affect the governing laws, authorities, policies, and operating procedures of the individual parties.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

To achieve the mutual interests of the three offices, the IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC intend to undertake the following roles and responsibilities.

Each office intends to appoint one or more representative(s) to take part in a coordination committee, overseen by the Director, IJC-GLRO; Executive Director, GLC; and Executive Secretary, GLFC. This committee plans to meet periodically on a regular, mutually determined schedule and report to the three offices on the status of coordinated activities. Initially, the IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC intend to collaborate on the following:

- ❖ Completing a decadal science plan based on the 2022 decadal science strategy (SAB-Great-Lakes-Science-Strategy-summary-report_2022.pdf (ijc.org)) and partnering to conduct workshops and engagement sessions associated with the project.
- ❖ Conducting an annual science vessel coordination workshop and planning activities to support basinwide cooperative action to enhance the use and effectiveness of the science vessel fleet to advance Great Lakes research.
- ❖ Engaging with political and agency leaders either through dedicated, topic-specific meetings or at convenings such as meetings of the Great Lakes Executive Committee, Great Lakes Public Forums, and U.S. and Canadian Great Lakes Days.
- ❖ Developing opportunities to attract new talent in the field of Great Lakes basin collaborative science and policy, and, where practicable, aligning these opportunities with projects of common interest to the three commissions.
- ❖ Other projects of mutual interest to the commissions as amended by section D to this MOU.

The IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC also intend to coordinate messaging and communication activities in support of any joint efforts. The IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC are expected to actively provide for this cooperative partnership within the constraints of each office.

C. Resources

To further the advancement of cooperative activities, the Parties intend to provide the following resources:

- ❖ Subject to each office's internal approval processes and the availability of funds, the IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC intend to support events/workshops/conferences that contribute to the accomplishment of the projects identified in Part B. Allocating staff resources to support this MOU, subject to availability of personnel and funding.

D. Amendment and Modifications

The MOU may be modified or altered as necessary with the consent of all Parties. Any changes must be made in writing by a team member with authority.

The Parties will, at the very least, review the MOU once every year, or sooner if mutually decided upon. Any modifications to the MOU, including those pertaining to any timeframes, will be detailed in writing.

Upon giving the other offices 30 days prior notice, a Party to this understanding may submit a written petition to renegotiate the MOU.

The IJC-GLRO, GLFC or GLC can leave the partnership upon giving the other offices 30 days notice.

E. Availability of Records

Each Party to the MOU is subject to its own availability of records procedures and will notify the other Parties regarding records that are disclosed outside of its organization. Parties to this agreement may need advance approval through their respective organizations prior to sharing records with another Party to the agreement. Should records be deemed sensitive or confidential by one Party these will not be shared without prior approval through their respective organizations.

F. Entire Arrangement

The IJC-GLRO, GLFC and GLC intend this MOU to represent the most current MOU between the three offices and supersedes all other written or oral arrangements to the extent inconsistent with them.

This MOU shall be in force for a period of three years from the date of the commissions' signatures.

The undersigned Parties acknowledge this MOU:

Erika S. Jensen
Executive Director
Great Lakes Commission

Marc Gaden
Executive Secretary
Great Lakes Fishery
Commission

Heather M. Stirratt
Director
Great Lakes Regional Office
International Joint
Commission

Date

Date

Date

