



Great Lakes Fishery Commission

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

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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION HONORS DR. SCUDDER MACKEY FOR FORMING KEY PARTNERSHIPS TO CONDUCT INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

Mackey, of Beach Park, Illinois, is recognized as a scientist and creative thinker who understands the necessity of partnerships and collaboration within the research setting

ANN ARBOR, MI—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission last week presented Dr. Scudder Mackey with the 2012 C.D. “Buzz” Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships. Dr. Mackey was recognized for successfully facilitating a partnership among multiple partners—including the private power industry—to manipulate the outflow of Lake Superior in an effort to improve sea lamprey control.

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. The commission presented this award to Dr. Mackey in appreciation for his innovative thinking and his determination to develop the partnerships to make the project a reality.

The St. Marys River is considered to be the major single source of sea lampreys into Lake Huron. Trapping spawning sea lampreys is a critical element of the control program and the commission has long known that some of the most productive trapping sites are located at power facilities, as the higher flows produced at these facilities are more attractive to migrating sea lampreys. Power companies, however, normally decrease flows during the night – off-peak hours for the industry – to curtail power generation during times of reduced power demands.

Said Commissioner Bill James, the Chief of Fisheries for the State of Indiana: “Armed with this information, and with the knowledge that sea lampreys are most active at night, Dr. Mackey approached the commission in late 2010 with a novel idea: if the outflow of Lake Superior at power companies could be increased at night, the commission could better understand how water flow relates to trapping effectiveness, thereby reducing recruitment of larvae to the St. Marys River.”

“Water flows are highly regulated and power companies only get so much water. This project, thus, required two private power companies – Brookfield Renewable Power and Cloverland Electric Cooperative – to take the ‘leap of faith’ that they would not be adversely affected by the change in timing and allocation of the water necessary to support this project,” explained Commissioner James.

James continued: “In addition to seeking the help of the power companies, Dr. Mackey also facilitated the process for getting the timing and volume of the flows changed to the specifications outlined in the research project. This was not an easy task, as the project required negotiating some significant changes to the current outflow plan. The International Joint Commission, through its Lake Superior Board of

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Control, had to approve increasing the water allocation – a major decision for the governing authority. The proposal was also examined thoroughly and endorsed by the International Upper Great Lakes Study. Working with the commission, Dr. Mackey successfully helped navigate these difficult – yet necessary – negotiations, and the work was initiated in 2011. It will continue through the next spawning season and it will influence commission decisions about trap placement and design.”

Commissioner James concluded: “The commission appreciates Dr. Mackey’s willingness to think outside of the box, his ability to develop the partnerships necessary to conduct this innovative research, and his devotion to using sound science to guide management decisions.”

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 Bill James (right) presents Dr. Scudder Mackey with the C.D. Buzz Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships. The award was presented to Dr. Mackey on June 6, 2012, during the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s annual meeting, held in Buffalo, NY. Photo: T. Lawrence