



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



A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RESTORING COREGONINES IN THE GREAT LAKES

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes historically held a unique complex of coregonines (common name ciscoes) that ranged widely within and among lakes;

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes supported multiple forms of coregonines, ranging from those that inhabited the deepest waters to those that inhabited surface and inshore waters;

WHEREAS, coregonines were the primary prey for lake trout, the native top predator;

WHEREAS, due to a combination of overfishing, sea lamprey predation, and habitat loss, coregonine populations declined dramatically throughout the Great Lakes in the 20th century;

WHEREAS, several forms or species of coregonines have been extirpated from individual lakes or are extinct;

WHEREAS, nutrient reductions resulting from the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, and the introduction of dreissenid mussels have resulted in Lakes Michigan and Huron undergoing regime shifts, and with reduced ability to support alewife, the dominant prey fish of these two lakes for much of the last 60 years such that they now more closely resemble the food web and planktivore community of Lake Superior;

WHEREAS, open ecological niches may be available to support a diversity of coregonines;

WHEREAS, the science affecting coregonine decision-making is rapidly emerging;

WHEREAS, the Lake Ontario Committee is restoring Bloater and enhancing its cisco population;

WHEREAS, the Lake Huron Committee is beginning a management experiment to re-establish cisco in Saginaw Bay;

WHEREAS, the Lake Huron Citizen Advisory Committee has been actively engaged in promoting coregonine restoration in Lake Huron since 2003;

WHEREAS, two forms of coregonines—*coregonus-artedi* and *coregonus-hoyi* (Bloater)—are currently being successfully reared in hatcheries, with a third form, *coregonus-artedi albus*, scheduled for production in 2018;

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.

WHEREAS, the Canadian and U.S. Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission believe that reestablishing native coregonines in open offshore waters is consistent with the goals of fishers, environmentalists, and conservationists; and

WHEREAS, hatchery-based conservation stocking has proven successful for other species such as lake trout, a similar model should be investigated for coregonine restoration.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the U.S. and Canadian Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission urge the Commission to encourage state, provincial, tribal, and federal partners to work together through A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries to make coregonine restoration a priority;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the U.S. and Canadian Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission call upon the Commission to work with the lake committees to determine a Great Lakes-wide strategy to determine the species or forms of coregonines of greatest relevance to each lake and evaluates the potential food-web effects;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the U.S. and Canadian Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission encourage the lake committee agencies to consider the best available science to maintain genetic diversity within the population; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the U.S. and Canadian Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission request that the Commission support research, including research on hatchery rearing, which has the potential to expedite coregonine restoration.

Passed unanimously

June 7, 2017

U.S. and Canadian Committee of Advisors