



**Lake Erie
Committee**

December 12., 2024

To Whom it May Concern:

The Lake Erie Committee (LEC) is extending the Walleye Management Plan (WMP) an additional five (5) years. The LEC has adjusted the review period for the WMP for the following reasons;

- Above average recruitment has been observed in the last (6) six years.
- Walleye sport and commercial fisheries are performing above their target values.
- Allow for the conversion of the Walleye stock assessment model from Automatic Differentiation Model Builder (ADMB) to R Template Model Builder (RTMB).

The LEC is clarifying the WMP Harvest Control Rules (HCR), ensuring a consistent approach to the order of operations between the Yellow Perch Management Plan and WMP. The LEC will continue to utilize Walleye Task Group technical input and advice from the Lake Erie Percid Management Advisory Group to arrive at a consensus Total Allowable Catch (TAC) decision using the following sequence:

1) If P^* is equal to or exceeds 0.05:

- the Recommended Allowable Harvest (RAH) range will be calculated using a reduced fishing rate that will ensure that the probability of the projected spawning stock biomass falling below the limit reference point (20% SSB_0) is less than P^* . The LEC will determine a TAC from within the RAH range.

2) If P^* is less than 0.05 and the RAH mean is outside the +/- 20% constraint bounds based on the previous year TAC:

- the RAH will be set at the 20% constraint bounds. For example, if the mean RAH is more than 20% greater than the previous year TAC, then the current TAC will be set at 20% more than the previous year TAC.

3) If P^* is less than 0.05 and the RAH mean is within the +/- 20% constraint bounds of the previous year's TAC:

- the LEC will establish TAC at the RAH mean.

REPRESENTING THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES OF LAKE ERIE

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Following the implementation of P*, the LEC will consider the following scenarios:

1) In a year following a single year P* TAC reduction when P* is no longer in effect:

- the TAC from 2 years prior will be used as a benchmark against which to employ the 20% TAC constraint.

2) In a TAC year where P* is not invoked, but P* has persisted for multiple years prior:

- the LEC will determine what the TAC would have been using the target F and the 20% TAC constraint for each of the years during that period, thus establishing what can be considered an “assumed TAC”. The previous years’ assumed TAC can then be used as a benchmark for the implementation of the 20% TAC constraint and a new TAC moving forward.

- Where P* has persisted for multiple years, consistent indicators of a strong year class must be present to rationalize invoking an assumed TAC. In a situation where models are predicting high level recruitment but fisheries dependent and independent data suggests otherwise, the LEC reserves the right to act in the best interest of sustainability and maintain a modest TAC at +/- 20% from the previous year’s TAC.
- If there is a risk of returning to P* in subsequent years following an assumed TAC allocation, the LEC reserves the right to act in the best interest of the resource and maintain the TAC at +/- 20% of the previous year’s TAC.

Thank You,



David Nihart, Chair

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