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A MESSAGE FROM
CHIEF PATRICK MADAHBEE
A/OFRC CHAIRMAN

I am pleased to present the 2006 Annual Report of the Anishinabek/Ontario Fisheries Resource Centre (A/OFRC). This report highlights many of the achievements realized by the A/OFRC throughout the past year, in continuing a tradition of providing quality information for the sound management of Ontario fisheries.

The 2006 field season saw the A/OFRC complete 29 fisheries projects with 22 different First Nations. This represents the largest number of projects completed in the Centre’s history. The information from these projects is being turned into recommendations and action plans e.g. developing a management strategy for Woodcock Lake; the continued use of index netting data in management of the North Channel; resolving conflict on Lake Nipissing. A number of Anishinabek nations undertook activities that would help them move closer to the creation of their own Fisheries Management Plans.

Planning began in earnest toward the creation and implementation of a capacity building strategy, which will provide knowledge and experience in fisheries assessment techniques to members of the Anishinabek Nation. It is anticipated that this strategy will be fully implemented in 2007, with trainees joining the staff to begin the field season.

The Centre has and will continue to play a significant role in the development of shared information services through working with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and many other organizations throughout Anishinabek territory.
ORGANIZATION PROFILE AND MANDATE

LETTERS PATENT

April 23, 1995

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman

Patrick Madahbee

Appointed Directors:

Clarence Bouchard
Alesia Boyer
Jim Grayston
Frank Kennedy
Peter Meisenheimer
Cliff Meness
Brian Monague
Tom Whillans

STAFF

Ed Desson, General Manager
Cynthia Roy, Office Administrator
Perry McLeod-Shabogesic,
Community Liaison
Caroline Deary,
Senior Fisheries Biologist
Maureen Peltier, Fisheries Biologist
Kim Carmichael, Fisheries Biologist
Frank Hardy Jr., Fisheries Technician

The Anishinabek/Ontario Fisheries Resource Centre (A/OFRC) originated from the Anishinabek Conservation and Fishing Framework Agreement signed in July of 1993. The Centre is a not-for-profit corporation established under letters patent dated April 25, 1995 by the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations. The A/OFRC serves as an independent source of information, providing advice on fisheries conservation and management issues wherever there is an interest to member communities of the Union of Ontario Indians (UOI)-Anishinabek Nation.

In addition to promoting state of the art science, the Centre reports on stock status through data collection, inventory, monitoring, and evaluating the impacts of use and other environmental stresses on fish populations and their habitats; and provides a forum for information sharing and participation with stakeholders.

The Centre has operated from a modest, but adequate rental unit at 755 Wallace Road, North Bay, since November 2001.
The A/OFRC Board of Directors currently consists of nine individuals from a variety of backgrounds. The Grand Council Chief of the Anishinabek Nation and the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources jointly approve the chairperson and each will appoint up to four directors.

JOINTLY APPROVED CHAIRMAN

CHIEF PATRICK MADAHBEE

Present Chief of Aundeck-Omni-Kaning First Nation; former Manager of Aboriginal Banking Services at Toronto Dominion Bank; extensive involvement with First Nation politics, spanning over 30 years; driving force behind the establishment of the Wabuno Fish Culture Operation on Manitoulin Island.

DIRECTORS APPROVED BY THE ANISHINABEK NATION GRAND COUNCIL CHIEF

CLIFF MENESS

Over 15 years as a community leader (Chief & Councilor); former member of the Union of Ontario Indians Board of Directors and Finance Committee; presently negotiating a trapping agreement for the Anishinabek Nation with the Province of Ontario; president of the Board of Directors, Fur Harvesters Auction House; international Firefighter status and instructor for Search & Rescue.

BRIAN MONAGUE

Band Councilor with the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation; part-time fisherman; with a long time interest in environmental issues on the Great Lakes. Presently sits as the First Nations Supervisor for the "Pinery Provincial Park Resource Management Plan" regarding deer herd reduction. Continuing interest in environmental issues on the Great Lakes, particularly invading species.

CLARENCE BOUCHARD

Commercial fisherman from Kiashke Zaaging Anishinabek (Gull Bay) First Nation on Lake Nipigon; former constable for the Anishinabek Police Service at Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinabek (Rocky Bay) First Nation.

ALESIA BOYER

Deputy Chief of Mississauga #8 First Nation; participates in the North Shore Fisheries Management Association and in Elders Circle in her community; involved in the working group for the Mississaugi Delta Provincial Nature Reserve.
DIRECTORS APPROVED BY THE ONTARIO MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES

JIM GRAYSTON
Present owner/operator of a Tourism Marketing Consulting Company; past Vice President of Product Development, Partnership and Sales for the Northern Ontario Marketing Corporation; former Executive Director for the Ontario Tourist Outfitters Association; former District Manager and Communications Specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR); present Partnership Coordinator for Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC).

TOM WHILLANS
Professor, Environmental and Resource Studies Program, Trent University; research interests in near-shore fisheries and wetlands in the Great Lakes basin; current director of INSTRUCT, a 6-year community-based watershed management program in Ecuador and Mexico; past member of the Ontario Fisheries Advisory Council.

PETER MEISENHEIMER
Executive Director of the Ontario Commercial Fisheries Association; former consultant to the Great Lakes fishing industry in Ontario, Illinois, and Wisconsin; former fisheries development advisor in Botswana; former manager of an aid and disaster relief program in Namibia; past experience with the design and implementation of marine mammal research in Russia; membership on committees such as the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission; advisor to the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission.

FRANK KENNEDY
Director of the Science and Information Branch, Frank was previously Manager of Business Solutions Services-Forests. Starting his career with the OMNR in 1977, he has provided leadership with the Land Use Planning Branch and has considerable senior management experience, including Forest Management Planning, Environmental Assessment and Land Use Planning.

ELDER ADVISOR

HAROLD MICHON
Past Fisheries Manager of the Rocky Bay Fisheries Unit; commercial fisherman, inland lakes, Lake Nipigon, Lake Superior; instrumental in advancing cooperation for fisheries management on Lake Nipigon.

The Board of Directors met formally in September of 2006 and again in January of 2007, to review the Centre’s progress and chart a direction for 2007/08. The Board decided that greater emphasis should be placed on capacity building, while maintaining support for First Nations seeking answers to critical fisheries issues. A decision was made to increase the size of the Projects Committee from four, to six, to take full advantage of the wide range of experience that exists within the A/OFRC Board.
In January of 2006 the A/OFRC Board of Directors examined the success that the organization has had to date in building and retaining capacity within First Nation communities. There was a desire to move toward offering more meaningful and lasting experience to community members wishing to pursue fisheries as a career. The idea was presented by Chief Patrick Madahbee to the Grand Council assembly in June of 2006 at Sand Point First Nation, and was unilaterally accepted.

The A/OFRC is now poised to conduct its field activities in 2007/08 with a shift in focus towards capacity building within the Anishinabek Nation. Fisheries Technician and Biologist interns will receive training through a lengthy work term, in all aspects of fisheries assessment and management that will include field work, data analysis, and report writing. Providing as much regional representation as possible, interns will be selected based on their commitment to fisheries science. Planning is also underway for the delivery of customized education modules to elementary and secondary schools; and for individual, directed training to existing Fisheries Coordinators. It is our vision that interns will be prepared for employment in the fisheries sector and Fisheries Coordinators will be in a position to design and implement their own programs. Ultimately, the experience and
knowledge gained through this initiative will be transferred back to the participants’ home community and region. The Centre will maintain the delivery of useable products in the form of reports on stock and habitat status, evaluation of stresses on fish populations and habitats, and developing recommendations for consideration by managers.

In planning for 2007/08, the A/OFRC Projects Committee thoroughly reviewed and prioritized 30 project proposals and selected 20 for implementation, within fourteen different First Nations.

The A/OFRC has signed an agreement with Fisheries and Oceans Canada under the Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program (AIHP), to begin delivery of a fish habitat strategy to the Anishinabek Nation. Implementation of this two year initiative will begin in 2007.
Total revenues available to the A/OFRC in 2006/07 were $1,220,000 while the Centre expended a total of $841,000.

![2006/07 Expenditures](image)

Highlights of these expenditures include:
- Twenty-five percent, $212,000, (core staff costs not included) expended on field projects.
- Staff team building, leadership training and skill development expenditures in anticipation of the 2007/08 capacity building initiative.
- The manufacture of a 24’ Kingfisher work skiff, significantly increasing the Centre’s ability to conduct work safely on larger water bodies.
- Replacement of two vehicles

Our audited financial statements are provided as an appendix of at the end of this document.

During the 2006/07 fiscal year, the Centre began a review of its costing procedures in order to develop a more accurate picture of the staff time directly associated with conducting its field program. For the 2007/08 Audited Statements and Annual Report, the A/OFRC will include an illustration of it’s staff involvement costs in conducting its field program. This will give a more accurate picture of what should be considered administrative staff costs and a more comprehensive field program cost total.

The 2007/08 fiscal year will see the review of administrative and overhead costs for the last 10 year period. The Centre will also conduct a review of staff salaries and wage scales in order to better position the Centre as a competitive employer.
COMMUNICATIONS AND NETWORKING

In the spring of 2006, the A/OFRC produced and distributed the eighth edition of the “Fisheries News”, which highlights activities, partnerships, and products. Ten thousand copies of this publication were inserted into the Anishinabek News, reaching homes throughout Anishinabek territory and beyond. One thousand additional copies were sent out to post secondary institutions, OMNR, and other network centres.

In addition, the A/OFRC website has been revamped and is updated regularly with field project information and other happenings.

The A/OFRC set-up and facilitated a meeting for the Lake Simcoe Fisheries Assessment Unit to deliver stock status information on Lake Simcoe yellow perch, to Chippewas of Georgina Island community members. This information transfer answered many long standing questions for a large group of community attendees.

The Centre presented a multitude of fisheries information at the Dokis First Nation “Natural Resources Workshop”, which gave community members a greater understanding of the assessment projects that have been carried out in their territory. Following this meeting, a stewardship council was formed within the First Nation with representation from the forestry and fisheries sectors, as well as youth and elders. The A/OFRC will act as an advisor to this council.

The Centre continues to provide fisheries information and support to communities within the Anishinabek Nation, and to the greater scientific community. Data is housed in standard formats, making it readily available to all users upon request. The demand for A/OFRC products and support continues to increase as the field projects completed now numbers over 200.

The A/OFRC provides active representation to various scientific/technical and resource stewardship groups within the Anishinabek territory. Some of these have included: Lake Nipigon FAU Technical Committee, Lake Nipissing Stewardship Council, Kawartha Lakes Fisheries Science Network, FMZ councils, and the Ontario Technical Committee for the Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program. Perry McLeod-Shabogesic will continue in his role as an Aboriginal Advisor to the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission.
2006 marked the start of a new decade in field operations for the A/OFRC, having now completed 226 fisheries projects in 33 different First Nations. In 2006/07, the A/OFRC completed 29 field projects within 22 different First Nations, in 3 of the four regions of the Anishinabek territory. The Centre continues to garner interest from new communities and helps others move closer toward the creation of their own fisheries management plans.

Through an agreement with Nbisiing Secondary School’s Cooperative Education Program, James Peshabo spent his work experience term with the A/OFRC. James was exposed to a professional work environment and became familiar with scientific processes and terminology.

In August of 2006, the Centre welcomed Caroline Deary as the new Senior Fisheries Biologist, bringing with her a wealth of experience in fisheries assessment and management, fisheries habitat issues, and data management.

**SUPERIOR REGION**

![Map of First Nation Communities in the Robinson-Superior Region Treaty Area](image)

Figure 1. First Nation Communities completing projects within the Robinson-Superior Region Treaty Area (outlined in red) during the 2006/07 Field Season.
BIINJITIWAABIK ZAAGING
ANISHINABEK FIRST NATION

LAKE NIPIGON:
LAKE STURGEON ADULT SPAWNING
POPULATION AND FALL JUVENILE
ASSESSMENT

Background: First Nations around Lake Nipigon have become concerned about possible impacts on their subsistence harvesting practices, due to the consideration given to the lake sturgeon for inclusion to the Species at Risk Act. The intent of this project was to initiate the collection of information on lake sturgeon to begin building a database for Lake Nipigon.

Summary: Residents along the Sturgeon River were interviewed for their knowledge of potential spawning locations. The spring project started on May 24th when the water temperature was 13 °C. Nets were set around the base of the hydro dam and at the mouth of the Sturgeon River to capture lake sturgeon as they entered the river to spawn. A total of 20 nets were set over a 4 day sampling period. One sturgeon was captured at the mouth of the river and biologically sampled and released.

The fall component ran over two weeks starting on Oct 9/06 and ending on Oct 19/06. Two areas were sampled on Lake Nipigon, the first being at the mouth of the Sturgeon River, and the second the entirety of Ombabika Bay. Twenty one lake sturgeon were captured at the Sturgeon River area out of four sets, but fishing was impaired by a severe fall storm. Ten sturgeon were captured in Ombabika Bay, in 10 gill net sets. All fish were sampled for life history information and implanted with PIT tags.

LAKE NIPIGON:
IMPACT OF WATER LEVEL CHANGES
ON LAKE TROUT AND LAKE
WHITEFISH REPRODUCTION

Background: The water levels of Lake Nipigon are presently being managed according to the Nipigon River System Water Management Plan of March 2005. The relationship between autumn water levels and lake whitefish / lake trout year class strength has never been adequately investigated in Lake Nipigon. The objective of this study was to map the locations of lake whitefish eggs on the Lesperance Island shoal and use this information to model the potential effects of water levels on lake whitefish egg survival, with extrapolation to other known spawning locations.

Summary: An assessment of the lake whitefish spawning shoal of Lesperance Island was conducted between November 28 and December 1, 2006. Transect lines were situated perpendicular to Lesperance Island based on contour mapping generated from a 2005 BASS mapping initiative. Egg counts were conducted along three transect lines, at 2 m intervals, over a distance of
approximately 45 m and at depths of 0.5 m to 5 m. A small number of eggs were located at depths ranging from 1.75 m to 3 m. Additional transects had been planned, but weather conditions prevented a more extensive assessment of the spawning shoal. A brief report will be prepared summarizing the methodology and findings, with recommendations for repeating this study at a future date.

FORT WILLIAM FIRST NATION

FISHERIES TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE DOCUMENTATION
Background: The Fort William First Nation is located on the northwest shore of Lake Superior where the traditional harvesting of fish forms an important part of the community’s existence. The documentation of traditional fishing practices and identification of emerging fisheries issues is an important step in developing a community based fisheries management strategy.

Summary: Survey questions identified fishing practices and local fisheries related concerns through contact with commercial, sport, subsistence fishers and other band members throughout the community. In total, 57 surveys along with the mapping of spatial information were completed over a four week period (July 24th – August 18th/06).

KIASHKE ZAAGING ANISHINAABEK FIRST NATION

GULL BAY: FALL WALLEYE INDEX NETTING
Background: Fall Walleye Index Netting was completed in Gull Bay in 2001, through a joint venture by the A/OFRC and OMNR. The First Nation wished to determine if there had been a change in relative abundance since that time. It has become an accepted practice to update FWIN information every five years.

Summary: The project commenced on Sept, 27/06 and fifty net sets were completed by utilizing two crews of three people, by Oct, 02/06. The catch consisted of approximately 510 walleye, 50 pike and 3 lake trout, along with a variety of coarse fish. It was interesting to note that a number of rock bass were captured, as they were not known to exist in Lake Nipigon previously.

FISHERIES TECHNICIAN TRAINING
Background: The First Nation has long held a commercial fishing licence on Lake Nipigon, providing employment for community members in both summer and winter. The waters of Gull Bay are also utilized by a number of families for subsistence and recreation. Having a member participate in many of the fisheries assessment projects on Lake Nipigon provides understanding and first hand knowledge that can be relayed back to the rest of the community.

Summary: A technician was hired from the First Nation for an extended term, participating in Lake Sturgeon Adult Spawning Population and Fall Juvenile Assessment and the Gull Bay FWIN.
LONG LAKE #58 FIRST NATION

LONG LAKE: SUMMER PROFUNDAL INDEX NETTING (SPIN)
Background: Members of the First Nation have long utilized the waters of Long Lake for commercial and subsistence purposes. Lake trout are an important part of their diet and provide economic opportunities through recreational fishing. The A/OFRC had previously employed the Spring Littoral Index Netting (SLIN) methodology for assessing lake trout populations on larger lakes, but these did not provide adequate results. It was anticipated that the SPIN method may be more suitable for Long Lake.

Summary: One hundred and two (102) net sets were completed from Aug 14, 2006 to Sept 1, 2006. Twenty four (24) lake trout, sixty eight whitefish (68) were captured and sampled for attribute information. Contaminant samples were taken from all lake trout and a number of walleye and whitefish, as well as fecundity samples from eight lake trout.

MCKAY LAKE: FALL WALLEYE INDEX NETTING (FWIN)
Background: Subsistence fishers of the First Nation desire information regarding the health of the walleye stocks in McKay Lake. A FWIN was selected as the best tool to provide a reasonable picture of this population.

Summary: From September 30 to October 4, 2006, sixteen nets were set in McKay Lake yielding a total of 474 fish. A total of 400 walleye were biologically sampled. The project was completed early because a target of 400 walleye was reached, which provided a complete representative sample of the population. Age structures and contaminant samples were collected and sent for analysis. This walleye population appears healthy but further data analysis is pending.

NAMAYGOOSISAGAGUN FIRST NATION

SMOOTHROCK LAKE: ADULT SPAWNING LAKE STURGEON STUDY
Background: Smoothrock Lake is located in Wabakimi Provincial Park, 42 kilometers north of Armstrong, Ontario. Namaygoosisagun First Nation is connected to this lake by multiple short portages and travel through 5 or 6 lakes. Elders make the journey to Smoothrock Lake every spring and bring home Lake Sturgeon to share with the community. The purpose of this study was to get an indication of the abundance of adult lake sturgeon in Smoothrock Lake. A small lake sturgeon commercial fishery was supported on Smoothrock Lake for a short time but this pressure no longer exists. The study of
Background: The Pic is a large river with low to medium gradient, emptying into Lake Superior at the heart of the First Nation. The Black and Kagiano Rivers are major tributaries to the Pic, and also have been known to be utilized by spawning sturgeon populations. In 2002, the First Nation participated with seven other agencies in a joint effort to survey the adult sturgeon population utilizing the Pic River system. This project was intended to build on the 2002 study to establish a comprehensive database for the lake sturgeon in this system.

Summary: The project ran from May 23 to June 9, 2006, and was mainly concentrated on the Pic River with some effort expended on the Black River. Five (5) sturgeon were captured, PIT tagged, biologically sampled, and released.

PAYS PLAT FIRST NATION

TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE GATHERING

Background: The First Nation has long been involved in subsistence and commercial fishing which provides employment for community members throughout the four seasons. The First Nation has great concerns over the expanding loss of knowledge and would like to document what they have while it still exists.

Summary: Local commercial, sport, subsistence fishers, and community members throughout the community were surveyed using a standard format. The survey was completed in November with a total of 27 surveys being completed out of 27 homes on the reserve. A final report describing fishing practices and identifying issues will be jointly prepared by Pays Plat and the A/OFRC, for fisheries management purposes. Individual responses will remain confidential.
PIC MOBERT FIRST NATION

TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE GATHERING

Background: The Pic Mobert First Nation is located a short distance north of Lake Superior. Historically all forms of harvesting have been practiced and have formed an important part of their community’s existence. The community’s interest in the fishery in respect to commercial, sport and food-fishing is increasing however, as are the concerns related to conservation and management of local fish populations. The documentation of traditional fishing practices and identification of emerging fisheries issues is a first step in developing a community based fisheries management strategy.

Summary: Local fishers and community members were surveyed in late September to identify fishing practices and identify local fisheries related concerns. The surveyor contacted commercial, sport and subsistence fishers throughout the community and helped them complete the questionnaire. Fifty-three surveys were completed and will be summarized with the creation of resource utilization maps. Individual responses will remain confidential. A final report describing fishing practices and identifying issues will be jointly prepared by Pic Mobert First Nation and the A/OFRC for fisheries management purposes.

RED ROCK FIRST NATION

LAKE HELEN: NORTHERN PIKE AND WALLEYE TAGGING

Background: The First Nation relies heavily on the walleye and northern pike populations of Lake Helen for subsistence purposes. Before embarking on any economic initiatives that would target recreational anglers, the community would like to obtain information regarding the health of this fishery.

Summary: This trap netting project was completed from May 11, 2006 to June 16, 2006, in which time 129 northern pike and 18 walleye were tagged. Other fish captured and biologically sampled during the project included: white sucker, longnose sucker, yellow perch, lake whitefish, lake trout, burbot, and rainbow trout. The MNR Nipigon District Biologist spent considerable time with our field crew and subsequently hired two Red Rock members to do another five week radio tracking study on their behalf. This study will be carried out again in 2007, with continued OMNR involvement.
**AUNDECK-OMNI-KANING / SHEGUINDAH FIRST NATIONS**

**NORTH CHANNEL: SMALLMOUTH BASS HABITAT MAPPING**

Background: Aundeck-Omni-Kaning and Sheguindah First Nations worked collaboratively with the Little Current Fish and Game Club to conduct an assessment of known smallmouth bass spawning areas and identify potential sites for rehabilitation. This was the first A/OFRC project that has been completed through such a partnership. The Centre will assist in the further advancement of this relationship.

Summary: Known spawning sites were identified using both aboriginal traditional knowledge and through angler knowledge provided by the LCFGC. Sites were examined and habitat information was collected for 57 nest sites in the traditional waters of both these communities.
FISHERIES COORDINATOR WORKSHOP

Background: The intent of this project was to provide a three day training course in basic fisheries ecology and management. This workshop was put together with assistance from Aundeck-Omni-Kaning First Nation in identifying topics of interest.

Summary: Eighteen participants came from AOK and from neighboring First Nations Sheguindah and Whitefish River. Information was delivered on: fish and fish habitat, map interpretation and GPS, sources of funding, TEK, fisheries management, boating safety, and gill netting techniques. The highlight of this session was an evening round table discussion on local fisheries issues, where experiences and concerns were shared by all. Commercial fisherman and former fisheries manager, Harold Michon from Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinabek provided valuable insight into dealing with many of the issues faced by the participating First Nations.

DOKIS FIRST NATION

DATA COMPILATION

Background: Dokis First Nation is developing a Natural Capital Protection Plan which will include a detailed component for fisheries management within their territory. The collection and indexing of existing information will help to form a significant part of this plan.

Summary: A Natural Resources Database was created using MS Access, encompassing information from key organizations (22 were contacted) that have data pertaining to Dokis lands and waters. A manual was written to accompany the database so that it can be updated and will be user friendly for a variety of individuals. The data was organized by title, date, source and key words. A total of 304 documents were entered including maps, reports and websites. Access allows users to search the database by using “keywords” to search for specific documents.

INLAND LAKE SURVEYS

Background: The Dokis First Nation territory of the French River is a popular destination for angling tourists and locals who have contributed to the fishing pressure on many small lakes.
Summary: Eight lakes within the Dokis First Nation territory were surveyed; Stinking, Portage, Shank, Andy’s Xavier, Mud, Nono’s and Lennon’s Lakes. Habitat was inventoried, which included shoreline features, beaver houses, cottages, substrate types, and water chemistry. The fish community in each lake was identified using gill nets and minnow traps. All information will be entered and stored in the Centre’s GIS, and will contribute significantly to the Natural Capital Protection Plan that Dokis F.N. is creating.

WOODCOCK LAKE:
FALL WALLEYE INDEX NETTING 2006
Background: The A/OFRC conducted a FWIN on Woodcock Lake in 1998 that averaged 7 walleye per net, which was considered average compared to other lakes in Ontario. The same fisheries assessment technique (FWIN) was conducted 7 years later in 2005. The CUE dropped from 7 walleye/net to 2.3 walleye/net.
Summary: In the fall of 2006, twelve nets were set at the same temperatures as in 1998. The results were quite similar to those observed in 2005, validating the substantial population decrease. Another missing piece of the puzzle was quantifying fishing pressure in this small lake. Since 1998, with road improvements, as well as increased construction of cottages and a better boat launch, it is likely that angling pressure has increased. A community survey to gauge subsistence fishing and angling activities is being planned for 2007.

M’CHIGEENG FIRST NATION
WEST BAY:
FISH COMMUNITY INDEX NETTING AND COMMUNITY SURVEY
Background: Following UGLMU protocol that has been previously used in the North Channel by the A/OFRC, netting took place both prior to, and after lake stratification. This information will contribute to a growing database on whitefish stocks in the northern part of Lake Huron. The period in-between netting sessions was used to conduct a community harvest survey to look at current and past fishing practices.

Summary: The Community Survey portion resulted in ninety-four completed surveys within four weeks (June 12 – July 7, 2006). The people surveyed were all currently using or have previously utilized the fishery. The surveys include much information comparing historical and current states of the M’Chigeeng fishery. The Index Netting portion involved six weeks of netting the traditional fishing areas of West Bay. Forty-three overnight sets were completed. Netting took place in two-week periods during three seasons, spring, summer and fall. Three strata were used – deep, shallow and nearshore. The spring netting season occurred from May 30 – June 8. The summer and fall seasons occurred on July 10-21, and August 28 – September 8. Data is currently being reviewed.
NIPISSING FIRST NATION

LAKE NIPISSING: EXPERIMENTAL FALL WALLEYE INDEX NETTING (FWIN)

Background: The objective of this study was to assess the fishing efficacy of the provincial FWIN gillnets and determine if they are providing a reliable estimate of the walleye cohorts in Lake Nipissing. This was examined through a gear comparison study whereby FWIN gillnets were set in conjunction with SPIN (summer profundal index netting) gillnets comprised of finer diameter twine and incorporating additional mesh sizes.

Summary: This was an excellent study idea and one which has received very little government or outside agency consideration, with the exception of the Muskoka Lakes Fisheries Assessment Unit which provided support in terms of gear and advice for this project. The study was designed to consist of 60 net sets – 30 pairs of nets, 1 FWIN net and 1 SPIN net per site. Only 52 net sets were completed, 8 of which were fouled with algae thereby rendering their data unusable. Comparisons will therefore be made for the remaining 44 nets (22 pairs). Although this is a much smaller sample size than originally planned, there may still be some interesting results. Preliminary analysis indicated that a greater number of fish were caught in the SPIN nets. When the ageing results are received, the data will be analyzed for possible cohort variation between net types. A report will be prepared summarizing the findings of this study. The results may also be included in a joint report/presentation incorporating the Muskoka Lakes Fisheries Assessment Unit’s experimental data results.

SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEEK FIRST NATION

LAKE HURON (NORTH CHANNEL): LAKE WHITEFISH INDEX NETTING

Background: Sagamok Anishnawbek has been actively involved in lake whitefish assessment with the A/OFRC for several years. This assessment has direct implications to their commercial fishery objectives.

Summary: Using the Lake Huron Management Unit’s standard lake whitefish index netting protocol, nets were set at randomly selected locations within the designated quota management zones. Two weeks of netting was completed beginning June 12, 2006 to June 23, 2006 and two weeks beginning in August 14, 2007 to August 25, 2007. The project was conducted independently with minimal assistance from the A/OFRC.

LACLOCHE LAKE: FALL WALLEYE INDEX NETTING (FWIN)

Background: LaCloche Lake is used by anglers and subsistence fishers and has not
been assessed since a 2001 FWIN was completed.

Summary: The assessment began October 2, 2006 and ended October 13, 2006, in which time 18 overnight net sets were made. The A/OFRC will produce summary and technical reports using all existing data, and distribute information to enhance provincial data sets.

**SPANISH RIVER: LAKE STURGEON ASSESSMENT**

Background: The purpose of this project was to determine the presence of lake sturgeon above and below the Espanola Domtar dam. The project also consisted of tagging staging and spawning lake sturgeon to track their movement following spawning, including timing their return to successive spawn sites.

Summary: Sampling consisted of large mesh gill netting above and below the dam. The assessment began in May 15, 2006 when the surface water temperature reached 11°C with netting of deep pools for staging fish, and then later at fast water sites for spawning sturgeon. This continued for 4 weeks until the surface water temperature reached 19°C. The intent was to determine the peak of the spawning run and collect as much biological information as possible on the Lake Sturgeon using the Spanish River. The information will be added to the Great Lakes database and a final technical report will be produce

**SERPENT RIVER FIRST NATION**

**INLAND LAKE SURVEYS**

Background: Five of the 10 major inland lakes within the boundaries of Serpent River First Nation were selected for surveying. These included: Bass Lake, High Dam Lake, Spooner Lake, Clear Lake, and Twin Lake #1. A lake survey consists of sampling the fish community, habitat inventory, and collection of water chemistry information.

Summary: All lakes exhibited typical characteristics of mesotrophic water bodies. The fish communities of High Dam, Spooner, Clear and Twin Lake #1 comprised: northern pike, smallmouth bass, brown bullhead, yellow perch, and bluegill and pumpkinseed sunfishes. The fish species of Bass Lake were similar, with the exception of smallmouth bass and northern pike, and the inclusion of largemouth bass. Clear Lake also had rainbow trout.

**WAHNAPITAE FIRST NATION**

**LAKE WANAPITEI: SUMMER PROFUNAL INDEX NETTING (SPIN)**

Background: Wahnapitae First Nation is located on the north shore of Lake Wanapitei, approximately 29 kilometers northeast of Sudbury, Ontario. Angling
pressure remains high on this system, and the Wahnapitae First Nation, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and other stakeholders are interested in obtaining information on the status of the lake trout population. The Summer Profunal Index Netting (SPIN) methodology is being developed by the Ministry for their State of the Resource initiative.

Summary: The project ran from July 24th/06 until August 11th/06. Two gillnets with a random series of different sized monofilament mesh panels (8x8=64m) were tied together to increase the effort. Nets are set for a minimum of two hours, with a maximum of ten sets a day possible. A total of 187 nets were set catching 112 lake trout. A database exists (30 plus lakes) in the MNR from which results from this study can be compared. The results will be incorporated into the OMNR database. Good baseline data for lake trout will help the First Nation design a fisheries management plan for the lake.

WASAUKSING FIRST NATION

FISH HABITAT MAPPING

Background: Wasauksing First Nation is located on Parry Island in Georgian Bay, just on the outskirts of Parry Sound. This area has become popular with cottagers and other recreational users. The purpose of this project was to map out critical fish habitat, as well as existing man–made structures.

Summary: This project began June 19/06 and ran until August 4th/06. Two technicians from Wasauksing First Nation were trained on habitat mapping survey methods and seine netting techniques. Training took 4 days, after which time, they worked independently. Shoreline cruises documented all habitat types, making note of critical areas including bass nesting and walleye spawning habitat. Information collected included: pictures, UTM coordinates of the starting and end point of the type of habitat, weather information, substrate type, dominant vegetation, shoreline classification, land use, and development. Parry Island was mapped completely by the end of the first week so the survey was extended to the surrounding islands. Seine netting was done with little success. Information was entered into an Excel spreadsheet and will be exported to ArcMap to create a detailed habitat map for the community.
WHITEFISH LAKE FIRST NATION
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN MEETING
Background: Whitefish Lake First Nation is working towards the formation of a fisheries management plan. The First Nation, along with the A/OFRC organized a preliminary fisheries management plan meeting to engage the community and to encourage discussion while inviting individuals to join their fisheries committee. By inviting guest speakers, the community had an opportunity to see how other communities implemented their plans and learn from others experiences.

Summary: A total of 25 community members attended with a wide range of interests from all age groups. Guest speakers came from First Nations across the province, having a good mixture of backgrounds in commercial and recreational fisheries. The guest speakers also found this experience to be informative and will take home new network connections and ideas to apply to the management of their own fisheries. The Whitefish Lake First Nation Fisheries Committee signed on three new members and now consists of 8 people. Many questions were posed to the new fisheries committee for their consideration.

WHITEFISH RIVER FIRST NATION
WHITEFISH RIVER: WALLEYE SPAWNING ASSESSMENT
Background: This was the second consecutive year that a spring walleye netting project was conducted by the Whitefish River First Nation. The objective was to contribute to a long-term data set documenting the use of Whitefish Falls by spawning walleye. This was one of a number of projects that Whitefish River First Nation had proposed for managing their walleye fishery.

Summary: A total of 47 fixed site trap net lifts were made from April 10 to May 3, 2006, at the mouth of the Whitefish River. During this period, 213 walleye were captured, 201 of which were biologically sampled and tagged. Water temperatures ranged from three to eleven degrees centigrade.

WIKWEMIKONG UNCEDED INDIAN RESERVE
COMMERCIAL FISHING WORKSHOP
Background: The number of commercial fishers in this community has declined in recent years, but there still remains a strong interest among community members. The First Nation wished to host a training workshop that would provide training on gear, netting practices, and proper handling
of the harvest. Emphasis was to be placed on ethical and efficient practices.

Summary: Commercial and subsistence fishers, occasional gill-netters, and people interested in fishing, made up the eighteen participants in attendance from Wikwemikong. The workshop started with a short overview of the Lake Nipigon commercial fishery that led into a discussion of Wikwemikong’s commercial fishing activity, drawing comparisons as well as suggestions for improvements. Hands-on sessions included the construction of legal marker buoys and clearing hooks, net construction and repair, knot tying, and proper maintenance of equipment. An Introduction to Global Positioning Systems that walked participants through all the features and operation of GPS units was well received.

SOUTHEAST REGION

Figure 3. First Nation’s completing projects within the Southeast region (made up of Upper Canada Treaty Area 1 and Williams Treaties – boundaries noted in red) during the 2006-2007 Field Season.
CURVE LAKE FIRST NATION

CHEMUNG LAKE:
NEARSHORE COMMUNITY INDEX NETTING (NSCIN)
Background: The Tri-lake waters (Buckhorn, Chemung, and Pigeon Lakes) continue to undergo major habitat and fish community changes. Curve Lake First Nation has expressed concern about the negative effects of the changing ecosystem that occur on a yearly basis. It has been determined that the optimal physical and thermal habitats of walleye have been greatly reduced from a wide variety of sources. The purpose of this project was to evaluate the fish species that inhabit the littoral zone of the lake and verify results from the previous years’ study.

Summary: From September 5th to early October of 2006, Curve Lake First Nation, in a three-way partnership with the Anishinabek/Ontario Fisheries Resource Centre and the Kawartha Lakes Fishery Assessment Unit (OMNR) completed their second consecutive NSCIN project on Chemung Lake. The survey began after Labour Day to reduce conflict with the recreational users on the lake. All fish captured in the six-foot trap nets were counted by species and measured for length. Weights and ageing structures were collected for all fish when catches were low.

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

FILLING THE DATA GAP:
LAKE WHITEFISH INDEX NETTING IN THE NORTH CHANNEL

FISHERIES ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES
Dokis First Nation Natural Resources Workshop – November 2006.

WHAT IS A LAKE SURVEY?
Dokis First Nation Natural Resources Workshop – November 2006.

WOODCOCK LAKE FWIN 2005/06
Dokis First Nation Natural Resources Workshop – November 2006.

BRIDGING THE GAP

LAKE NIPIGON NORTHERN PIKE ASSESSMENT
Lake Nipigon FAU Technical Committee – March 2007

2006 LAKE NIPIGON LAKE STURGEON ASSESSMENT
Lake Nipigon FAU Technical Committee – March 2007

2006 GULL BAY FALL WALLEYE INDEX NETTING
Lake Nipigon FAU Technical Committee – March 2007
APPENDIX

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31ST, 2006
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Ed Desson, General Manager
Anishinabek/Ontario Fisheries Resource Centre
755 Wallace Road, Unit 5
North Bay, ON P1B 8G4
Ph: (705) 472-7888
Fx: (705) 472-6333
www.aofrc.org