

Assessing Fish Communities in Lakes – MNR's Programs

Lake Links Conference
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Overview

- Who assesses in MNR?
- Why assess a lake?
- How do we assess fish communities and fisheries?
- How to decide which lakes get assessed?

Who in the MNR assesses fish communities (South Region)?

- Fisheries Assessment Units
 - Kawartha Lakes, Muskoka Lakes, Algonquin, Lake Simcoe, Haliburton-Hastings
 - Long term trends since 1978
- Lake Ontario Management Unit
- District Level
 - Kemptville, Peterborough, Bancroft, Pembroke

Why assess a lake?

- Need a clear objective such as:
 - Assess a new angling regulation(s)
 - Assess habitat restoration
 - Assess status of fish community or specific species or management area (Fisheries Management Zone, watershed)
 - Research initiative
- Best as part of research, zone-wide or watershed-wide monitoring with associated funding support

How does MNR assess fish communities and fisheries?

- **Gill nets, trap nets,** fyke/hoop nets, seines, minnow traps, electro-fishing
 - Work with local manager to choose appropriate survey
- **Creel surveys**
 - Stay tuned for workshop summer 2010 hosted by Frontenac Stewardship Council



Standard MNR Net Programs

Key fish species	lake trout	brook trout	walleye	Bass & panfish
Net program	BSM SPIN SLIN	BSM BTIN	BSM FWIN ESTN	NSCIN BSM

- BSM – Broad Scale Monitoring (24-hour gill nets)
- SPIN – Summer Profundal Index Netting (2 hour gill nets)
- SLIN – Spring Littoral Index Netting (1.5 hour gill nets)
- BTIN – Brook Trout Index Netting (0.5 hour gill nets)
- FWIN – Fall Walleye Index Netting (24-hour gill nets)
- ESTN – End of Spring Trap Netting (24-hour trap nets)
- NSCIN – Nearshore Community Index Netting (24-hr trap nets)

What's involved?

- Labour & resources
 - Field portion (minimum 5 to 14 days), strong backs, training, time commitment of volunteers, appropriate boats-motors
 - Data entry (1 to 2 days)
 - Analyze/report/presentation (a lot of time, need expertise to analyze)
 - Realistically 1-2 per year depending upon other workload
 - Need to consult with local manager 1-2 years ahead
 - DON'T EXPECT REPORT RIGHT AWAY
- Aging of fish
 - \$1 to \$4 per fish depending upon structure aged
 - Typically collect up to 100 per fish species per project
- Equipment purchase, maintenance
 - Nets
 - \$200 to \$3000 per net for new nets
 - Up to \$100 per net to repair