



## **Dr. Howard A. Tanner**

Dr. Howard A. Tanner received his B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Michigan State University, graduating in 1952. He taught and conducted research at Colorado State University for nine years and led the Colorado Department of Game, Fish and Parks Fisheries Research Program for three years before coming to Michigan as Chief of the Fisheries Division. There he teamed with Dr. Wayne Tody to resurrect the Great Lakes, which had become dysfunctional owing to the near elimination of lake trout (from overfishing and invasive sea lampreys) and domination by the invasive alewife. With the objective of converting at least some of the alewife biomass into economically-valued fisheries, they explored pelagic predator species that could be reared with the limited hatchery resources available to the state. Their search eventually led to the decision to introduce coho and Chinook salmon, which led to the emergence of the Great Lakes as a leading recreational fishing center of North America. The initial stocking of coho salmon in 1966 and Chinook salmon in 1967 was combined with sea lamprey control, restocking of lake trout, and conversion of commercial fisheries from lethal gillnets to far less lethal, selective trapnets. This integrated program resulted in Great Lakes fisheries that now generate more than \$2.5 billion in recreational angling expenditures and retail sales and \$7.1 billion in economic output annually.

After three years as Chief of the Fisheries Division, Dr. Tanner became Chair of the Michigan State University Department of Fisheries and Wildlife where he served for eight years. He then served as Director, Michigan Department of Natural Resources for over eight years. Following his retirement, he served another 10 years as professor back at Michigan State University. In recent years he has served on the Lake Huron Citizen Fisheries Advisory Committee and as co-chair of the Michigan United Conservation Club's Sea lamprey Control Funding Task Force. Under Dr. Tanner's leadership, the Sea Lamprey Task Force contributed importantly to the decision by Congress and the State of Michigan to increase funding for sea lamprey control, particularly in the St. Marys River, the largest remaining source of sea lamprey production in the Great Lakes.

The contributions of Dr. Howard A. Tanner that ultimately shaped the Great Lakes stocking program as perhaps the largest biomanipulation program involving propagated fish in the history of North American aquaculture will never be forgotten by the fisheries management community.

Elected into the NATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT HALL OF EXCELLENCE, 2008  
Executive Committee, Fisheries Management Section, American Fisheries Society