

Fish Habitat Management

CCFAM Inland Fisheries Committee
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Halifax, Nova Scotia

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Policy
Modernization
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Partnering
Arrangements

Audit –
Protecting Fish
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Discussion



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Purpose

- Provide an update on the modernization of the Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat
- Provide an update and seek input on the Habitat Management Program's Policy Agenda
- Provide an overview of the Habitat Management Program's partnering activities and to seek input on the evaluation of these activities
- Provide an update on the federal audit of the Habitat Management Program

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Modernization of the Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat

- The 1986 Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat (Habitat Policy) provides a framework for the administration of the habitat protection and pollution prevention provisions of the *Fisheries Act*
- The Habitat Policy is the basis for the Habitat Management Program, though much has changed and much has been learned since its introduction
- Internal discussions are underway to determine whether modernization of the Habitat Policy will be undertaken
- Many partners and stakeholders will have interest in the modernization of the Habitat Policy and will be engaged early in the process to help inform its development

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The Policy Agenda

- The Habitat Management Program has identified several priority areas for development and improvement of operational policies:
 - Position Statement on Fish Mortality
 - Policy on 'No Net Loss' and habitat compensation guide
 - Guide to writing authorizations
 - Marine Pathways of Effect and space-based management
 - Guide on Flow Requirements
- Consultation with provincial partners is vital to developing strong policy documents
- A process is needed for informing provincial agencies of new policy work, and for obtaining technical input on their development
 - The Position Statement on Fish Mortality as a pilot project

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Habitat Management Partnering Arrangements

- The concept of partnering has been central to the delivery of the Habitat Management Program
- Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM) in early 2000 committed to signing formal Habitat Management agreements to meet its objective of *“Coordination of fish habitat management activities by governments to provide, efficient, seamless program delivery to Canadians”*
- In 2002, DFO approved internal “Guidelines for Developing Partnering Agreements on Fish Habitat Management with Provincial and Territorial Agencies” and has used these as basis for formal agreements with stakeholder groups as well

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Habitat Management Partnering Arrangements (con't)

Province or Territory	Arrangement on Fish Habitat Management
British Columbia	MOU signed in 2000
Alberta	Informal – Protocols in place
Saskatchewan	MOU to be signed in 2008
Manitoba	MOU signed in 2003
Ontario	Canada-Ontario Fisheries Agreement signed in 1987
Quebec	Informal
New Brunswick	Informal – Watercourse Alteration Committee
Prince Edward Island	MOU signed in 2002
Nova Scotia	MOU signed in 2005
Newfoundland and Labrador	Informal
Yukon	Informal
Northwest Territories	Informal
Nunavut	Informal

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Habitat Management Partnering Arrangements (con't)

Category of Partners	Partnering Arrangements	Year
Industry	MoU with Canadian Electrical Association	2002
	Agreement with Natural Resources Industries Association	2004
Aboriginals	Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program	2004
NGOs	MoU with Coalition of National/Regional Non-Governmental Conservation Organizations	2007
	National Fish Habitat Coordinating Committee with Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations	2007
	MoU with Federation of Canadian Municipalities	2008
Other Government Departments	S 36 MoU with Environment Canada	1985

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Habitat Management Partnering Arrangements (con't)

- An Evaluation Framework is under development to test the effectiveness of Habitat Management partnering activities, and to inform future partnering initiatives

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Auditor General Audit of the Habitat Management Program

- Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) has undertaken an Audit titled “Protection Fish Habitat”
- The OAG is currently developing recommendations based on the information gathered to date
- Public release of the Audit Report is expected in Spring 2009

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Auditor General Audit of the Habitat Management Program (con't)

- Areas of focus:
 - Administration and enforcement of the *Fisheries Act*
 - Collaborative arrangements with provinces, communities, and stakeholders
 - Implementation and adaptation of the Environmental Process Modernization Plan
 - Performance measurement and reporting
- The Audit also looks at case examples:
 - Duck Pond Tailings Impoundment Area
 - Oil Sands
 - Fraser River Gravel

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- What initial comments do provincial governments have about the modernization of the Habitat Policy?
- How do provincial governments want to be involved in the development and improvement of other Habitat Management operational policies?
 - Can we test a new process using the Position Statement on Fish Mortality as a pilot?
- How can provincial agencies provide input to the evaluation of Habitat Management partnering activities?