



Miramichi community mayors, councillors, support smallmouth bass project

Blackville, Doaktown, Upper Miramichi, pass motions in support of critical conservation project

Fredericton, March 29, 2022 – Project partners received a boost on Monday when the mayor and councillors of Upper Miramichi voted unanimously for a motion supporting the eradication of invasive smallmouth bass from the Miramichi watershed.

This follows motions passed unanimously by the mayors and councillors of Doaktown and Blackville. Following a presentation to its Public Safety and Environment committee on March 23rd, Miramichi city council has agreed to bring a similar motion forward soon.

“The leaders of these river communities know what’s at stake and have shown their support for the largest conservation project in Miramichi history,” said Robyn McCallum, president of the Miramichi Salmon Association and co-chair of the Working Group on Smallmouth Bass Eradication in the Miramichi.

The Working Group has developed a plan to use a Health Canada approved rotenone product to eradicate illegally introduced, invasive smallmouth bass from Miramichi Lake, Lake Brook, and approximately 15 kilometres of the Southwest Miramichi River where smallmouth have been detected.

The project has undergone a provincial environmental assessment that attracted 1,290 letters of support and a federal review by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which has authorized the plan. The 120-person project team was in place and ready to begin last year when some people paddled onto Miramichi Lake to oppose the project.

“We are determined to finish this work in 2022 because the future of the Miramichi watershed depends on it,” said Jim Ward, general manager of the North Shore Micmac District Council, which is a Working Group member and the project proponent. “We are at a turning point where the river can be restored or damaged forever by an invasive species. It’s encouraging to know our neighbours up and down the river understand.”

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The Working Group on Smallmouth Bass Eradication was formed in 2016. Members include Anqotum Resource Management, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Miramichi Salmon Association, Miramichi Watershed Management Committee, New Brunswick Salmon Council, New Brunswick Wildlife Federation, and the North Shore Micmac District Council. For more information visit www.miramichismallmouth.com