

**TERMS OF REFERENCE:
NEW BRUNSWICK RECREATIONAL SALMON FISHERY
RE-VITALIZATION
FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL TASK FORCE**

November 16, 2017

Context

Recreational fishing is an important cultural and economic component in rural communities across New Brunswick. Economic activity in this sector has however declined in recent years. This is partially due to the long-standing trend of declines in the populations of Atlantic salmon. In 2015 the federal Ministerial Advisory Committee on Atlantic Salmon (MACAS), and more recently the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans (2017), have recommended transformation of the recreational salmon fishery in New Brunswick by considering the management of fishing activities using a more local approach often termed a “river-by-river” or river specific management approach. DFO Gulf Region has launched a multiple phased approach that begins with design of possible models for a new type of recreational salmon fisheries management built on partnerships that will be followed by implementation phases.

This initiative is set up to foster a healthy, diverse, and abundant salmon resource for future generations. The economic, social and environmental context has changed over recent years, prompting governments to review the recreational management regime to better support sustainable fisheries to meet the needs of First Nations and contribute to the current and future prosperity of Canadians.

The Task Force is mandated to address the first phase which is to design possible models for future management using the recreational salmon fishery on the Miramichi River system in eastern NB as a case study. The case study approach is chosen to improve the feasibility of designing a new model that, in practicality, could work in NB.

Principles underlying development of this new initiative are in Annex 1.

Regardless of the outcome, DFO and NB governments will retain their legal mandates. Additionally, the project respects the hierarchy of principles of fisheries management in Canada:

- 1) Conservation of the resource
- 2) Aboriginal fisheries
- 3) Other uses such as recreational fishing activities

Mandate

The Governments of Canada and New Brunswick wish to increase the economic benefits that accrue from a robust recreational fishing sector, while respecting conservation priorities for Atlantic salmon. Accordingly, they co-chair the Task Force and will work with First Nations governments to oversee the project. This Task Force is also mandated to conduct fulsome and comprehensive discussion forums and engagement with First Nations and stakeholders to order to achieve its goals related to the following:

1. To propose models for recreational salmon fisheries management appropriate to New Brunswick, which include an analysis of local and watershed management approaches. These models should give consideration to:
 - active and increased participation of First Nations, river users, and local stakeholders in wild salmon recreational fishery resource management advisory processes; also in the monitoring and science, and regulatory compliance activities relevant to wild salmon and other species
 - science and monitoring regimes that provide current and relevant information to facilitate well-informed and timely resource management decisions
 - approaches that would better complement regimes used in adjoining recreational fishery management jurisdictions.
2. To work on options for self-funding or cost-recovery strategies which are sustainable, accountable, and implementable to support the long-term success of the selected management model. To develop strategies that could lead to specific initiatives or programmes to re-vitalize the sector associated with recreational fishing in New Brunswick. The strategies should incorporate fishing opportunities and other recreational opportunities associated with the recreational fisheries infrastructure and could better position local New Brunswick communities as choice destinations for international and domestic tourism.

The Task Force will take into account the food, social and ceremonial needs of First Nations, social and economic aspirations of these communities, and the statutory responsibilities of the federal and provincial governments.

Task Force Composition

The Task Force will be co-chaired by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Gulf Region Regional Director General, and the New Brunswick Department of Energy and Resource Development Assistant Deputy Minister of Renewable Resources and Operations

(Division). The co-chairs ensured that the Task Force includes representation from New Brunswick First Nations by inviting Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn Incorporated (MTI) and local First Nations Chiefs to the Task Force. DFO will provide executive directorate services for administration and oversight for the Task Force.

The DFO members: the Regional Director General, the Regional Director Fisheries and Aquaculture, the Regional Director of Science, and the Senior Advisor from Ecosystem and Fisheries Management (Ottawa).

The Provincial (NB) members: the Assistant Deputy Minister of Renewable Resources and Operations (Division) in Energy and Resource Development; the Chief Engagement Officer of the Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat; the Director of Fish & Wildlife in Energy and Resource Development; and the Manager of Product Innovation for NB Tourism and Development.

First Nations members: the Chief of Eel Ground First Nation, the Chief of Indian Island and the Fisheries Coordinator for Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn (MTI).

Governance

The Task Force may establish any working groups necessary in order to conduct its work, either for the immediate need of providing recommendations, or the subsequent need of developing programmes and transitional activities to move to the future management model. It is envisaged that working groups may be required for topics such as discussion forums and consultations, science programs, community engagement, local or river specific management, funding and income generation etc.

Administrative support, travel arrangements and compensation for federal and provincial government Task Force members and their undertakings will be provided by their respective individual organizations. Officials from governments will be asked to participate in the undertakings of the Task Force and its working group.

Annex 2 provides a draft work plan outline for the Task Force and the Working Group in the first phase of the project. It is expected that the Task Force could require up to 12 months to achieve its mandate which is the design phase using the Miramichi River system as a case study project. Once the Task Force's recommendations receive decision through Ministerial approvals and authorities, phase two will begin. Phase two could be either a new initiative and task force/steering committee or continuing this task force with a refreshed mandate to oversee the implementation of the resulting programs, policies, and tasks to operationalize the recommendations.

Annex 1 Principles

Wild Atlantic salmon is an iconic species that holds cultural, social, and economic significance for Canadians. In order to conserve and protect this valuable resource these are the principles that will guide work in order to restore and maintain healthy salmon populations and their habitats for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Canada in perpetuity. DFO will maintain its legislative authority towards the conservation of Atlantic salmon and its habitat.

- *Conservation.* Conservation of wild Atlantic salmon, their genetic diversity and their habitats is the highest priority.
- *Sustainable Use and Benefits.* Decisions will consider biological, social, and economic consequences; reflect best science including Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and local knowledge, and maintain the potential for future generations to meet their needs and aspirations.
- *Open and Transparent Decision Making.* Decisions will be made in an open, transparent and inclusive manner.
- *Shared Stewardship.*
- *Respect.*

Annex 2: Task Force Draft Work Plan

This is a final draft work plan with key delivery milestones and proposed dates. This is meant to be illustrative of the activities which will be undertaken by the Task Force to achieve its mandate within a twelve month period. This draft identifies key tasks, and the project management philosophy. Regular updates and checks for direction-setting with senior management are part of the process which takes the approach of ensuring significant engagement of NB First Nations and stakeholder consultations, to test each phase of the Working Group's work from initial analysis, to development of options, design of models, determination of programs and policies, and then propose an implementation strategy. This will ensure that community and partner capacity is developed simultaneously as the work progresses.

The work plan ends with the decision on a model and implementation strategy for proposal to senior management. Depending on the circumstance and environmental scan, it may be necessary to continue with the Task Force to oversee the implementation or to reconstitute another body to oversee that phase of the implementation work (phase two).

The first key activity of the Task Force is development and finalization of the work plan to meet its mandate.

#	Key Activity	Completion
1	Initial meeting of the Task Force – approve draft TOR, identify key tasks, consultations plan, roles; Confirm composition of Task Force and the Working Group; set date for next conference call meeting	October 6 2017
2	Working Group first meeting: background research on existing river by river management models model, economic development WG Confirm fact-finding strategy for engagement– questions, stakeholders, locations, methods for engagement	November 20 ^h week (early)
3	Working Group completes the first round of local consultations and discussions on the Miramichi with user groups to present project, share interests and feedback (First Engagement)	Late November 20 th week
4	Two conference calls with WG on lessons learned from NFLD river classification and Que for ZEC approach	Early December
5	Working Group develops draft model with options for design of: models/scenarios A) river classification scheme (s) B) watershed level participation/governance (s) C) others	Early December
6	Task Force 2 nd meeting: conference call for Working Group to update on progress, confirm direction	Mid-December
7	First update to senior executives and Ministers – seek approval to continue	Mid-December
8	Working Group develops initial round of options as models for further engagement and refinement based on work to date.	Mid-January 2018
9	Second update conference call to Task Force, on initial round of options	Mid-January
10	Update senior executives and Ministers – on initial options	Late
11	Working Group finalizes initial round of options based on TF feedback	Early February
12	Working Group second round of engagement on the initial round of possible options for a river-by-river management project	Mid-February
13	Working Group – finalize models based on user feedback	March 5st
14	Working Group drafts Implementation Plan for detailed program, policy changes, funding, strategy to fill gaps in information etc.	March 5st
15	Third update to Task Force, senior executives and Ministers – with drafted models for decisions on proposed model and implementation plan for a pilot	Mid-March
16	End of phase one of project (design)	March 31st