

Managing Fish Means Managing People

As the GLFC concluded during the two-day retreat this spring, I have also learned that fisheries managers manage more than fish. Collaboration and partnerships between states, tribes, federal agencies, and even stakeholders, policy-makers, researchers, and others are necessary aspects of effective fisheries management. Preparing for the future management of resources in the Great Lakes Basin will be a continuing challenge due to the plethora of individuals, agencies, and

organizations that share a vested interest in the sustainability of these resources and must work together to provide for effective management of them. Fortunately, in my opinion, the GLFC stands at the helm of enabling collaboration and successfully facilitating partnerships with other agencies and organizations. With its proven track record, the GLFC is uniquely positioned to promote future cooperation toward the sustainability of Great Lakes fishery resources in the Basin and their environments.

By beginning these discussions about the future with the GLFC,

I am learning how to best prepare organizations to be able to address potential changes in the Great Lakes environment. I am grateful to Michigan State University and the Fenske Fellowship Committee, and for Bob Lambe and Dr. Bill Taylor in particular, for providing me with abundant experiences to work closely with the GLFC Commissioners and staff. Most importantly, I am thankful for the opportunity to become immersed in a management and decision-making process that has and will continue to effectively protect the fishery resources of our magnificent Great Lakes.

What is the Fenske Fellowship?

Fellowship History and Description

Jan Fenske was the first female fisheries biologist of the Fisheries Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. For 27 years, Jan worked passionately to protect and conserve the state's aquatic and fisheries resources. As an advocate for equality, Jan served as a mentor to many future professionals in the field of fisheries science and management. The Janice Lee Fenske Excellence in Fisheries Management Fellowship honors her and her significant legacy. The fellowship program is in its ninth year and has supported eleven students. For more information about the Fenske Fellowship, please contact Dr. Dana Infante (infante@msu.edu) or visit: http://www.fw.msu.edu/graduate/graduate_fellowship_opportunities



Jan Fenske

Molly's Motivation to Apply

I was inspired to apply for this fellowship because I greatly admire Janice Lee Fenske's passion for the sustainability of aquatic and fisheries resources she displayed during her lifetime. I was eager to find an opportunity that would enable me, like Janice, to make my own impact on fisheries sustainability in the Great Lakes Basin.

Molly's Fenske Project

In addition to helping the GLFC conduct an evaluation of the organization's future (covered in this article), I was also tasked with establishing a working relationship with members of the GLFC Law Enforcement Committee. One outcome of this relationship included a half-day symposium on fisheries sustainability, crime, and enforcement held at the 2015 American Fisheries Society meeting in Portland, OR.

Molly's Lessons Learned

I can proudly say that I finally understand the basic structure and function of the GLFC. I also learned that effective decision-making is a huge challenge, especially with so many stakeholders at the table. Through the many meetings and seminars I have attended with the GLFC, I have learned that relationships and partnerships are the key ingredients to a successful decision-making and management process.

Molly's Application beyond the Fellowship

This fellowship provided me with opportunities that have enabled me to grow as a graduate student and future professional in the field of fisheries science and management. I am more confident to pursue a permanent position with a state, federal, or even provincial management agency, and I know better how to become an effective fisheries manager capable of making positive change.