



**Committee of Advisors  
to the  
Great Lakes Fishery Commission**



June 10, 2016

Dear GLFC Commissioners and GLSLCI Board of Directors and Staff:

During its annual meeting on June 9, 2016, the U.S. and Canadian Committee of Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) discussed concerns regarding agricultural nonpoint source pollution to the Great Lakes. Advisors recognize that a primary source of this pollution is the waste runoff generated from Concentrated Agriculture Feed Operations (CAFOs). This agricultural runoff contains nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen; these contribute to harmful algal blooms, which degrade water quality for humans and fish.

The Committee of Advisors was established by the Great Lakes Fisheries Act of 1956 and consists of individuals that are appointed to represent the sport fishery, the commercial fishery, the public-at-large, and the management agencies of jurisdictions that share management authority on the Great Lakes. The committee meets regularly to consider issues, share information, and provide advice to governments about the management of the shared Great Lakes fishery.

The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI) has developed a resolution, for consideration at its June 2016 annual meeting (attached), which calls for:

- All jurisdictions in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin to expand their efforts to reduce nutrient loss to surface and groundwater from CAFOs because of the significant contributions of loadings that can come from them;
- Federal, state, provincial, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances to be strengthened to provide the necessary protections for surface and groundwater while allowing for responsible operations,
- Performance monitoring of CAFO water pollution control systems and practices that is comprehensive enough to provide assurance that the control systems are operating effectively;
- Appropriate outreach to the agricultural community to provide information about proper construction and operation of CAFO water pollution control systems;
- Recognition of exemplary operations of CAFO water pollution control systems should be to highlight the work of leaders in the agricultural community.

The U.S. and Canadian Committee of Advisors supports this resolution and would like to reiterate the recommendations outlined by the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. The U.S. and Canadian Committee of Advisors would like build on those recommendations with the following:

- **BE IT RESOLVED**, that U.S. and Canadian Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission requests that the Commission encourage all Great Lakes States and

*The Committee of Advisors consists of both U.S. and Canadian representatives, from First Nation, commercial, recreational, academic, agency, and public fishery interests in the Great Lakes Basin. Advisors provide advice to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission; U.S. advisors are nominated by the State Governors, and appointed by the commission. Canadian advisors are nominated by the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources and appointed by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.*

Province to review all respective regulations regarding CAFOs to ensure and protect the Great Lakes Fishery and its economic benefit to the Great Lakes Region;

- **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the U.S. and Canadian Advisors of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission call upon the Commission to press for effective Great Lakes Basin wide standards, systems and regulations that will protect the fishery and the water quality of the Great Lakes watershed to the benefit of the fish community of the Great Lakes
- **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the U.S. and Canadian Advisors to The Great Lakes Fishery Commission request that the Commission partner and work with other agencies and organizations to ensure that effective regulation of nonpoint source discharge from agriculture and industry in general is effectively controlled to the benefit of the Great Lakes Fishery.

The U.S. and Canadian Committee of Advisors is pleased to join with the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Cities Initiative on this important issue. Thank you for the opportunity to voice the support of our committee.

Sincerely,

Captain Denny Grinold  
Chair  
U.S. Committee of Advisors

Dr. Tom Whillans  
Chair  
Canadian Committee of Advisors



**GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE CITIES INITIATIVE**  
**ALLIANCE DES VILLES DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT**

**RESOLUTION – 2016M**

**Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) in the Great Lakes Basin**

**Submitted by: [Name of Submitting Municipality]**

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes contains 6 quadrillion gallons of fresh water; one-fifth of the world's fresh surface water; 95 percent of the U.S. supply; 84 percent of the surface water supply in North America; and

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes provides 56 billion gallons of water per day for municipal, agricultural, and industrial use; and

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes provides drinking water for 40 million people; and

**WHEREAS**, the International Joint Commission's (IJC) 2013 report, An Inventory of Nutrient Management Efforts in the Great Lakes, stated, "The regulatory regime for nonpoint sources is generally more complex... Consequently, there is a much larger emphasis on providing funding and technical assistance for voluntary stewardship actions. This approach can be effective but due to the complexity of the issue, it is difficult for these programs to be appropriately comprehensive in scope"; and

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (WQA) between the United States and Canada acknowledges the vital importance of the Great Lakes to the social and economic well-being of both countries, as well as the need to address the risks to human health posed by environmental degradation; and,

**WHEREAS**, the IJC recommended governments in Canada and the United States collaborate to develop, maintain and share an inventory of effective management actions that are used to better retain nutrients and sediments on the land, especially in watersheds yielding high phosphorus loadings; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2015 report, A Summary of the Next Twenty-Five Years: Final Report on an Enquiry for the Great Lakes Protection Fund, identified nutrients, harmful algal blooms (HABs), and agricultural nonpoint source pollution as emerging top priorities; and



**WHEREAS**, the number of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)/Intensive Livestock Operations (ILOs) has increased substantially in the Great Lakes - St Lawrence River basin in the past decade; and,

**WHEREAS**, more unpredictable and heavier precipitation events due to climate change will increase the risk of manure runoff from CAFOs/ILOs; and

**WHEREAS**, agricultural (nonpoint) runoff from CAFOs/ILOs contains nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen, which contribute to harmful algal blooms (HABs); and

**WHEREAS**, in 2015, there were 11,607,507 CAFO animals (all species) in Western Lake Erie Watersheds (MI, OH, IN) alone that produced 690,803,414 gallons (liquid and solids); and

**WHEREAS**, a harmful algal bloom (HAB) in the western basin of Lake Erie caused the Toledo drinking water utility to advise over 400,000 citizens not to drink the water for two days in August 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2000, seven people died and more than 2,300 became severely ill in the small Ontario town when their drinking water was contaminated with *E. coli* 0157:H7. The source of this highly dangerous bacteria strain was cattle manure; and,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that all jurisdictions in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin need to expand their efforts to reduce nutrient loss to surface and groundwater from CAFOs because of the significant contributions of loadings that can come from them;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that to the extent that federal, state, provincial, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances can be strengthened to provide the necessary protections for surface and groundwater while allowing for responsible operations, such steps should be taken; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that monitoring the performance of CAFO water pollution control systems and practices need to be comprehensive enough to provide assurance that the control systems are operating effectively;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, Appropriate outreach to the agricultural community to provide information about proper construction and operation of CAFO water pollution control systems needs to be conducted wherever needed;



**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, Recognition of exemplary operations of CAFO water pollution control systems should be provided to highlight the work of leaders in the agricultural community.