

# *GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION*

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO PEER REVIEWERS**

2100 Commonwealth Blvd., Suite 100, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105

Tel. (734) 662-3209 / FAX (734) 741-2010

Thank you for agreeing to provide a peer review of a research proposal submitted for funding. For a description of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's (commission) programs, please review the web site [www.glfsc.org](http://www.glfsc.org).

Proposals are reviewed based on four general criteria.

*Peer review of proposals* – Every research proposal submitted to the commission is subjected to a review by scientific peers. A recommendation to the commission for funding a project will be highly dependent upon positive, favorable reviews of the proposal.

*Relationships to fishery agency and commission programs* – Research projects will have a high priority for funding if they relate directly to the [Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries](#), the [commission's Strategic Vision](#), [Fish Community Objectives](#), or the research priorities identified in State of the Lake conferences, by the [Lake Committees](#), or by the [Sea Lamprey Control Board](#). Most projects supported by the commission's Fishery and Sea Lamprey Research Programs are organized under broad research theme areas that describe topics important to fishery or sea lamprey management in the Great Lakes. These theme areas establish key research questions and hypotheses that become the focus of specific projects. Research themes for the Fishery Research Program can be found at <http://www.glfsc.org/research/FRra.php>. Research themes for the Sea Lamprey Research Program can be found at <http://www.glfsc.org/research/SRra.php>.

*Importance to conservation, rehabilitation, and sustainability of fisheries* – Research projects will have a high priority for funding if they relate to a species of conservation or rehabilitation concern or if they are critical to the achievement of healthy Great Lakes ecosystems.

*Past performance* – Project leaders should have demonstrated technical expertise to complete the project or have co-investigators or appropriate partnerships with other organizations to meet all the requirements of the project. Projects must be non-duplicative with other projects. Principal and co-investigators should have had successful experience with similar projects.

Please read the attached conflict-of-interest statement for peer reviewers. If you are not sure whether a conflict of interest exists, please notify the appropriate research program associate ([frp@glfc.org](mailto:frp@glfc.org) or [slrp@glfc.org](mailto:slrp@glfc.org)) before you decline to review.

Peer reviews are completed by answering a number of questions in an online form. A template for these questions is provided for your convenience below. Explanations for your answers are critically important to help project leaders revise and improve their proposals. Yes / No answers and scores with no explanation are not helpful. Reviews will be shared with the investigators, but your identity will not be revealed.

Thank you for your assistance in the commission's research program.

*GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION*

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT  
FOR  
PEER REVIEWERS OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS AND TECHNICAL REPORTS**

As a peer reviewer, you are asked to review a research proposal that will assist with Great Lakes Fishery Commission (commission) funding decisions. The performance of your review requires that you be aware of potential conflicts of interest. Please read the examples of potentially biasing affiliations or relationships below.

If you cannot conduct this review due to a conflict of interest, please contact the appropriate research program associate. Conflicts of interest are not accusations and do not imply that a reviewer's judgment is compromised.

The proposal must be kept in strict confidence. If, as a peer reviewer, you gain access to information not generally available to the public, you must not use that information for your benefit or make it available for the benefit of any other individual or organization without the permission of the authors. You are not to discuss a proposal or manuscript with its authors or other colleagues. Questions about the proposal are to be discussed only with the person coordinating the review of this proposal or with commission's science director.

The commission receives proposals and manuscripts in confidence and protects the confidentiality of their contents. For this reason, you must not quote or otherwise disclose or use material from any proposal or manuscript that you review (until it is published).

## **Potential Conflicts of Interest for Great Lakes Fishery Commission Peer Reviewers**

### Competitor for funding:

1. Direct involvement with a research proposal currently competing for funding from the same commission research program.

### Relationship to applicant institution:

1. Current employment at the institution associated with the proposal or manuscript as professor, adjunct professor, visiting professor, or similar position (including multi-campus institutions).
2. Employment with the institution via consulting, an advisory arrangement, re-employment arrangement, or you are being considered for employment with the institution.
3. Employment at the same institution within the last 12 months.
4. Ownership of the institution's securities or other evidences of debt.
5. Holder of any office, governing board membership, or relevant committee chair in the institution.
6. Current enrollment as a student in the department or school of the institution that originates the proposal or manuscript.
7. Received an honorarium or award from the institution within the last 12 months.

### Relationship with an investigator, author, project director, or other person who has a personal interest in the proposal or manuscript.

1. Family or close personal relationship including marriage, civil union, or other partnership.
2. Business or professional partnership.
3. Past or present relationship as a graduate committee member or graduate student.
4. Collaboration on a project or on a book, report, or paper within the last 48 months.
5. Other relationships, such as close personal friendship, that may affect your judgment or be seen as doing so by a reasonable person familiar with the relationship.

## **Confidentiality of Peer Reviews and Reviewer Identities**

The commission's policy is that reviews and peer reviewer identities will not be disclosed, except that verbatim copies of reviews (without name and affiliation of the reviewer) will be sent to the principal investigator or lead author.

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## **RESEARCH PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

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**Title of Proposal:**

**Name of Investigator:**

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Please respond to the questions below and provide a numerical rating (described below) for each category. Please use the following ratings:

Excellent – 4

Good – 3

Fair – 2

Questionable – 1

**\*\*Please provide an explanation for your answers, whether positive or negative\*\***

**Scientific Merit:**

**Rating:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are the research objectives clear and focused?
2. Will the proposed methodological approach accomplish the objectives? Is the experimental design correct (e.g., sample size, sampling frequency, spatial distribution of sample collection)? What modifications should be incorporated?
3. Do the suggested statistical tests seem appropriate to evaluate hypotheses? What other types of analyses should be considered?
4. What is the scientific feasibility of the proposed research? What is the probability that the objectives will be achieved?

**Rationale:**

**Rating:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. How important is the proposed research to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields?
2. Does this proposal adequately review the related scientific literature? What key publications have not been cited and reviewed (please list)?
3. Does the proposal demonstrate awareness of similar work being conducted elsewhere? Please describe any related projects not addressed in the proposal and include, if possible, names and organizations involved.

**Innovativeness:**

**Rating:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does this proposal apply new conceptual or technological approaches to solving problems or investigating processes?

**Budget, Logistics, and Qualifications:**

**Rating:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Is the budget appropriate for the research proposed?

2. Are the proposed research personnel (e.g., graduate students, technicians, postdocs) and equipment appropriate to achieve the objectives? What is the probability that the objectives will be achieved in the time frame proposed? Is the schedule for completion reasonable?
3. To what degree are the investigators qualified by education, training, and/or experience to conduct the proposed research?
4. Are there other investigators, collaborators, or agencies that should be involved in this project? If not, what organizations, or types of expertise, are missing and what are your recommendations for dealing with this deficiency?

**Other Comments:** [please type below other comments you may have about the proposal]

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**Overall Impression of this Proposal**

**Rating:** \_\_\_\_\_

(This score should not be an average of the above scores, but rather should reflect your overall impression of the proposal.)