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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION HONORS ROD MCDONALD FOR HIS OUSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO GREAT LAKES SEA LAMPREY CONTROL

McDonald, of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, was honored for decades of outstanding work to advance lampricide treatment techniques, the adult assessment program, and cutting-edge science to improve the design and employment of sea lamprey traps

GRAND RAPIDS, MI—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission presented Mr. Rod McDonald, formerly of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, with the 2015 Vernon C. Applegate Award for Outstanding Contributions to Sea Lamprey Control. The award, which the Commission presents annually, recognized Mr. McDonald for his nearly forty years as a pioneer of successful sea lamprey control.

Sea lamprey, a destructive Great Lakes invader, must be controlled to protect the \$7 billion fishery. McDonald began his career in 1973 as lampricide treatment crew biologist for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. During 1981, he was appointed as the Sea Lamprey Control Centre's first Adult Assessment Project Supervisor, and was one of the primary architects of the program; he proceeded to transform the program over the course of the next thirty years.

“Rod pioneered and helped perfect sea lamprey control techniques—techniques that are still in use today—for the documentation and effective treatment of secondary areas where sea lamprey larvae find refuge and would otherwise survive” said Jim McKane, a Canadian Commissioner from Owen Sound, Ontario, upon presenting Mr. McDonald with the award. “Rod was one of the primary architects of the Adult Assessment Program. He transformed the program from one characterized by low-tech approaches to one defined by its use of state-of-the-art, integrated traps and barriers. His contributions helped make the program what it is today.”

McKane continued: “Rod was also extensively involved in research, particularly in the area of sea lamprey behavior using attractants, repellants, and telemetry. Notably, he led what we believe is the first-of-its-kind telemetry project involving sea lampreys, he helped develop and implement the Sterile-Male-Release program, and he helped develop the model used to estimate sea lamprey spawning runs. Through this research, he co-authored papers for both the 1980 and 2000 Sea Lamprey International Symposia, which means his work has contributed to the lasting, primary

GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION

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literature. All of these initiatives were innovative and all have kept the Commission’s work on the cutting edge of science and management.”

Commissioner McKane concluded: “Rod’s career epitomizes the Applegate Award – he has improved sea lamprey control through scientific contributions, efficiency, and innovation. Rod’s work helped rid the lakes of a lot of sea lampreys, and the fishery is the better for it.”

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is an international organization established by the United States and Canada through the 1954 Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries. The commission has the responsibility to support fisheries research, control the invasive sea lamprey in the Great Lakes, and facilitate implementation of A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries, a provincial, state, and tribal fisheries management agreement.



Great Lakes Fishery Commission Commissioner Jim McKane (left) presents Rod McDonald with the 2015 Vernon C. Applegate Award Jack Christie/Ken H. Loftus Award for Outstanding Contributions to Sea Lamprey Control. The award was presented to Mr. McDonald on June 10, 2015, during the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s annual meeting, held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Photo: T. Lawrence, GLFC.