

# FIRST NATIONS (ALBERTA) TECHNICAL SERVICES ADVISORY GROUP (TSAG)



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Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program

# First Nation Fish Habitat Management Programs

- Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS)
- Aboriginal Aquatic Resources and Oceans Management Program.
  - Both these program are current available for communities where DFO manages the fisheries – Coastal Provinces
- Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program
  - Available to communities where DFO manages Fish Habitat – Inland Provinces

# Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program

- DFO has committed \$1.8 M each year for the past five years
- The program has been identified as a long term commitment, therefore is intended to go beyond existing term – 2009-2014
- Currently under review with Treasury Board

# DFO AIHP Objectives

- DFO partnering with Aboriginal communities
- Establishing long-term capacity of Aboriginal communities for fish habitat management  
*(i.e. provide \$ for staff)*
- Encourage partnering with province, municipalities and industry

# AIHP Program Information

## Eligibility

- Aboriginal organizations that:
  - Are located in inland provinces, where the province manages the freshwater fisheries but where fish habitat management is a federal responsibility;
  - Represent an 'aggregate' of Aboriginal groups;
  - Have a resource management administration that is independent of day-to-day political influence;
  - Have a track record of sound business practices and resource management plan.

# TSAG-AIHP Goals and Objectives – 2007-2009

- A 2007-2009 summary of Alberta-AIHP program development and management will include:
  - Development and design of workshops and workshop materials;
  - resource gathering and distributions;
  - riparian and fish habitat site inspections;
  - presentations to communities and Chief and Council;
  - administrative and political organizations meetings;

# TSAG-AIHP Goals and Objectives – 2007-2009

1. First Nations Inland Habitat Program Development and Management– provide the necessary tools for political & administrative organizations in Alberta to:
  - Build technical capacity for fish habitat management; participate in habitat regulatory reviews & various fora groups, & assist with development protocols on ATK.
  - Link with current DFO strategies or initiatives such as Canada's Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, the Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program, & Species at Risk (terrestrial and aquatic).

# TSAG-AIHP Goals and Objectives – 2007-2009

2. Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) & Consultation-Accommodations Protocols Development
  - A grass roots effort will be taken as many communities will have their own protocols in place for consultation and accommodation processes as well as for the collection of ATK.
  - With the potential for fish habitat restoration projects to exist there is also the potential for ATK, which includes collection methods, assessment and integration of the information associated with fish and fish habitat management policy or practices at the community level.

# TSAG-AIHP Goals and Objectives – 2007-2009

3. Fisheries Inland Habitat Technical Capacity Building  
– provide training that would enhance and build the internal technical expertise and capacity that is ordinarily external or not readily available to First Nations.

- expert knowledge in these areas would have immediate impacts in communities by creating regional awareness, capacity development with respect to fish habitat stewardship and incorporate the key elements of ATK in a First Nations Fisheries Strategic plan.

# Fish Habitat Management

- ➔ Within inland provinces, provincial agencies manages the fisheries, DFO manages fish habitat



# *Regulatory - Fisheries Act*

## Section 35(1)

- prohibits the Harmful Alteration, Disruption or Destruction of fish habitat (HADD)

Section 35(2) permits the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada to authorize a HADD

## Section 36

Deleterious Substances



# Fisheries Act

## Defines Fish Habitat as:

“spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply, migration and any other areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes”



# Fisheries Act

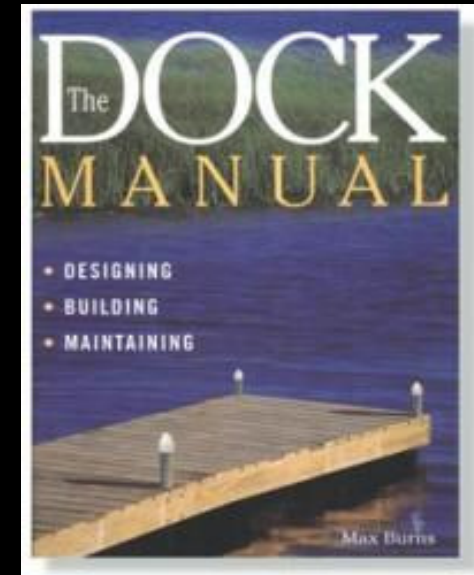
## Defines Fish as:

*"parts of fish, shellfish, crustaceans, marine animals and any parts of fish, shellfish, crustaceans or marine animals, and the eggs, sperm, spawn, larvae, spat and juvenile stages of fish, shellfish, crustaceans and marine animals"*



# Regulatory Activities

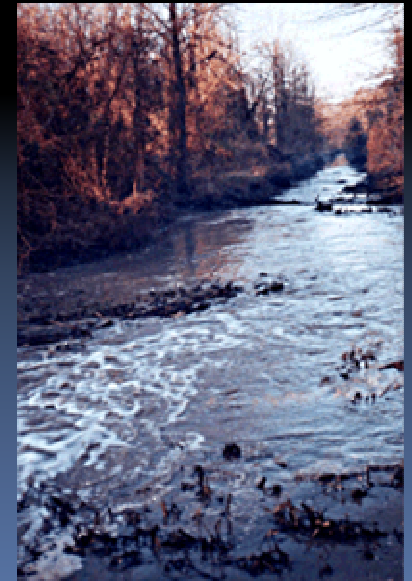
- DFO Responsibilities include:
  - Review and advise on projects
  - Identify fish habitat management research priorities
  - Monitor project compliance and effectiveness





# Types of Environmental Assessments

- Evaluation – most assessments can be done in community-based offices.
- Screening – often forwarded by an evaluating office these larger projects may require a screening committee.
- Comprehensive (Panel Review) - In very large or complicated development, a review panel will be established to conduct the assessment. This occurs when projects have potential significant adverse effects, are likely to cause significant public concern, or involve the use of new or controversial technology.





# Types of Environmental Assessments –cont.

- Once assessments are complete, recommendations are forwarded to a decision making body which may recommend one of the following:
  - The project will not have significant adverse effects and should proceed.
  - The project will have significant adverse effects that cannot be mitigated and should not proceed.
  - The project should proceed with terms and conditions that will mitigate the effects.
  - The project should be assessed at a higher level.

# Types of Environmental Assessments cont.

- In some cases, assessments may also recommend Project Audits or Effects Monitoring.
- The federal government, territorial government or First Nation governments, as potential Decision Bodies for the activities, will receive all relevant project information and decide whether to accept, reject or vary the recommendations of the assessor.

