August *Community* Update

From Nawash Fisheries

More Questions? Contact **fisheryoffice.nawash@gmail.com**

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Together with Giigoonyag

(TWG) is a research initiative intented to adress concerns brought forward by the community about the SON fishery.
This initiative includes several different research projects.

Christopher Akiwenzie will be conducting SON-based ecological knowledge interviews with knowledge keepers, fish harvesters and Elders from SON. The interview process is expected to last up to two years.

Progress to date:

1. Data collection manual created and approved.
2. Community meet and greet to introduce interviewers.

Project Partners for TWG:
Queen's University,
Lakehead University,
Trent University,
Bagida'waad, NDMNRF and Parks Canada.

Lake Whitefish Larvae Research

Mature lake whitefish gather and spawn in the fall over shallow and rocky shoals along the shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. The eggs overwinter and hatch as larval fish the following spring. Presently, there is limited knowledge of the factors that affect spawning success. This component of the project will include conducting larval fish and plankton surveys.

Habitat and Shoal Assessment

There is limited knowledge from Western science of the status of historical and spawning shoals within SON. An underwater drone will be used to assess spawning habitat and spawning behaviour.

Progress to date:

1. **Purchase of underwater drone.**
2. **Side scan mapping of LIttle Port Elgin Shoal.**

Acoustic Telemetry

An acoustic telemetry system has transmitters and receivers. Transmitters are electronic tags that spreads sound pulses into the water. These can surgically be implanted into fish. Receivers record the information and it is downloaded for scientific study. This project will monitor the lake- wide movments of lake whitefish and lake trout , providing data on home- range size and seasonal movments of various populations.

Progress to date:

1. Placement of receiver array throughout Lake Huron and Georgian Bay
2. Tagged 49 lake whitefish

The knowledge held by community members is an invaluable resource for protecting the Rights and Interests of SON within their Traditional Territory.

Community Engagement/ Education Outreach

The project parties will carry out public and community engagement about various projects for the purpose of general education and outreach.

Progress to date:

1. School fishing event
2. Fishery presentation to schools

The foundational knowledge held by the community is a source of strength in making informed decisions with respect to SON fishery and developments in the Terriorty.

Fish Stocking Discussion

The NDMNRF and the SON will be adressing this concern through engagment and research. In the most recent fishery agreement the NDMNRF and SON agreed to adress fish stocking. This project will have three main phases. Phase 1; a report summarizing knowledge from Western science and SON- based knowledge. Phase 2; SON fishery goals and objective report. Phase 3; joint action plan outlining potential next steps for SON NDMNRF.

Progress to date:

1. Literature review largely completed

Lake Trout and Lake Whitefish Interactions

The intent of this project is to work with SON community members to share SON- based ecological knowledge as well as collecting fish stomachs to learn more about the role of lake trout in the lake whitefish decline.