



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 Tribal Leaders Henry Buffalo Sr. and Richard Gurnoe For Exceptional Contributions to Partnerships

ANN ARBOR, MI—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission presented the Buzz Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships to the families of Henry Buffalo Sr. and Richard Gurnoe. The award recognized the lasting relationships between Great Lakes tribes and state governments that Mr. Buffalo (deceased) and Mr. Gurnoe (deceased) forged more than two decades ago. Buffalo's and Gurnoe's achievements brought tribal input into Great Lakes fishery management and substantially built tribal management capacity. The Buffalo and Gurnoe families currently reside in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

“Mr. Buffalo and Mr. Gurnoe are recognized for their dedication and exceptional leadership in creating successful tribal partnerships within the Great Lakes region,” said Commission Vice-Chair Gerry Barnhart, Director of Fish, Wildlife, and Marine Resources for the State of New York. “Working in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Buffalo and Gurnoe organized the tribes into a functioning fisheries management entity, the Indian Fishery Commission, the precursor to today's highly respected Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. Buffalo and Gurnoe also helped create the intertribal organization's biological, enforcement, and management capabilities as well as an operating judicial system.”

“Parallel to their successful efforts to organize the tribes,” Barnhart continued, “Buffalo and Gurnoe also sought to better integrate tribal and state fisheries management. As such, they gained tribal acceptance of A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries, a multi-state/provincial agreement about shared fisheries. They also convinced the Joint Strategic Plan signatories that the tribes should be a part of the plan. The state-tribal-federal relationship they forged has allowed for more effective collaboration within the Great Lakes basin.”

“As a result of their efforts, Mr. Buffalo and Mr. Gurnoe stimulated a tremendous evolution in Great Lakes fishery management,” added Barnhart. “Their interactions evolved into those of mutual respect. Tribal leadership and state, provincial, and commission officials have a better understanding of the Great Lakes fish community and of each others' needs. We gained a better understanding of how to collaborate; we gained a more holistic picture of what it means to be a part of the Great Lakes basin, what it means to be a part of the Great Lakes fishery; we learned how to be better stewards of our natural resources. This is exactly what the Joint Strategic Plan envisioned. These men's efforts have had positive effects lasting long after their passing.”

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 coordinate fisheries research, control sea lampreys, and facilitate implementation of the Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries. The Joint Strategic Plan is a multi-jurisdictional, non-binding agreement signed by the province of Ontario, the eight Great Lakes states, U.S. tribes, and the federal governments of Canada and the United States. The plan helps the fishing agencies coordinate their management activities. To download a high-resolution photo of the Buffalo and Gurnoe families receiving the Buzz Basadny award, visit www.glfcc.org/awards/photos2006.