



Great Lakes Fishery Commission

ESTABLISHED BY CONVENTION BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES TO IMPROVE AND PERPETUATE FISHERY RESOURCES

For Immediate Release
June 2, 2010

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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION RECOGNIZES ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS AND HUNTERS FOR ATLANTIC SALMON RESTORATION EFFORTS

SAULT STE. MARIE, ON—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission today presented the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) with the C.D. “Buzz” Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships. The federation was honoured for its outstanding work to conceive and implement a program to restore Atlantic Salmon to Lake Ontario. Atlantic salmon, a once-prolific native species, experienced a severe decline throughout the 20th century. The federation was recognized for its work to foster a large and effective partnership among several governmental and non-governmental agencies to restore this species.

The C. D. “Buzz” Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships is named after the former Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Director and Great Lakes Fishery Commission Chair who was known throughout the region as a statesman, partnership-builder, and respected force for ecosystem conservation.

Atlantic salmon, once an abundant top predator in Lake Ontario, was extirpated as a result of overharvest, habitat destruction, pollution, and dam construction. Although for decades Atlantic salmon restoration has been a priority of the management agencies, non-governmental organizations, and stakeholders, it has only now occurred because of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters’ massive, coordinated, and integrated effort.

“The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters is determined to restore native Atlantic salmon to Lake Ontario, and the federation’s commitment to the development of the partnership needed to make Atlantic salmon restoration a reality is nothing short of incredible,” said commission vice-chair Robert Lambe, the Regional Director General for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans’ Central and Arctic Region. “To date, more than 40 organizations are actively supporting the program, including the primary sponsors, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario and Banrock Station Wines.” Other partners include government agencies like the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada; binational organizations like the Great Lakes Fishery Commission; local agencies like the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and non-government organizations like the Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association, the Metro East Anglers, the Ontario Wildlife Federation, and the Trees Ontario Foundation.

Lambe continued: “Partnerships of this scope and scale are often more promise than product. The OFAH has successfully coordinated this unique network to complete many projects that have contributed to the early success seen in returning adult salmon and a captivated public. For example, OFAH and its partners have increased the hatchery capacity necessary to achieve rehabilitation; improved habitat through streambank stabilization, wetland protection, better agricultural practices, and modification of dams; and

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implementation of an exceptional outreach program, including classroom hatcheries, which have captured the imagination of students around Lake Ontario.”

“The initiative, leadership, and dedication of the OFAH have catalyzed and implemented a basin-wide management effort to restore this native species,” Lambe concluded. “When this program is fully realized and when Atlantic salmon populations are self-sustaining, it will be the OFAH and its partners that made it possible.”

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.



Dr. Terry Quinney (right) accepts the C.D. Buzz Besadny Award on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. The award was presented by Great Lakes Fishery Commission Vice-chair Robert Lambe, the Regional Director General for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans’ Central and Arctic Region. The award was presented to the federation on June 2, 2010, during the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s annual meeting, held in Sault St. Marie, Ontario. Photo: T. Lawrence.