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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION HONORS MARK HOLEY FOR FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS TO SATISFY KEY FISHERY RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT NEEDS OF THE GREAT LAKES

DULUTH, MINNESOTA—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission honored Mr. Mark Holey with the C.D. “Buzz” Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships during the Commission’s recent 62nd annual meeting in Duluth, Minnesota. The award, which the Commission presents annually, recognized Mr. Holey for developing and leveraging partnerships across the Great Lakes basin to help fishery managers meet key management needs and objectives in the upper Great Lakes and for initiating efforts to support deepwater coregonid re-introduction in Lake Ontario. Mr. Holey’s recognition that strong, lasting, and effective partnerships are critical for success has been evident throughout his entire career, which has spanned nearly four decades.

Commissioner Tom Melius, the Midwest Regional Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, presented Mr. Holey with the Besadny Award. The person after whom this award is named—Buzz Besadny—was a former member of the Commission, a former secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and a strong supporter of the Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries,” said Commissioner Melius. “Mr. Holey personifies Buzz Besadny’s philosophy that partnerships are the path to great things in Great Lakes fisheries.”

Melius continued: “Mr. Holey has served as chair of the Lake Michigan Technical Committee for 15 years, and during his tenure, he has built trust among the members in addressing the Chinook fishery collapse in the late 1980s, the yellow perch fishery collapse in the 1990s, and investigations into the impacts of low thiamine on lake trout reproduction. The ongoing effectiveness of the Salmonid Working Group, Yellow Perch Task Group, and regular thiamine monitoring are a testimony to Mr. Holey’s leadership on those challenging files.”

Melius continued: “In his appointed role on the Scientific Advisory Team of the Great Lakes Fishery Trust, Mr. Holey advocated to have the Trust fund priorities that addressed basin-wide fishery needs, resulting in research on bacterial kidney disease and thiamine deficiency. Furthermore, his leadership in organizing two lake sturgeon restoration workshops ultimately led to the Trust’s basin-wide lake sturgeon restoration coordination meeting, which continues to serve as the primary scientific forum on lake sturgeon restoration.”

“Mr. Holey’s career accomplishments have not been limited to fostering partnerships to satisfy the immediate fishery research and management needs of the upper Great Lakes,” added Commissioner Melius. “More recently, and on his own volition, he committed his time, and that of his staff, to initiate deepwater coregonid re-introduction in Lake Ontario following a decade of disappointing bloater recovery attempts. Thanks in large part to Mr. Holey’s efforts, fishery managers are now poised to re-structure Great Lakes

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forage fish communities basin-wide. Without question, bloater recovery in Lake Ontario would not have been possible without Mr. Holey’s leadership, and the Commission is confident his efforts will contribute to basin-wide coregonid restoration.”

Melius continued: “Throughout his career, Mr. Holey has performed all of his duties with a great appreciation for others’ views and the realization that by working together, the proverbial whole will be worth much more than the sum of the parts.”

These are but a few examples of Mark’s commitment to his work and his understanding that it takes others to get the job done. The Great Lakes community is fortunate to have to have him on the team and the fishery is better and stronger for it,” concluded Commissioner Melius.

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 Tom Melius (left) presents Mr. Mark Holey with the 2017 C.D. Buzz Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships. The award was presented to Mr. Holey on June 7, 2017 at the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s 62nd annual meeting held in Duluth, Minnesota. Photo: T. Lawrence, GLFC.