

SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
FOR

Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Confederation Fiord Emerging Char Fishery Application

Background:

The Nattivak Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO), Qikiqtarjuaq, NU have requested an exploratory licence for Arctic Char from the Confederation Fiord Area. The HTO is the applicant and has consulted with their membership and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). This briefing note and the attached fishing plan are being presented to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for decision.

According to the application and previous correspondence with the applicant Arctic Char are abundant in the four Confederation Fiord Lakes (Figure 1). Currently, there is minimal subsistence fishing that takes place in the area. The HTO feels that these lakes have the potential to develop into a viable commercial fishery.

Confederation Fiord Area:

The most current information available was provided by the community of Qikiqtarjuaq. Traditional and local knowledge, including current fisher reports, suggests that the proposed exploratory harvest level of 2000 kg in the attached fishing plan is reasonable. Furthermore, this initial harvest level is consistent with previous exploratory harvest levels recommended by DFO for other areas. The collection of information as per the five-year exploratory protocol would allow DFO science to evaluate harvest levels. DFO recommends the exploratory fishery begin with the 1st year of the 5-year approach due to the limited information currently available.

The five-year exploratory fishery protocol is intended to provide information on the viability of a fishery in a particular waterbody. The protocol requires effort be taken to annually harvest the full quota over the five-year period, and the collection of biological characteristics of the fish caught at, a minimum, the start and at the end of the five-year period. Changes to the population structure following continuous harvest of the maximum quota may indicate that the harvest level is not sustainable. However, if the harvest over that period does not change indicators of population health, then the existing level of harvest is likely sustainable. Harvest of the full quota annually is necessary for this approach.

Recommendations:

Based on a review of the available information and science advice, DFO's view is there would be a moderate risk¹ of harm from fishing if the attached fishing plan was approved.

The fishery should be monitored to assess the effect of the exploratory fishery on the stock and the following conditions implemented:

- Each fishery should follow the exploratory fisheries five-year approach, with all samples and data being submitted annually to DFO-Science in Winnipeg, as per the Exploratory Licence;
- Minimum gillnet mesh-size of 5 ½ inches employed.

Consultations: DFO Central & Arctic Region
Nattivak Hunters' and Trappers' Organization
Parks Canada

Prepared by: Chris Lewis
Fisheries Management Biologist
Fisheries and Oceans
Eastern Arctic Area

Date: Feb. 3, 2011

Attachment 1:
Confederation Fiord Area Emerging Char Fishery Fishing Plan.

¹ Moderate risk: some information is missing which would allow for the assessment of the health of the stock. We think fishing at this level may not adversely affect the stock; however, it is very important to collect data from any harvest that occurs. It is also important to reassess the stock once biological data has been collected and analyzed.

ATTACHMENT:

CONFEDERATION FIORD AREA EMERGING CHAR FISHERY PLAN

LICENCE APPLICANT:

Nattivak Hunters' and Trappers' Organization (HTO), Qikiqtarjuaq, NU

PURPOSE:

To develop a sustainable commercial char fishery and promote economic opportunities for Inuit in Qikiqtarjuaq.

LOCATION & HARVEST LEVEL:

Waterbody	Coordinates	Exploratory Harvest Level (kg)
Confederation Fiord Area – 4 Lakes: (1): Ugallipaaq; (2): Qikiqtalik; (3): Akullipaaq; (4): Tasiujaq.	(1): 68°09'00"N 68°00'00"W; (2): 68°12'00"N 67°58'00"W; (3): 68°13'00"N 67°56'00"W; (4): 68°12'00"N 67°55'00"W.	2000 kg (total)

METHODS:

Fishing will take place during the winter months, ideally between February and April. The HTO will be the licence holder and as such will coordinate community members to fish the exploratory harvest level. The exploratory char fisheries five-year approach for collecting biological and catch-effort data will be followed. A minimum gillnet mesh-size of 5.5 inches will be employed. Any harvested Arctic Char that is exported across Nunavut's territorial borders will follow the prescribed direction by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency as directed by the "Fish Inspection Act" and "Fish Inspection Regulations."

Given that the Confederation Fiord Area is adjacent to Auyuittuq National Park, Parks Canada has also been contacted.



Figure 1. Locations of Confederation Fiord Area Lakes, Nunavut.