

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR THE
YELLOW PERCH TASK GROUP (YPTG) OF
THE LAKE ERIE COMMITTEE (LEC)**

Adopted October, 1980
Revised March, 2004

TITLE: The Lake Erie Committee Yellow Perch Task Group (YPTG)

BACKGROUND: The Yellow Perch Task Group was formed in 1980 to address yellow perch harvest strategies and population assessment in response to declining abundance of yellow perch in Lake Erie. Since the task group's inception, the status of yellow perch stocks in Lake Erie has been described using an accumulation of shared fishery and survey data, which in turn have been used to generate population estimates and yield projections. The YPTG has traditionally recommended allowable harvest (RAH) range based on single or multiple yield strategies. The other main functions of the YPTG are to address charges from the LEC and the Standing Technical Committee (STC) that pertain to scientific research and management issues of Lake Erie yellow perch. The YPTG presents the results of these activities in an annual report and presentation at an annual meeting of the Lake Erie Committee.

MISSION STATEMENT: The YPTG is dedicated to employing the best science in order to support international management of yellow perch on Lake Erie. In so doing, the YPTG will adhere to the following principles:

- **Sustainability** of Lake Erie yellow perch component stocks, their fisheries, harvests, and a broad distribution of benefits.
- **Wise Use** of the Lake Erie yellow perch resource to promote its health for the future.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES: The primary objectives of the YPTG are to:

- Describe the status of yellow perch stocks in Lake Erie using state-of-the-art fishery and experimental assessment techniques.
- Provide sound scientific advice and background material to the LEC for the annual derivation of TAC and allocation of agency harvest quotas.

To achieve the mission and objectives, the members of the Yellow Perch Task Group uphold the following tenets:

- **Membership-** LEC member agencies will provide personnel to address YPTG charges. Task group members are selected by their parent agencies. Non-agency personnel can be appointed to the YPTG with the consensus of the STC and LEC. If a task group member is withdrawn from

the group, the parent agency may provide a replacement person if the agency is not represented sufficiently. Two co-chairpersons selected by YPTG consensus and approved by the STC and LEC, will be comprised of one U.S. representative and one Ontario representative. These roles will alternate periodically at the discretion of the LEC, STC and the task group. See the LEC Task Group Responsibilities and Membership for further discussion.

- **Cooperation-** The members of the YPTG will share responsibilities addressing charges, in collecting and collating interagency data, running analyses, producing reports and giving presentations.
- **Objectivity-** The YPTG maintains objectivity through emphasis on a scientific approach.
- **Transparency-** Information and methodology must be disseminated completely to facilitate comprehension and input by LEC, other agency representatives, stakeholders and the public in general.
- **Science and Technology-** The YPTG will use the latest available techniques to assess the status of Lake Erie yellow perch stocks and their associated fisheries. Task group members will address management and research initiatives as charges that emerge from the STC or LEC.
- **Restoration and Rehabilitation-** If yellow perch populations are considered degraded or at risk, the YPTG will advise the LEC regarding approaches for restoration and rehabilitation of the Lake Erie yellow perch stocks.

CHARGES: Charges are assigned to the YPTG by the STC and LEC in order to meet the primary objectives and to address specific tasks important to the LEC. On an annual basis, the STC and LEC determine whether the charges have been completed satisfactorily or if they require further elaboration.

RECOMMENDED ALLOWABLE HARVEST: Annually, the YPTG provides a recommended range of allowable harvests (RAH), based on current adopted harvest strategies, to the LEC. The methodology used for annual RAH derivation must be clearly documented. RAH derivations will take into account the status of stocks, biological risks associated with various levels of exploitation, and other potential threats to the stability of the walleye resource. After quotas are established by the LEC, these quotas will be further allocated to the states and province by a clearly defined sharing formula (presently based on size of jurisdictional water areas within each Management Unit).

REPORTING: One YPTG co-chairperson, or a designated member, will report formally on the activities of the YPTG at the annual meeting of the LEC. The co-chairpersons or individual Task Group members may be asked to report on critical issues to the LEC or STC chairperson or membership at other times, including the annual Pre-LEC meeting, seasonal LEC meetings and/or STC business meetings. An annual written report summarizing YPTG charges, activities toward those charges and RAH or harvest recommendations will be

produced for the LEC, with the scheduled release to the public at the conclusion of the annual LEC public meeting.

CONSENSUS APPROACH: YPTG issues are resolved by consensus of the members. If consensus cannot be achieved on an issue, the issue will be referred to the STC first and then to the LEC for resolution.

DATA SHARING: All data used to create the YPTG report are shared freely among agencies. The report is available to the public online at www.GLFC.org, and from the distribution of reports at the annual LEC meeting. Agencies may not share with the public any other agency and/or task group data or intellectual property without the expressed consent of the originating agency.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: The YPTG meets as deemed necessary by its members, the STC members, or the LEC, to address task group charges, with the intent to meet at least twice annually.

SUPPORT: Salary and traveling expenses of the members of the YPTG will be the responsibility of the parent agencies, unless otherwise provided through an arrangement of the GLFC or other external funding sources.