

Champlain and Memphremagog Fisheries Research Program (CMFRP) Request for Proposals 2026

The Champlain and Memphremagog Fisheries Research Program (CMFRP) supports research addressing basic or applied questions in fisheries and/or fish ecology on lakes Champlain and Memphremagog, with additional interest in comparative work on research questions of relevance to the Laurentian Great Lakes. Lake Champlain is a fragmented and heterogeneous system comprising five basins differing in trophic state, morphometry, and food web communities. This natural experimental gradient can be leveraged to address questions related to fisheries management, fish habitat use, population dynamics, and food-web structure and function, and thus contribute to a better understanding of how systems may respond to future changes, including stressors (e.g., climate change, invasive species, land use) and management actions. The CMFRP is funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

Applicants are encouraged to tailor their research proposals to management priorities (see list below) and research needs identified for lakes Champlain (<https://ecoevortex.org/repository/view/14373/>) and Memphremagog. To develop cross-basin questions, applicants can view the [GLFC fishery research themes](#). Pre-proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevance – does the pre-proposal address specific research topics outlined in the RFP or is of broad and significant interest to the field of fisheries?
- Scientific merit - is the design valid to address the research topic, produce reliable data, and generate meaningful knowledge?
- Feasibility – do the methods, timeline, costs, and team appear adequate to successfully accomplish the work?

We particularly encourage applications from investigators outside the University of Vermont (UVM) and SUNY Plattsburgh and outside the Champlain Basin. *Proposals focused on Lake Memphremagog will also be considered as part of this funding program.* A total of \$475,000 is available to fund 1 to 3 projects. Projects must be accomplished within three years. Awards will cover the entire duration of successful proposals. Additional funding up to \$20,000 may be available for projects that require access to the UVM R/V *Marcelle Melosira*.

Proposals that address the following management-related research questions will be given priority consideration, although proposals on any fisheries-related topic will be considered:

- (1) What is the cumulative contribution of unstocked (and generally smaller) tributaries to Atlantic salmon recruitment in Lake Champlain, and what type of portfolio effect could these tributaries contribute to self-sustaining populations?
- (2) What is the dispersal and fate of juvenile and adult sea lamprey in Lake Champlain? Which, if any, tributaries contribute disproportionately more parasitic adults to the overall population?
- (3) What are the demographics of the Lake Champlain fishing community and what are the values of the different sectors?
- (4) What is the extent and use of lake trout spawning sites across Lake Champlain for wild and stocked fish, do distinct spawning populations exist, and what is inter-annual variability in spawning site use?
- (5) What is the extent and cause of recruitment failure of wild walleye and sauger populations in Lake Champlain? Do stocked walleye, or the manner in which they are stocked, interfere with or suppress recruitment of wild walleye?
- (6) What are the demographics, habitat use, and interactions of the esocid community in Lake Champlain? What is best way(s) to effectively survey esocids to develop effective trend analyses given the highly heterogeneous habitat of Lake Champlain?

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- (7) What are the potential impacts associated with greater establishment of existing aquatic invasive species (AIS) (e.g., tench, spiny waterflea) on fish communities in Lake Champlain, and how might these impacts translate to the Great Lakes for those AIS present in Lake Champlain but still absent in the Great Lakes (i.e., tench)?
- (8) What are characteristics of the “commercial” recreational fishery in Vermont, including angler demographics, catch and sales, economic impacts, and public perceptions?
- (9) Other fisheries related topic(s), including those focused on Lake Memphremagog such as transmissible cancer in fish populations.

A number of resources exist that may be of use for proposals addressing the above questions (e.g., large and small research vessels, historical data, samples from routine monitoring programs). Please contact lcfrp@uvm.edu for additional information.

Evaluation of pre-proposals and full proposals will follow a protocol similar to that used by the GLFC Fishery Research Program (<https://www.glfc.org/for-researchers.php>).

Successful proposals will be funded as sub-awards through the University of Vermont (UVM) and indirect costs will be restricted to 5% of the total budget.

Expected Timeline for 2026

Mid-August: RFP released

September 15: Pre-proposals due

September 29: PIs notified on pre-proposal decisions

November 17: Invited full proposals due

January 22 (2027): PIs notified on funding decisions

April 1 (2027): Earliest start date

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRE-PROPOSALS (DUE **SEPTEMBER 15, 2026)**

Template updated June 2026

COMPLETING THE PRE-PROPOSAL FORM:

1. Pre-proposals must be submitted to lcfrp@uvm.edu
2. Instructions are embedded within the sections of the pre-proposal form.
3. Total length of pre-proposal must not exceed one page.
4. Use 11-point Times New Roman font for body text of the pre-proposal. Do not change font styles or sizes of the headings and subheadings of the form. Delete the announcement and instructions pages and investigator instructions [contained in brackets within the pre-proposal form] prior to submittal of the pre-proposal.
5. Investigators must submit budget request in USD, including those from Canadian agencies or institutions.
6. Projects may not have start dates before **April 1, 2027**.
7. At the end of the pre-proposal, include a one-page CV for each investigator.
8. The pre-proposal and CVs of investigators should be compiled in a single PDF document with the filename **[LastNameofPI]_LCFRP_Preproposal.pdf**
9. The PDF file should be sent to lcfrp@uvm.edu with the subject line “LC Preproposal: PI LastName” prior to **midnight (EDT), September 15, 2026**.

Questions can be sent to lcfrp@uvm.edu

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Lake Champlain Fisheries Research Grant Program

TITLE: [Type title in **Sentence case** font. Use a short, descriptive title that captures the project's purpose or goal.]

PROJECT LEADER(S): [Include the name, agency or organization, address, phone number, and email of Principal Investigator. List the name, email, and agency of other investigators.]

COSTS: 1st yr: _____ **Total:** _____ **PROJECT DATES:** [Provide the start and end dates here]
[Include 1st yr costs and total cost. Funds are in USD.]

RATIONALE: [Briefly describe the rationale for the project, including the issue or question that will be addressed by the research. State the hypotheses or research questions to be explored. A good research question should be narrow enough to address specific issues but not so narrow that it can be addressed with a yes or no answer or the gathering of a few statistics. A well-thought-out and focused research question leads directly into hypotheses. Ecological hypotheses represent possible explanations of cause and effect (i.e., they explain observations or relationships among variables). Multiple competing, or alternative hypotheses can be developed to explain the observation. Predictions are what you expect to occur if the hypothesis is correct. For instance, if hypothesis A is supported, we predict result (1), result (2), and result (3), but NOT result (4) or result (5). Negative tests of predictions help eliminate flawed hypotheses. Once research questions and hypotheses are formulated, research objectives can be developed (see below). Describe why the proposed research is important and provide a brief justification for the hypotheses. Explain the reason why this project should be conducted and why the proposed work is significant.]

OBJECTIVES: [Numerically list research objectives in the sequence of their completion. Many pre-proposals fail to advance to a request for a full proposal due to poorly formulated objectives. Research objectives are statements that are related to scientific understanding based on interpretation of data analysis; objectives are **not methodological steps** (e.g., collect data, conduct experiments, analyze data, write report). Objectives identify a pattern, process, or relationship among variables to be tested, compared, or described, and can be used to evaluate progress of a project. Objectives should be worded to reflect the research questions to be answered, the hypotheses to be tested, and the processes to be described. A set of objectives are ideally related to each other. When little information exists to formulate questions and hypotheses, then descriptive research objectives are appropriate.]

METHODS: [Provide a concise overview of proposed methods. For research projects, include study design, data collection procedures, analytical methods, reporting, and time frames.]

RELEVANCE: [Identify which numbered priority or priorities are addressed in the proposed work and describe how the proposed research will benefit research and/or management in Lake Champlain or Lake Memphremagog and potentially the Great Lakes.]

DELIVERABLES AND DISTRIBUTION OF FINDINGS: [Provide a concise description of products to be delivered and the medium(s) through which the research results will be disseminated. Products may include students trained, theses, peer-reviewed publications, models, techniques or methodology, databases, workshop and technical reports, public engagements, policy and management briefings, electronic files, and presentations. Medium(s) may include email listservs, websites, journals, management meetings, conferences, etc.]