

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR THE
COLDWATER TASK GROUP (CWTG) OF
THE LAKE ERIE COMMITTEE (LEC)**

Adopted October, 1980
Revised April, 2011

TITLE: The Lake Erie Coldwater Task Group (CWTG)

BACKGROUND: The Lake Erie Coldwater Task Group was formed in October 1980 as the Lake Trout Task Group to address lake trout rehabilitation issues. In 1992, the group's name was changed to the Coldwater Task Group to address population assessment of other Lake Erie coldwater species like burbot, whitefish, cisco (lake herring) and the stocked and naturalized trout and salmon species. The main functions of the CWTG are to: address charges from the Lake Erie Committee (LEC) and the Standing Technical Committee (STC), report on lake trout rehabilitation, report on status of Lake Erie coldwater species and their fisheries, and monitor and report on the control of sea lamprey populations in Lake Erie and its tributaries.

MISSION STATEMENT: The Lake Erie Coldwater Task Group's philosophy will be based on the following principles:

- **Sustainability** of Lake Erie coldwater component fish stocks, their fisheries, harvests, and their broad distribution of benefits;
- **Wise Use** of the Lake Erie coldwater species resources to promote their health for the future;
- **Support** of efforts to restore and rehabilitate native coldwater Lake Erie species that are at risk, as deemed necessary by the LEC, where biologically, genetically and technologically feasible to benefit the resource; and
- **Monitoring** of sea lamprey control and assessment activities and progress in the Lake Erie basin.

To achieve this mission, the members of the Coldwater Task Group uphold the following tenets:

- **Membership-** LEC member agencies will provide personnel to address CWTG charges. Task group members are selected by their parent agencies. Advisory and non-agency personnel can be appointed to the CWTG at the discretion of the STC and LEC, following the Terms of Reference for LEC Task Group Responsibilities and Membership. If a member is withdrawn from the group, the parent agency may provide a replacement person.
- **Task Group Chairing** - A single chair or co-chairs will be selected by CWTG consensus and approved by the STC and LEC. At least one chair must belong to an LEC member agency, but a co-chair may also come from other agencies signatory to the Joint Strategic Plan (USGS, DFO-Canada, USFWS, NMFS).

These roles will alternate periodically at the discretion of the CWTG, STC and LEC. Task group chairs will serve as the primary liaison between the Task Group, the STC, and the LEC. In this capacity, task group chairs will serve to facilitate achievement and reporting on charges to the LEC, will administer the routine operations of the task group including the organization of meetings, conference calls, and recording of minutes, and will manage requests for task group data from outside agencies. Chairing commitments will extend a minimum of two years, and alternate periodically at the discretion of the CWTG, STC, and LEC. See the LEC Task Group Responsibilities and Membership for further discussion and responsibilities of chairing.

- **Cooperation-** The members of the CWTG will share responsibilities in collecting and collating interagency data, running analyses, producing reports and presentations. Data and intellectual property produced for the CWTG by agencies and the task group will be distributed according to the defined Task Group's Data Sharing Protocol, and may only be released by the consent of the originating agency and all task group members.
- **Objectivity-** The CWTG maintains objectivity through emphasis on a scientific approach.
- **Transparency-** The members of the CWTG will share information with the STC, LEC, other Task Groups, and will communicate results and distribute reports to stakeholders and the public.
- **Science and Technology-** The CWTG will use the latest available techniques to assess status of Lake Erie coldwater species. Coordination of agency stockings of lake trout and naturalized coldwater species (brown trout, rainbow trout, coho salmon and chinook salmon) will be completed on an annual basis.

CHARGES: Charges are assigned to the CWTG by the STC and LEC in order to meet the primary objectives and to address specific tasks important to the LEC. On an annual basis, the STC and LEC determine whether the charges have been completed satisfactorily or if they require further elaboration.

RECOMMENDED ALLOWABLE HARVEST: The CWTG does not determine annual recommended allowable harvest levels (RAH) for any coldwater species. If charged by the LEC, the CWTG will provide general recommendations and summary trends in abundance, growth, harvest, and related demographic information to support LEC endeavors in TAC management of a coldwater species.

REPORTING: One Co-chairperson of the CWTG, or a designated member, will report formally at the annual meeting of the LEC on the activities of the CWTG. The Co-chairpersons of the CWTG or individual Task Group members may be asked to report on critical issues to the Chair and/or LEC membership at other times, including the annual Pre-LEC meeting, seasonal LEC and/or STC business meetings, and other times as necessary. An annual written report summarizing CWTG charges and activities toward those charges will be produced for the LEC, with the scheduled release to the public at the conclusion of the annual LEC meeting.

CONSENSUS APPROACH: CWTG issues are resolved by consensus of the members. If consensus cannot be achieved on an issue, then it will be referred first to the STC, then to the LEC for resolution.

DATA SHARING: All data used to create the CWTG report are shared freely among agencies. The report is available to the public online at www.GLFC.org, and from the distribution of reports at the annual LEC meeting. Agencies may not share with the public any other agency and/or task group data or intellectual property without the expressed consent of the originating agency.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: The CWTG meets as deemed necessary by its' members, the STC members or the LEC, to address charges, with the intent to meet at least twice annually.

SUPPORT: Salary and traveling expenses of the members of the CWTG will be the responsibility of the parent agencies, unless otherwise provided through an arrangement of the GLFC or other external funding sources.

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