



**For Immediate Release
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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION HONORS STEVE LAPAN FOR OUTSTANDING AND UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF THE SEA LAMPREY CONTROL PROGRAM

DETROIT, MICHIGAN—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission presented Mr. Steve LaPan with the 2019 Vernon C. Applegate Award for Outstanding Contributions to Sea Lamprey Control. The award, which the Commission presents to an individual or group annually, recognized Mr. Lapan for resolute support and staunch advocacy of the Sea Lamprey Control Program throughout his career with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Commissioner Dr. Don Pereira, the former Chief of Fisheries for the State of Minnesota (retired), presented Mr. LaPan with the Applegate Award at the Commission's 64th annual meeting, held recently in Detroit, MI. Commissioner Pereira noted the award is named after the father of sea lamprey control, Dr. Vernon Applegate, who was perhaps best known for his exemplary dedication to the control program.

As Section Head of New York's Great Lakes Fisheries Program, Mr. LaPan knows all too well the necessity of controlling the invasive sea lamprey to manageable levels to protect the \$7 billion Great Lakes fishery.

"Throughout his thirty-year long career, Mr. LaPan has been a long-standing member of the Council of Lake Committees and co-chair of the Lake Ontario Committee," Commissioner Pereira stated. "In these roles, Mr. LaPan has demonstrated his understanding and support of the dynamic relationship that exists between healthy fisheries and sea lamprey control: successful fishery management is reliant upon effective suppression of sea lamprey populations in the Great Lakes, which is impossible without the cooperation and support of federal, state, provincial and tribal fisheries managers. He continuously reminds people that Lake Ontario's world-class fishery would not exist without effective sea lamprey control."

Pereira continued: "Mr. LaPan's support for this program is evident in his persistence and dedication to overseeing critical projects related to the program. A shining example is his facilitation of the construction of the Orwell Brook sea lamprey barrier near Altmar, New York. Steve was involved in every facet of this project, from facilitating successful negotiations to securing the land lease agreement; to presenting the project concept to prospective bidders, to working tirelessly with state and federal environmental agencies to ensure that all necessary permits were obtained. Thanks to Mr. LaPan's efforts, the Orwell Brook barrier is an important weapon to the Lake Ontario sea lamprey control effort. It prevents the infestation of the upstream reaches and eliminates the need for lampricide treatments in all but the lowermost section of Orwell Brook.

GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION

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“Mr. LaPan’s consistent, even-keeled, straightforward interactions with stakeholders and private citizens, whose perspectives and objectives often diverge, have led to better awareness of the program and better appreciation for what we do,” concluded Commissioner Pereira. “His remarkable ability to foster collaboration among managers from various state, provincial and federal agencies has been key in ensuring the continued success of the sea lamprey control program in Lake Ontario.”

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 Don Pereira (left) presents Steve LaPan with the 2019 Vernon C. Applegate Award Jack Christie/Ken H. Loftus Award for Outstanding Contributions to Sea Lamprey Control. The award was presented to Mr. LaPan on May 29, 2019, during the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s annual meeting, held in Detroit, Michigan. Photo: T. Lawrence, GLFC.