

Grass Carp Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Committee Name

Grass Carp Advisory Committee

Area of Concern

For deliberations of this committee, the area of concern is the Great Lakes basin including all its tributaries, connecting channels, and river systems to the first impassable barrier within both the U.S. and Canadian borders. Within this broad geographic setting, the primary focus of the committee will be Lake Erie.

Committee Purpose

The Grass Carp Advisory Committee serves as the instrument of signatory agencies to *A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries* (Joint Strategic Plan) and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission for coordinating regional efforts to seek eradication of grass carp in Lake Erie, if possible, while also maintaining surveillance where appropriate in other lakes to:

- (i) Coordinate actions that address specific Lake Erie Committee (LEC) priorities associated with its 5-year Adaptive Management Response Strategy to eradicate grass carp. Annually report on progress toward LEC priorities;
- (ii) Develop coordinated approaches to address critical uncertainties identified by the LEC. Provide annual reports on progress for addressing critical uncertainties and maintain up-to-date work plans that identify how long it will be expected to take to address each critical uncertainty;
- (iii) Provide recommendations about additional uncertainties that should be addressed and whether any LEC priorities should be adjusted based on the effectiveness of priority actions to date and accumulated insights about critical uncertainties that may affect LEC goals and;
- (vi) Coordinate surveillance for grass carp throughout the Great Lakes basin and provide advice to individual lake committees as appropriate.

Membership

Signatory agencies – Up to two representatives of agencies signatory to the Joint Strategic Plan with grass carp interests or responsibility to respond to grass carp in a Great Lake, may be appointed by each agency. For agencies with multiple water bodies within their purview, one additional member per basin may be nominated, if desired.

Co-chairs – Two co-chairs will be recommended from within the GCAC for approval by the Council of Lake Committees (CLC). These roles will alternate periodically at the discretion of the GCAC. Co-chairs will serve as the primary liaison between the GCAC and lake committees. In this capacity, co-chairs will serve to facilitate achievement and reporting on grass carp priorities to lake committees, will administer the routine operations of the GCAC including the organization of meetings, conference calls, and recording of minutes, and will manage requests for task group data from outside agencies. Chairing commitments will extend a minimum of two years, and alternate periodically at the discretion of the CLC.

Resource persons -- As appropriate, the GCAC chairs may invite interested individuals with needed expertise to attend meetings and participate in activities of the committee. Resource persons are expected to participate in discussion, bring relevant information, speak for their agencies or universities, and to play an active role in the development of consensus.

Consensus

Consistent with the Joint Strategic Plan, the GCAC shall operate under a consensus format. In this regard, there is no formal voting mechanism. The GCAC is encouraged to work toward consensus, but if consensus cannot be achieved, the GCAC shall present the varying opinions or positions to the CLC for resolution.

Agency Commitments

To ensure accomplishment of desired grass carp surveillance and control objectives and priorities, agencies are encouraged to commit appropriate personnel and resources to GCAC activities in their annual agency work plans, including support for personnel salaries and necessary travel. All members and resource persons are expected to participate in GCAC assignments in a manner conducive to their expertise and their agency's interest in a particular issue.

Task Groups

With the approval of the GCAC, Task Groups may be activated by the co-chairs to undertake and coordinate special focused activities needed to achieve GCAC and individual lake committees' objectives.

Reporting

The co-chairs will furnish detailed reports of GCAC meetings to all members, to the CLC, and to the Commission. An annual report on progress toward lake committee priorities shall be delivered each spring.

Meeting Schedule

The committee shall meet at least annually. More frequent meetings or conference calls may be needed to address issues that require urgent and/or timely action.

Role of the Secretariat

A member of the Secretariat shall serve in a formal liaison capacity between the Commission and the Grass Carp Advisory Committee. The Secretariat assists the committee in the development of meeting agendas, meeting arrangements, and the preparation of briefing materials, reports and minutes.

26 November 2021