



Resolution 26-1 Prioritizing Great Lakes Whitefish Rescue and Recovery

- WHEREAS,** Great Lakes fisheries, specifically lake whitefish, are vital to the physical and economic well-being of the residents and communities in and around the Great Lakes, specifically around Lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron; and
- WHEREAS,** lake whitefish populations in the Great Lakes are in a sustained collapse, with some genetic variations and stocks at risk of completely disappearingⁱ; and
- WHEREAS,** this sustained collapse has been driven, in part by invasive dreissenid mussels filtering available nutrients vital to produce zooplankton food that young lake whitefish rely on to grow and reach maturity; and
- WHEREAS,** lake whitefish are crucial to commercial fishing in the Great Lakes, making up around 89% of the total harvest each year, however Lake Michigan harvests have fallen from 6.9 million pounds in 2009 to less than 2 million pounds in 2024ⁱⁱ; and
- WHEREAS,** lake whitefish are an integral part of the treaty rights and cultural practices of the Indigenous Nations around the Great Lakes, including the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples who hold lake whitefish deeply culturally, spiritually, and nutritionally significantⁱⁱⁱ; and
- WHEREAS,** many Tribal Nations have federally protected fishing rights for lake whitefish, and a deterioration of the lake whitefish population would infringe on these rights; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED,** that the members of the GLLC recognize the importance of lake whitefish to the Great Lakes basin and that the threat to lake whitefish is one of urgency and requires attention from states and provinces that surround the Great Lakes; and
- RESOLVED,** that the members of the GLLC do hereby commit to working with regional partners to help advocate for the lake whitefish rescue and restoration efforts, to ensure that this species can continue to thrive and provide for our communities; and
- RESOLVED,** that the GLLC will add a priority area for lake whitefish rescue and recovery, as well as invasive mussel mitigation to the GLLC Policy Agenda under Aquatic Invasive Species.

Approved at the 2026 Annual Meeting on September 29, 2026

ⁱ [Bridge Michigan, Kelly House](#)

ⁱⁱ [MSU Whitefish Research, Jack Flainski](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Native News Online](#)