



Great Lakes Fishery Commission

For Immediate Release
June 17, 2026

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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION HONORS DR. MICHAEL JONES WITH JACK CHRISTIE/KEN H LOFTUS AWARD

Jones recognized for his foundational contributions to Great Lakes fisheries science, for co-founding two major research institutions, and a career spent making complex quantitative science accessible to fisheries managers

WINDSOR, ONTARIO—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (Commission) presented Dr. Michael Jones, formerly of Michigan State University (MSU), with the 2026 Jack Christie/Ken H. Loftus Award for Distinguished Scientific Contributions Toward Understanding Healthy Great Lakes Ecosystems. The award was presented at the Commission’s annual meeting in Windsor, Ontario, on June 3, 2026. The award honors the legacy of Jack Christie and Ken Loftus, two emeritus fishery scientists from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources who dedicated their careers to understanding the complexity of the Great Lakes ecosystem. Commissioner Niall Cronin, Executive Director of the U.S. Transboundary Affairs Division at Global Affairs Canada, presented the award to Jones for his plethora of contributions to the Great Lakes scientific community.

“Mike is one of the most productive, thoughtful, and visionary scientists the Great Lakes community has known,” said Commissioner Cronin. “His 123 publications and more than 9,000 citations speak for themselves—but the number that tells the real story is his more than 200 co-authors. Sure, that reflects productivity, but it truly reflects partnership. Mike’s ability to build relationships and foster collaboration across disciplines is at the heart of everything he has built.”

Jones began his career with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources before moving to academia at Michigan State University. In 1997, he became the first scientist hired under the Partnership for Ecosystem Research and Management (PERM), a cooperative framework established in 1995 by MSU, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MIDNR), and the Commission to integrate science and fisheries management. PERM later expanded to the University of Guelph in Ontario, where Jones helped establish the Center for Ecosystem Management, strengthening the binational research collaboration that continues today.

With a background in fish population dynamics and ecology, resource management, and simulation modeling, Jones’ expertise led him to co-found the Quantitative Fisheries Center (QFC) at MSU, once again bringing together MSU, MIDNR, and the Commission to make quantitative knowledge and computing technology available through teaching, outreach, and research to current and future generations of fishery managers.



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“The QFC and the Center for Ecosystem Management are lasting contributions to how the Great Lakes are managed,” Commissioner Cronin continued. “Mike didn’t just do great science—he built the institutions that allow great science to keep happening.”

Jones has been previously recognized by the Commission. In 2004, he received the Vernon C. Applegate Award for his leadership of the Second Sea Lamprey International Symposium, and in 2018, he and Travis Brenden accepted the C.D. “Buzz” Besadny Award for their leadership in establishing the QFC. The Christie/Loftus Award makes Jones the first recipient of all three of the Commission’s major scientific honors.

“Mike’s ability to make it easier for fisheries managers and the public to understand complex science and themes has really allowed for deeper understanding of the work that myriad scientists and organizations perform throughout the basin. We are thankful to have someone so passionate about his work; it makes all the difference,” concluded Commissioner Cronin.



Great Lakes Fishery Commission Commissioner Niall Cronin (left) presents Dr. Michael Jones with the 2026 Jack Christie/Ken H Loftus Award. The award was presented to Jones on June 3, 2026, during the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s annual meeting held in Windsor, Ontario. Photo: R. Shaw, GLFC.

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. Visit online at www.glf.org.

