



# **ABORIGINAL FISHERIES STRATEGY**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2004 - 2005**

#542578

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**NOTE:**

***The information contained in this report is believed to be accurate but is not warranted. Any errors or omissions are unintentional.***

## **General Overview of the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy**

The Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) is a program that provides for the effective management of the Aboriginal fishery in a manner consistent with the *Sparrow* decision. This landmark Supreme Court of Canada decision found, among other things, that where an Aboriginal group establishes an Aboriginal right to fish for food, social and ceremonial (FSC) purposes, this right, after conservation, has priority over any other user of the resource.

In accordance with negotiated, time-limited agreements, Aboriginal groups participate in the management of the fisheries and are provided with both allocations of fish and economic development opportunities. The Program applies where Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) manages the fishery, and where land claims settlements are not in place.

### **AFS Agreements**

AFS Agreements are without prejudice to either party's position on Aboriginal rights. Agreements negotiated under the AFS contain an allocation to be harvested by the Aboriginal group, which is fished under a communal fishing licence. This allocation is determined after consultations with the group regarding their needs for FSC purposes. Agreements detail the conditions to be included in the communal fishing licence, such as quantities, time, gear and data collection. Agreements may also contain other arrangements for the co-management of the Aboriginal fishery by the group and DFO, such as stock assessment, fish enhancement and habitat management projects. Commercial fishing and other economic development opportunities may also be negotiated as part of an AFS Agreement.

**Fishing Plans**

Fishing Plans, one component/schedule of an AFS Agreement, detail the numerical harvest levels which have been negotiated and established for FSC purposes.

These plans establish the Fishing Authority and the plan to monitor fisheries harvests by members of the community who have been designated on behalf of the community. The allocation sets the species and the quantities, times and gear to be used.

**Communal Licences**

The Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licence Regulations provide for the issuance of communal licences to Aboriginal groups. These licences include conditions for quantity of catch by species, gear, time and area of harvest, and disposition of fish. The conditions for designating fishers and the reporting requirements are also set out in the communal licence. Typically, communal licence conditions flow from the fishing plan within the AFS Agreement. However, where DFO cannot reach an agreement with a First Nation, a communal licence is issued. As per s.6(f) of the Policy for the Management of Aboriginal Fishing, the conditions will be minimal and will contain allocations based on the last offer made by DFO before termination of negotiations.

The communal licences are a way of providing the opportunity for Aboriginal communities to fish for FSC purposes consistent with the priority afforded them, while integrating the management of Aboriginal fisheries with all other fisheries.

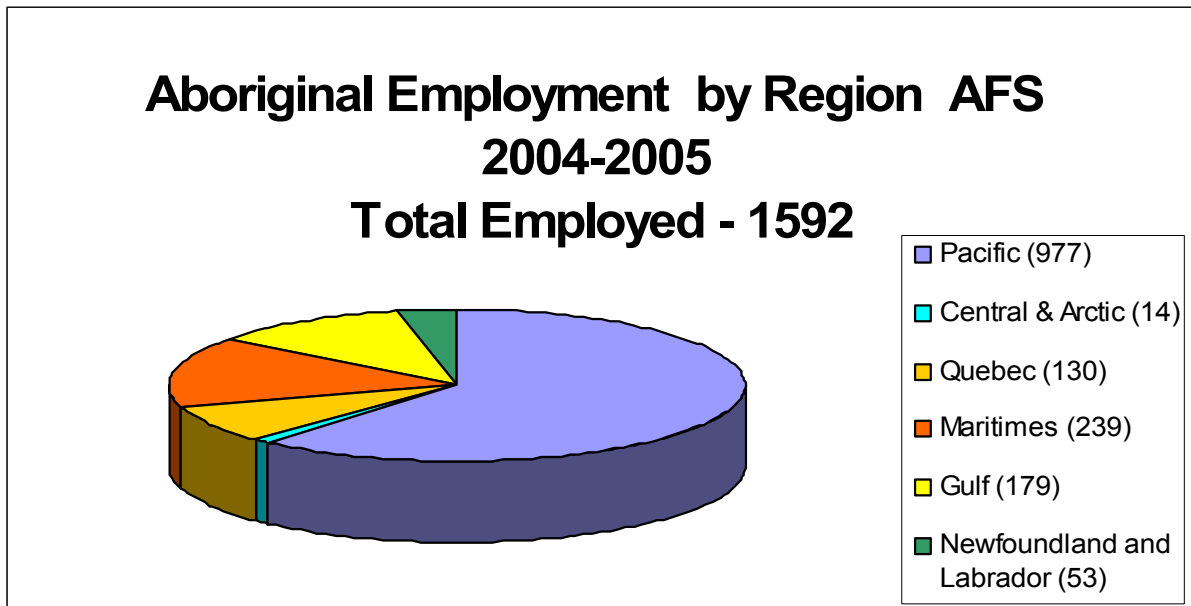
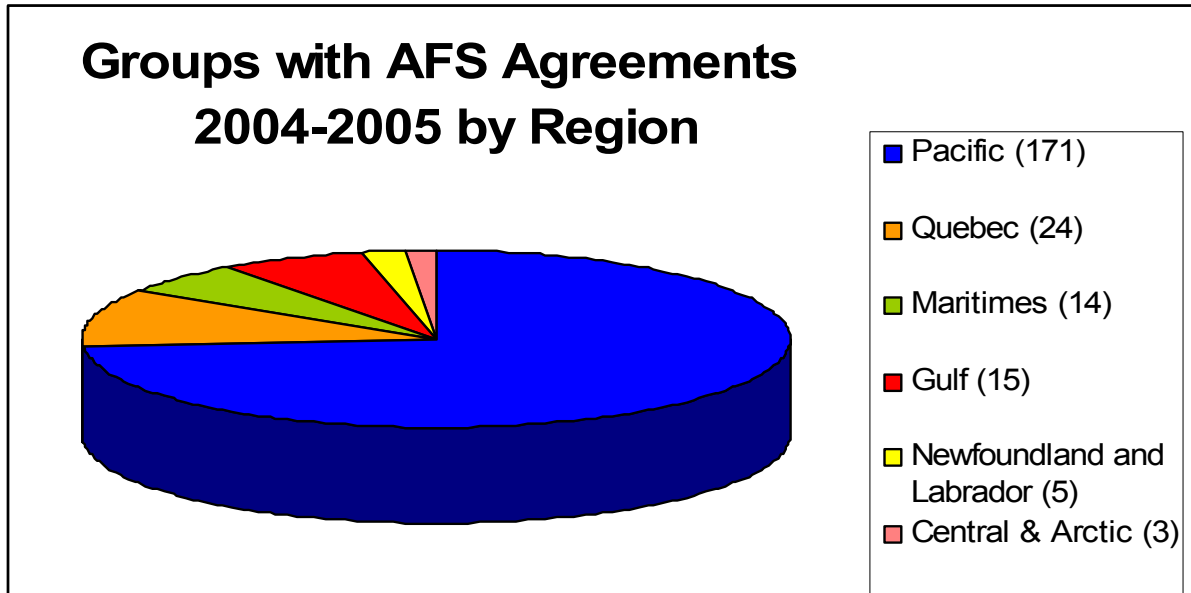
### **National Perspective**

The AFS was funded at \$35,221,000 in 2004-2005. This included a mandated amount of \$25,221,000 for co-management expenditures and \$10,000,000 for the Allocation Transfer Program (ATP). \$99,600 of the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) included in this budget was re-profiled as part of a departmental exercise, \$79,440 was transferred into the AFS budget from the Aboriginal Inland Habitat Program, and \$320,000 from the Co-Management mandate was transferred to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) for implementation of the Nisga'a Treaty. In addition, \$40,000 in O&M was transferred to Aboriginal Business Canada as our share of the costs of a Workshop, and \$10,000, also in O&M, was transferred to INAC to cover the costs of a reception for Aboriginal groups. All of this resulted in a final budget of \$34,830,840. There was some movement between Co-Management and ATP funding throughout the year resulting in final expenditures of \$23,539,054 in Co-Management and \$10,358,840 in ATP. \$871,400 was spent in O&M and \$61,546 was unspent at year end.

194 AFS Agreements and Amendments were signed with 232 Aboriginal groups in British Columbia (BC), Quebec, Central and Arctic and Atlantic Canada. Some of these First Nations are funded under an Agreement with an Umbrella Group such as a Tribal Council, Watershed Authority or Native Council. Central and Arctic region had not signed Contribution Agreements in past years, but rather contracted projects with Aboriginal groups. In 2004-2005 for the first time this Region signed AFS Contribution Agreements with three groups for a total of \$115,000.

These AFS Agreements have resulted in the creation of 1,592 seasonal jobs in areas such as processing, monitoring and enhancement activities. 174 of those employed through the AFS are Aboriginal guardians, trained by DFO and employed by the Aboriginal group. The remaining 1,418 jobs were created nationally in the fisheries management field (habitat restoration, stock assessment, fisheries enhancement, etc.), and in the areas of consultation and economic development.

**Groups with AFS Agreements**





**Expenditures by Region 2004-2005**

Region	Co-Mgmt G&C	Co-Mgmt O&M	ATP Mandates	Total Mandates
<i>PACIFIC</i>	\$15,817,170.00	\$400,000.00	\$5,740,750.00	\$21,957,920.00
<i>CENTRAL &amp; ARCTIC</i>	\$115,000.00	\$240,000.00	\$0.00	\$355,000.00
<i>QUEBEC</i>	\$1,229,734.00	\$200,000.00	\$2,388,000.00	\$3,817,734.00
<i>MARITIMES</i>	\$2,271,500.00	\$0.00	\$175,810.00	\$2,447,310.00
<i>GULF</i>	\$2,990,650.00	\$0.00	\$739,000.00	\$3,729,650.00
<i>NEWFOUNDLAND &amp; LABRADOR</i>	\$990,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,315,280.00	\$2,305,280.00
<i>HEADQUARTERS AFS *</i>	\$125,000.00	\$31,400.00	\$0.00	\$156,400.00
<b>TOTAL SPENT</b>	<b>\$23,539,054.00</b>	<b>\$871,400.00</b>	<b>\$10,358,840.00</b>	<b>\$34,769,294.00</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$34,830,840.00</b>		<b>Unspent</b>	<b>\$61,546.00</b>

**Employment Under the AFS – 2004-2005**

REGION	GUARDIANS	OTHERS	TOTAL
PACIFIC	46	931	977
CENTRAL & ARCTIC	0	14	14
QUEBEC	7	123	130
MARITIMES	36	203	239
GULF	48	131	179
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR	37	16	53
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>1418</b>	<b>1592</b>

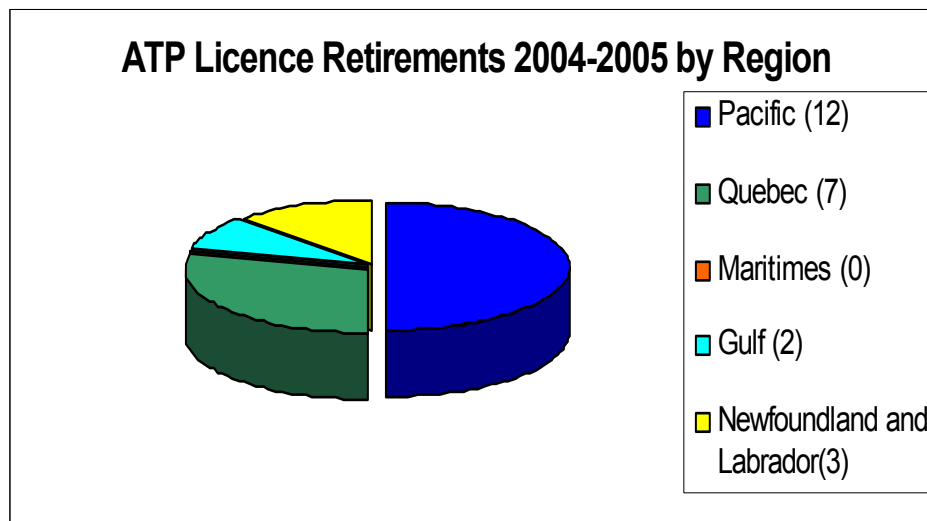
## Allocation Transfer Program (ATP)

### Background

In 1994 the AFS was amended to include the ATP. The ATP supports Aboriginal groups in achieving self-sufficiency through participation in commercial fisheries. The ATP facilitates the voluntary retirement of commercial licences and the issuance of new licences to eligible Aboriginal organizations in a manner that does not add to the existing effort on the resource. As a result of changes in 1998, funding may also be provided to purchase equipment, such as vessels and/or gear necessary for Aboriginal groups to fish these licences. Eligibility is restricted to Aboriginal organizations that have fisheries agreements with DFO under the AFS. It is a means to stimulate Aboriginal economic development opportunities and develop fisheries expertise in Aboriginal communities.

### National ATP Budget

As noted above, the ATP was funded at \$10,358,840 in 2004-2005. 24 licences were retired and the department purchased or contributed towards 21 vessels. In addition various quotas, equipment and gear were retired nationally.



## **Pacific Region**

The core budget for 2004-2005 in Pacific Region was \$21,055,000, which included \$15,155,000 for Co-Management, and \$5,700,000 for the ATP. A Co-Management top-up of \$887,980 and additional ATP funds in the amount of \$102,000 was provided from Headquarters contingency funds resulting in a revised total budget of \$22,044,980. This includes \$400,000 in O&M.

During 2004-2005, a total of \$5,740,750 was spent to retire licences, vessels and gear under ATP in this Region. An additional \$200,000 in O&M was paid to a licence broker, and \$61,250 in ATP funds was not spent by year end. \$15,817,170 was spent on Co-Management Agreements and \$200,000 on contracts with First Nations. \$25,810 was transferred to Maritimes Region at year end.

### **Number of Agreements**

The following Agreements were negotiated in 2004-2005

- 36 Contribution Agreements
- 19 Amendments to Contribution Agreements
- 46 Fisheries Agreements
- 38 Amendments to Fisheries Agreements
- 1 Framework Interim Measures Agreement
- 1 Framework Interim Measures Agreement Amendment
- 1 Fisheries Resource Protection and Conservation Sub-agreement Amendment
- 1 Razor Clam Sub-agreement
- 2 Communal Commercial Fisheries Access Sub-agreements
- 1 Communal Commercial Fisheries Access Sub-agreement Amendment
- 1 Project Funding Agreement
- 1 Watershed Agreement

Total of 148

## Employment

In 2004-2005 approximately 46 Aboriginal Fisheries Guardians were employed seasonally. Another 931 people were employed seasonally in other projects funded through the agreements. Please note that this information is based on final reports received for 2004-2005, or on preliminary projected estimates provided by the group at the beginning of the fiscal year.

## Commercial Access

14 commercial licences were retired in 2004-2005 under the ATP in Pacific region. 4 licences have been allocated to First Nations and the remaining licences will be allocated under future AFS Agreements.

### ***The following licences, quotas and vessels were acquired under the ATP in 2004-2005***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Value</b>
Red sea urchin (10.76 m. vessel)	\$173,750
Herring Seine	\$675,000
Prawn by trap (10.62 m. vessel)	\$533,500
Crab by trap (10.62 m. vessel)	\$533,500
Salmon seine licence (22.05 m. vessel)	\$390,000
Sablefish licence and quota (20.154m. vessel)	\$1,455,000
Crab by trap (9.12m. vessel)	\$410,000
Salmon gillnet (10.71 m. vessel)	\$85,000
Salmon gillnet licence (10.71 m. vessel)	\$85,000
Salmon gillnet licence (11.17 m. vessel)	\$95,000
Crab by trap licence (11.17 m. vessel)	\$590,000
Salmon seine licence (21.38 m. vessel)	\$450,000
Salmon gillnet licence (10.36 m. vessel)	\$85,000
Red sea urchin (10.50 m. vessel)	\$180,000
Licence coordinator	\$200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,940,750</b>

## **Key Projects**

### ***A-Tlegay's Electronic Monitoring System***

The A-Tlegay Fisheries Society was formed in 1999 comprising of a group of five First Nations that include: Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, Tlowitsis, Kwiakah and Comox. This society represents over 2,100 people and a territory that runs from lower Johnstone Strait south to the Comox Valley.

Due to the size of their membership, large fishing capabilities and limited budget, the A-Tlegay Fisheries Society was looking for a cost effective way of monitoring and reporting their FSC catches as it applies to Pacific Salmon. A-Tlegay approached DFO with an idea to develop an FSC electronic data reporting system that would track their FSC catches (all species) and provide the following information; species caught, who caught it, date of catch, location of catch, vessel name, gear type and where the catch was distributed. As part of the application, they also wanted a permitting system that would allow them to track who is fishing in their traditional territories, by band affiliate.

In 2000, DFO working with A-Tlegay developed a Microsoft Access data base to meet their data collection requirements. Funds for the project were split between DFO and A-Tlegay with the latter providing the majority of the funds. Included in the project development was software that could be used to collect the FSC information on handheld mobile computers. This was advantageous in that data could be collected and stored electronically in these devices while in the field. This data could then be down loaded via satellite or telephone to A-Tlegay's data base and exported directly into DFO's Fishery Operation System system, for internal staff use. The essence of the electronic reporting system is that it cut down on A-Tlegay's staff workload by automatically producing electronic sequential fishing permits and recording catch information against each permit. This in turn allowed A-Tlegay to track their catch with up to the minute information.

A-Tlegay used this system continually since 2000 and has refined it over the years to further meet their requirements. Some of the refinements made include; the development of comprehensive fishing reports and the replacement of the bulky handheld computers with smaller, easier to use Personal Data Assistants (PDAs) for field use.

As this electronic catch reporting system has been refined and become known to other First Nations throughout the province, more groups have taken interest in adopting A-Tlegay's FSC Electronic data reporting system. Currently, there are nine bands using the system in the South Coast, Central Coast and the Lower Fraser River areas. Other bands have expressed interest in using the system in the North Coast and BC Interior on the Fraser River.

A-Tlegay's interest in developing an electronic reporting system has had positive results in; reducing their administrative workload, providing up to date catch and tracking information and constructing a system that is universal and useable by other First Nation groups.



*A-Tlegay fishery monitor aboard a salmon seine vessel recording salmon catch on PDA*

***Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFFCA)***

In 2001 the concept of a “fisheries interest group” comprising upper Fraser First Nations and DFO was conceived. The impetus for the formation of such a group was born out of the commonalities that upper Fraser First Nations shared in relation to the aquatic resources of the area; including their desire to ensure these resources are managed in a sustainable manner, challenges each face in accessing these resources, and their unique cultural identity with these resources. Additionally, the groups’ also shared a common desire to implement specific technically-based capacity development and scientific initiatives; the achievement of which it was recognized could be more effectively and efficiently pursued working together as opposed to working in isolation. Through ongoing meetings, the group adopted the name of the Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFFCA) and acted as an “ad hoc” technical forum where technical and political personnel, from upper Fraser First Nations, attended near monthly meetings. The UFFCA developed a vision statement, objectives, and has emphasized a watershed-based approach to its’ planning and activities rather than an approach based on political boundaries; owing to the UFFCA’s technical focus. Meetings generally included discussions relating to technical issues involving upper Fraser fisheries resources and were open to all who wished to attend. DFO has had continual participation in the process of the group’s formation and provides ongoing support for the UFFCA’s meeting forums.

The upper Fraser First Nations recognized their need to develop the required capacities to participate more effectively in all aspects of the existing realm of fisheries management activities taking place within the upper Fraser. Additionally, it was recognized by DFO and First Nations that there were considerable information gaps relating to the fisheries resources of the area that, if redressed, had the potential to contribute to more effective and sustainable management of these resources. The upper Fraser First Nations considered the pursuit of both of these objectives (i.e.: increased participation in ongoing fisheries management activities, and pursuing the redress of scientific information gaps) as priorities to further their interests. In order to guide and facilitate the UFFCA’s objectives with respect to capacity development and their participation in and management of scientific initiatives, a need was identified to develop a Strategic Plan. Funds for this purpose were received from DFO, which were subsequently administered through the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, who completed the development of this Plan. In order to keep this planning task within a reasonable “scope”, given limited available funds and time, only the anadromous resources of the upper Fraser watershed were considered.

However, it should be noted that the UFFCA is equally concerned with the sustainable management and conservation of all aquatic resources.

The parties to the UFFCA determined that the geographical area considered within this Plan would include the Fraser River and all tributaries from the Fraser's headwaters downstream to the confluence of Deadman Creek. For the purposes of this Plan, the geographic area has been divided into five watershed-based subunits that encompass the largest sub-basins to the Fraser. A thorough description of the anadromous stocks within each subunit and recent escapement trends for each stock were provided. A technical summary was provided for each subunit that describes an overview of the ongoing fisheries management activities that are annually or regularly occurring, including DFO's "internal" habitat and enforcement programs. An estimate of the source and amount of financial resources contributed to these programs, as well as the nature and source of the human resource capacities required to undertake these activities was summarized.

The Plan made suggestions as to the development of specific infrastructure components within the UFFCA and corresponding board governance mechanisms that would allow the Alliance to petition for and administer funding on the behalf of upper Fraser First Nations and retain and hire staff. Two of the primary short-term recommendations of this Plan were pursued. These included the submission of a proposal to the BC Capacity Initiative to provide a Fisheries Field Technician Training course for First Nations technicians, and to hire an associated Coordinator position; and a proposal to the Federal Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management (AAROM) Program. In early 2005, the Alliance submitted a proposal to DFO's AAROM Program. By March, the Alliance became a Society under the *BC Society Act*. This has allowed the Alliance to receive funds from the AAROM program. The Alliance has been successful in signing a multi-year AAROM funding agreement with DFO in order to continue to work toward and achieve its far-reaching goals.

For more information on UFFCA go to [www.uffca.ca](http://www.uffca.ca).



***Teslin Tlingit Council (TTC)***

This small community located near the headwaters of the Yukon River has implemented a unique community-driven management plan aimed at boosting escapement of chinook salmon to tributaries within TTC traditional territory. Since 1994, the TTC have observed “conservation days” where the community pulls their nets for two days per week during the chinook season. While the conservation days are, at TTC’s request, they are reflected in the Aboriginal Communal Licence issued by DFO. TTC has worked closely with community members to ensure voluntary compliance. TTC has gained 100% compliance efforts through a combination of education, communication and solid leadership. The conservation days are a source of pride to TTC and the First Nation has articulated this proactive conservation strategy forward to regional, national and international forums including the World Fisheries Congress. TTC participation in the Congress was partially supported by AFS in 2004-2005.

In addition, through AFS Project Funding Agreements, TTC has conducted small fisheries assessment projects on headwater rivers and streams located in the BC portion of the Yukon River Drainage, such as the Gladys, Jennings, Morley and Swift. Included in the growing list of projects successfully completed by TTC are preliminary habitat studies, adult salmon enumeration, and DNA collection. In 2004-2005 TTC completed documentation of traditional knowledge and incorporated the information into a GIS system.

This unique approach to effective and respectful fisheries co-management can facilitate long-term conservation through the encouragement of community based strategic planning, which is science-based while also incorporating Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge.



*Frank Sidnet and Darren Sidney of the Teslin Tlingit Council scale sampling a chinook salmon on an Upper Yukon River tributary.*



*Preparing to release a Chinook salmon*

## Central and Arctic Region

In 2004-2005 the Central and Arctic Region operated on an annual AFS budget of \$240,000, all in O&M. Late in the year, an additional \$115,000 in Co-Management G&C funding was provided from the Headquarters Reserve for Contribution Agreements with three Aboriginal groups.

In 2004-05, the Central and Arctic Region had an annual AFS budget of \$240,000. Most of the budget (\$210 000) was spent on Aboriginal fishery community projects and 30K was spent on consultations with First Nations including the funding of the Great Slave Lake Advisory Committee (GSLAC). In addition, \$115 000 was allotted to three Aboriginal organizations through contribution agreements to purchase various equipment for future ASF projects. The Akaitcho Territory Government spent \$54,000 on a boat, a dock and a building to house the boat and project equipment. The Lutsel K'e First Nation spent \$32,000 refurbishing a project boat and purchased materials to build a boat house, while the Hay River Métis Council spent \$29,000 to purchase a boat and materials for a garage/storage building.

### **Aboriginal Fishery Strategy Project Workplan – 2004 - 2005**

Community Fishery Workers:	2004/05 NWT
Métis First Nations:	
Hay River Métis Council	\$30,000
Fort Smith Métis Council	\$4,000
Akaiicho First Nations:	
Deninu Kue	\$15,000
Lutsel Ke First Nation	\$45,000
Deh Cho First Nation:	
Deh Gah Gotie Dene Band	\$14,000
Kakisa Dene Band	\$7,000
Sambaa Ke Dene Band	\$20,000
AFS Co-ordinator/Technician	\$65,000
AFS Trainer/Technician	\$10,000
Consultations/Co-management (GSLAC)	\$30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$240,000</b>

**Employment**

The AFS Program resulted in 732 person days of employment or approximately 3 person years. Fourteen individual Aboriginal workers were employed seasonally.

**Project Description**

The community field workers, hired by 7 Aboriginal organisations in 7 communities, will foster co-management initiatives at the community level. The program will provide interaction with Dene Bands, indigenous Métis organizations and management boards, allow the gathering of harvest information, improve fish handling and processing practises, promote conservation education and co-operative fishery management projects.

The co-operative fishery management projects involve:

- I. Promoting the co-management of fisheries by building capacity in the various Aboriginal organizations we are able to work with.
- II. Assessing fish stocks, important to Aboriginal people, through tag/recapture studies, weir counts, sampling for age and growth data and measuring catch per unit effort (CPUE).
- III. Delineating stocks through stock identification programs.
- IV. Conducting community surveys to gather harvest information and traditional knowledge of stocks and fishing patterns
- V. Involving the Aboriginal community in finding solutions to fishery management problems.
- VI. Conducting traditional ecological knowledge studies to compliment and enhance scientific studies.
- VII. Providing learning opportunities to enhance the knowledge of fisheries management protocol by community workers and conversely an understanding of traditional ecological knowledge by DFO personnel.

**Sub-projects - 2004/05****i. Great Slave Lake Fisheries****(by contracting the Hay River Métis Nation, the Deninu Kue First Nation and the Lutsel Ke First Nation)**

The fish resources of Great Slave Lake (GSL) are shared by Aboriginal, commercial and recreational fisheries. At least six Aboriginal communities directly utilise GSL fish stocks for sustenance and over 90% of the participants in the GSL commercial fishery are of Aboriginal origin although many may not be beneficiaries of claims presently being negotiated in the Northwest Territories (NWT). All users of the resource are represented on the GSLAC which represents all user groups on the lake and co-manages the fisheries by making recommendations to DFO.

Objectives are to:

- train Aboriginal community field workers to gather information useful in the management of GSL fisheries by DFO, Aboriginal co-managers and the GSLAC;
- monitor the status of GSL whitefish stocks and other species by measuring fish for size and age and collecting information on CPUE and species composition of the commercial catch; and
- monitor the fishery harvest of the various user groups.

The Hay River Métis Council was contracted to hire two seasonal field workers to assist with data collection on the GSL and two inland fisheries. The study involved sampling 1,000 whitefish at Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) fish plants and placing fishery observers on commercial fishing vessels. Data was collected on CPUE and species composition of the catch as well as cullage rates and information on gear and crew size.

The Lutsel K'e First Nation once again hired two workers who surveyed recreational anglers encountered in the east arm of GSL. The first Nation also completed the first year of an Aboriginal food fishery survey which provides harvest statistics useful in the management and allocation of fishery resources.

**ii. Deh Gah Gotie Dene Band, Fort Providence**

Digaa Enterprises Ltd. was contracted to hire a harvest surveyor who collected harvest statistics for the Fort Providence Aboriginal food fishery which occurs on the Mackenzie River and Horn River. This survey has now provided eight years of harvest data to the community.

**iii. Fort Smith Métis Nation**

A field worker was contracted to survey the First Nation food fishery harvest on the Slave River from August to October. The survey provides information on the harvest of spawning inconnu and other species.

**iv. Sambaa Ke Dene Band, Trout Lake**

The Band was contracted to monitor the fishery on Trout Lake and the Moose and Island Rivers, including guests of their lodge business. Two seasonal workers were hired to patrol the lake during the summer months.

**v. Ka'a'gee Tu First Nation, Kakisa**

Walleye size and age samples were collected from the commercial catch on Kakisa Lake and Tathlina Lake. Data collected during 13 years of monitoring have been analysed and interpreted and used in the management of the fisheries. DFO has a good working relationship with the Band and has been working with them to address some recent walleye stock problems.

**vi. AFS Coordinator/technician**

The overall co-ordination of the program was facilitated by an Aboriginal graduate of a Renewable Resources Technology Program. This person was responsible for over-seeing the AFS programs with the various Aboriginal groups. The Co-ordinator trained and monitored seasonal workers and ensured that data was being collected according to current fisheries management protocol and was recorded in a clear and concise manner. The Co-ordinator supervised the organisation and computer analysis of data collected during the various community studies and assisted with the preparation of reports. She presented results of the programs to the Aboriginal organizations and management committees and conducted two conservation education sessions in community schools.

**vii. The Great Slave Lake Advisory Committee (GSLAC)**

The GSLAC makes recommendations to the DFO on the health and maintenance of fish stocks and the management of the fisheries of Great Slave Lake. Voting members represent the Dene and Métis First Nations who use the lake as well as the commercial and sports fishing industries and recreational anglers. Non-voting members represent DFO, the Government of the NWT and the FFMC.

**Key Project*****Great Slave Lake whitefish fishery monitoring – Hay River Métis Council***

DFO has been working with the Hay River Métis Council since the inception of the AFS program. They have been instrumental over the years in providing support for our monitoring of the GSL commercial and subsistence fisheries by hiring seasonal technicians. The monitoring programs include:

- commercial whitefish sampling for size measurements and aging structures;
- stock assessment studies utilizing multi-mesh gillnets;
- placing fishery observers on commercial vessels; and
- stock assessment of river spawning runs important to various food fisheries.

In 2004-2005, the Hay River Métis Council contracted a commercial fisher, fishing vessel and seasonal workers to conduct a gillnet selectivity study in the western basin of GSL. They also collected samples to verify the accuracy of our fish plant sampling program, as well as sampling whitefish from the various administrative areas of the lake.

The data collected in these studies was analysed and interpreted by DFO Fisheries Management and Science Stock Assessment biologists and presented to the GSLAC. It provided information useful to the Committee to make informed recommendations to DFO on the management of the GSL fisheries.

The Hay River Métis Council has assisted us in developing a long-term data base of whitefish size and age from 1975 to present. Based on this data, DFO Science is developing a model which will predict year-class strength of whitefish stocks; a very useful tool for future fishery co-managers.





*Fishery Observer records commercial catch on Great Slave Lake fishing boat*



*Great Slave Lake Advisory Committee 2004*

## **Quebec Region**

In 2004-2005, the Quebec Region had an annual budget of \$3,818,030 for the AFS. This included a top-up from Headquarters of \$240,030 in Co-Management funding and \$138,000 in ATP. \$200,000 of this mandate was O&M for a contract with the Centre spécialisé des pêches de Grande-Rivière.

Of this, \$1,429,734 was earmarked for co-management agreements and contracts, while \$2,388,000 was earmarked for the purchase of fishing enterprises under the ATP. \$296 was unspent at year end.

### **Northern Quebec**

#### ***Agreement with the Kativik Regional Government***

The objective of the agreement was the protection, conservation and annual management of marine fishery resources in the Nunavik region, with particular attention to beluga, two populations of which are on the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada list of species at risk.

#### ***Number of jobs created***

The agreement provided for the recruitment of 16 staff members, including a coordinator, an executive secretary, an administrative assistant, 7 renewable resources officers, 4 renewable resources technicians and 2 Inuit community officers, all seasonal. The total project cost was \$480,000.

### **Southern Quebec**

#### ***Fisheries Agreements***

Fiscal year 2004-2005 was a year of consolidation and/or restructuring for most of the seven Innu communities signing AFS agreements with the DFO. For others, such as the Uashat community, this was a year of major acquisitions, with attractive opportunities for fishery enterprises available on the market.

It is important to mention that the Uashat and Betsiamites communities still have to acquire a significant number of licences/boats. In the Quebec Region, the funds available under the Aboriginal ATP are distributed equally (over a period of approximately five years) among the communities.

In 2004-2005, we continued implementation of the six agreements signed in 2003-2004 with the seven Innu communities. Five of these were two-year agreements, ending in 2005-2006; the sixth was signed for a three-year period, ending in 2006-2007.

This year, most of the available funding was allocated to hiring fisheries coordinators, and theoretical and practical training (*Diplôme d'études professionnels en pêche* [vocational diploma in fishing]). A significant part was allocated to the ATP for the purchase of fishing enterprises. Five communities hired a consultant to help them consolidate and/or restructure their fishing enterprises. As mentioned previously, over the past five years, most of the Innu communities have experienced what has on some occasions been a sharp increase in their responsibilities for fishing activities. External assistance is therefore desirable: in some cases, to mitigate continual changes on band councils (and therefore frequent changes in individuals assigned to fisheries) and to address a lack of knowledge. Despite this, the Innu have made impressive progress in the management and profitability of their fisheries.

### ***Training of Innu Fishers***

One significant Innu success is the training program that was set up in cooperation with the Centre spécialisé des pêches de Grande-Rivière [Grande-Rivière specialized fisheries centre] (CSP). Two training sessions have been offered to the Innu every year since 2000, in order to develop their fisheries skills. To this point, 110 Innu have taken a training program. Spread out over several years, the 1,400-hour training program allows individuals to participate in a fisheries training program recognized by the Ministry of Education and customized to meet their needs. They can take courses including marine mechanics, general deck worker, master's certificate, or fisheries planning and management. Individuals who complete the program receive a *Diplôme d'études professionnels en pêche*.

### **Concrete benefits in the Communities**

The Uashat community now has two complete, trained aboriginal crews, including two certificated masters. Aboriginal teachers are also hired by the CSP. Students are supervised each day by an Aboriginal person, a Class 4 captain who graduated from the CSP in 2001. In addition, the training takes place at a Uashat school in Sept-Îles, a strategic meeting area for North Shore Innu. The location means that students from the eastern and western North Shore can more easily access this training. All students are billeted in boarding houses for periods of up to eight weeks.

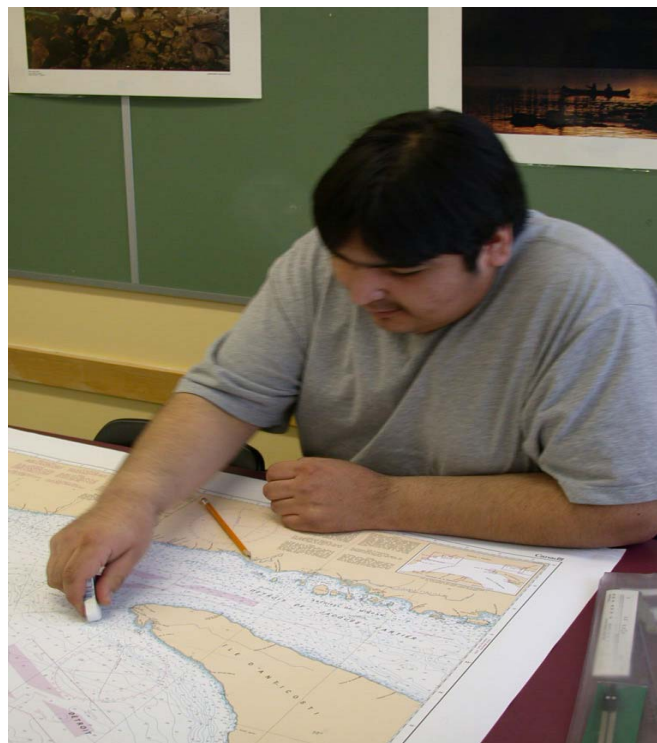
This year, 60 Innu fishers from among the seven communities came to one or more of the training courses listed below. The courses are paid for by the DFO and provided by the Sept-Îles CSP.

Program	Number of course hours	Number of candidates completing the program
General deck work		
Group 1	150 hrs	20
Group 2	180 hrs	33
Mechanic	210 hrs	10
Professionalization		
Group 1	96 hrs	12
Group 2	81 hrs	14
Master Class IV	255 hrs	6
Management and Planning	195 hrs	10
Restricted Operator Certificate - Maritime Commercial (ROC-MC) (radiotelephony)	26 hrs	2*

\* These two candidates were included in a non-Aboriginal group



*Net Repair class for Innu fishers*



*Learning to read a navigational chart*

### **Employment**

In 2004-2005 under AFS Agreements in Southern Quebec, 114 Aboriginal people were employed for between 10 and 34 weeks each.

### **Commercial Access**

**In 2004-2005 Quebec Region participated financially in the purchase of the following commercial licences under the ATP:**

<b>Commercial Licence</b>	<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Snow crab and whelk	Vessel included	Betsiamites	\$700,000
Whelk and stimpson surf clam	Vessel included	Uashat	\$240,000
Vessel upgrade		Uashat	\$60,000
Stimpson surf clam	Vessel included	Uashat	\$500,000
Whelk and lobster	Vessel and gear included	Mamit Innuat	\$100,000
	Vessel payment	Mamit Innuat	\$188,000
	Contribution towards vessel	Natashquan	\$300,000
	Contribution towards vessel	La Romaine	\$300,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$2,388,000</b>

### **Key Projects**

#### ***Innu Community Commercial Initiatives***

A third film project was completed again this year by the Uashat community. In 2003-2004, the first film was produced on crab fishing. In 2004-2005 a DVD on shrimp fishing was made. The latest addition is a documentary on Innu fishing on the North Shore.

Another of this year's successes is a Uashat Community initiative to buy a fishing enterprise in partnership with another community. The Uashat and Betsiamites communities acquired a fishing enterprise worth two million dollars. Uashat took the lead in this initiative, which had a very positive effect on the Betsiamites, since they had experienced delays in acquiring licences. The two communities

created *Les pêcheries Nitshimau* [Nitshimau fisheries], a general partnership, allowing them to jointly manage business licences (snow crab, scallops, whelk and other species).

This Uashat initiative coincided with the fact that INAC is no longer subsidizing communities buying fishing enterprises, these communities have lost an important financial partner. It is therefore likely that other communities will follow suit in the future (other opportunities for associations of this type are under discussion as this is being written).



*Le Chasseur d'Écume*, multi-purpose vessel, 47 feet  
Property of *Pêcheries Nitshimau* (Uashat and Betsiamites)

## **Maritimes Region**

The total operating budget under the AFS for Maritimes Region for 2004-2005 was \$2,421,500. \$350,000 was provided to fund the Native Council of Nova Scotia (NCNS), and the remaining \$2,071,500 funded Agreements with 13 First Nations. All of the funding for First Nations was for Co-Management Agreements. \$200,000 of the NCNS funding was for Co-Management projects. The remaining \$150,000 was for commercial access for this group. At year end this region received a top-up of \$25,810 from Pacific region which was provided to the NCNS for additional commercial access.

### **Number of Agreements and Employment**

In 2004-2005, AFS Agreements were signed with the NCNS and with 13 First Nations in Maritimes region. Under these 14 Agreements, 36 Aboriginal Fishery Guardians were employed for a total of 180 months, and approximately 203 Aboriginal workers were employed for a total of 852 months in other projects.

### **Commercial Access**

The ATP mandate for Maritimes Region for 2004-2005 was \$150,000. Near the end of the year an additional \$25,810 was provided out of surplus funds from Pacific region. The total amount was spent on costs associated with the building of a new vessel for the NCNS.

**Total** **\$175,810**

### **Key Projects**

#### ***Four Communities "One Bond"***

The AFS is thriving on the Saint John River watershed. First Nation's communities of Woodstock, Oromocto, Kingsclear and Tobique in partnership with DFO, Maritimes Region, Population Ecology Division, have shared a common goal of implementing the AFS program. In this program First Nation's personnel are a vital part of the scientific research and assessment studies of the Saint John, Nashwaak and Tobique River, even venturing to the Inner Bay of Fundy's Big Salmon River. While the AFS program is not new, the way in which these technicians, from support of chiefs and councils, have collaborated with



DFO and, most importantly, with each other shows a glowing example of how we can strive together for a better understanding and management of our natural resources.

**Woodstock First Nation** - Seven Technicians involved with Electro fishing densities studies on the Nashwaak and Big salmon Rivers, and have assisted with juvenile marking at the Mactaquac Biodiversity Facility.

**Oromocto First Nation** - Six technicians at the Nashwaak River on various projects, Rotary screw trap, assessment counting fence, broodstock collections, and other research projects.

**Kingsclear First Nation** - Four technicians at the Nashwaak River on various projects, Rotary screw trap, assessment counting fence, broodstock collections, and other research projects.

**Tobique First Nation** - staffed one technician on Tobique River research project that include, Electro fishing, Rotary screw trap and assessment of the Tobique River captive rearing program.



*AFS Crew*



Nashwaak Counting Fence

## Gulf Region

Gulf Region AFS had a total operating budget for 2004-2005 of \$3,190,650. A top-up of \$539,000 was provided to Gulf Region from Headquarters contingency funding to provide commercial access for the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation, resulting in final expenditures in this Region totaling \$3,729,650.

\$275,000 was provided to the Native Council of Prince Edward Island (NCPEI) of which \$150,000 was spent on Co-Management projects and \$125,000 was spent on commercial access for this group.

\$210,300 was provided to the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council (NBAPC) of which \$135,300 was spent on Co-Management projects and \$75,000 was spent on commercial access for this group.

The remaining \$2,705,350 was spent on Co-Management Agreements with 12 First Nations.

### **Number of Agreements and Employment**

In 2004-2005, AFS Agreements were signed with the NCPEI and the NBAPC and with 12 First Nations in Gulf Region. Under these 14 Agreements 48 Aboriginal Fishery Guardians were employed for a total of 225 months, and approximately 131 others were employed for a total of 765 months in various other projects. In addition 7 non-Aboriginal people were employed by the NBAPC to assist in harvesting of commercial catch.

### **Commercial Access**

\$125,000 was spent to retire licences and repair a vessel for the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council as follows:

Scallop Gear	\$14,000.00
Upgrades/repair of vessel "Sak III"	\$77,820.65
Final payment on upgrades/repair to vessel "Sak III"	\$33,179.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$125,000.00</b>

\$75,000 was spent on repairs to a vessel, traps and a motor for NCPEI as follows:

Boat Repair	\$23,240.35
Trap material	\$29,242.88
Wages for building traps	\$17,383.47
30HP Mercury Out Board motor	\$5,133.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,000.00</b>

\$539,000 was spent on commercial access for the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation as follows:

Lobster licence package	\$515,000.00
Rock crab gear	\$24,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$539,000.00</b>

## **Key Projects**

### ***Pabineau First Nation***

The Pabineau First Nation continued its yearly operation of the Salmon Enhancement Project on the Nepisiguit River. The salmon counting fence was constructed in June, 2004. Grilse and salmon were counted, weighed, and scale samples taken as they made their way up the Nepisiguit River for fall spawning. In collaboration with the Nepisiguit Salmon Association, salmon fry (fall fingerlings) were stocked in various locations throughout the Nepisiguit River system.

The salmon counting fence was de-constructed for the year in mid-October. A total of 10 members of the Pabineau First Nation worked on the 2004 Salmon Enhancement Project.

There were 10 Aboriginal Fisheries Technicians hired for four months (17 weeks).

***Indian Island First Nation***

The fisheries guardian program was undertaken this year by Indian Island First Nation. There were seven fisheries Guardians employed for approximately 10 weeks between the periods of July 5<sup>th</sup> – September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

The guardian's duties included assisting in the preparation of the fishing season as well as assisting the fishermen. The Guardians also did patrolling off the waters of Indian Island as well as the fishing grounds. They also undertook the monitoring of all fishing activities and assisted in the aquaculture project.

***Tobique First Nation***

There were 24 individuals hired for a period of 13 weeks to perform various job tasks as outlined in the AFS Agreement.

Based on the AFS work plan, the administration of the agreement consisted of identification of training requirements of the Guardian monitors and technical personnel, coordination of pertinent data, maps, and technical information. Tobique First Nation educated the public on all fronts, through presentations, newsletters, and word of mouth on all activities relating to the AFS.

There were nine river monitors hired to patrol the river adjacent to the Tobique First Nation. The duties of the river monitors were very limited due to the lack of professional training of 2-8 hour shifts of the patrolling on the river and in the vehicle. Any gillnets identified were reported to the Director of Fisheries and appropriate action was taken. Training these individuals is greatly needed for them to do their job effectively.

There were five field technicians hired to conduct brook and stream surveys and to collect statistical data which was provided to the DFO Science Branch Gulf Region. On the job training was provided to new entrants to the program through a DFO field technician. Installation of counting fences and smolt wheels was done in conjunction with DFO standards through their Field Technician. There were a number of streams and rivers where data collection took place. They are: Tobique River (17 sites), Salmon River (3 sites), Shiketehawk River (5 sites), and Kennebecasis (5 sites).

In addition to the regular index sites, Tobique First Nation Technicians in a collaborative research study investigated the growth rates of Juvenile Atlantic Salmon.

Further training requirements for the field technicians are greatly needed for these individuals to be effective in doing their job.

There were six individuals' hired to clean up debris and garbage along the banks of the Tobique River as well as upkeep of the Sunset Beach area and installation of floating docks.

### ***Red Bank First Nation***

Overall, this year's Fisheries activities can be deemed as a success. The level of involvement by the community in the conservation and protection of such a natural resource was impressive. The Fisheries Coordinators and Chief and Council feel that the program met its objectives.

Trap nets came to an end as of October 15, 2004. The total amounts of fish caught are as follows: Salmon – 299, Grilse – 866. The trappers fished seven days a week. Their duties were to keep records of fish catches, to tag all female fish, distribute fish to community members and also community work. Science related work was also done if necessary.

The Guardian program went well. They had an uneventful year, with no major problems. The Guardians feel that training should be a priority to ensure the further development of the program. They were also doing joint patrols with DFO. One major concern with the Guardians is habitat – low water. The Guardians feel an assessment should be conducted as soon as possible by Environment Canada.

The Community Enhancement Project was combined with the Habitat Restoration Project and the Fish Enhancement Project. During this period of the projects, crews were responsible for and completed the following work: assisting in installation of trap nets, assessment of brooks and riverbanks, cleaning around brooks in their boundaries, cleaning up the riverbank at the Oxbow Park, cleaning around the Metepenagiag Outdoor Adventure lodge, and removing old garbage from the main waters.

## Newfoundland and Labrador Region

Newfoundland Region had a total AFS mandate for 2004-2005 of \$1,770,000, comprised of \$870,000 in Co-Management and \$900,000 in ATP funds. During the year they received a top-up from Headquarters of \$120,000 in Co-Management Contribution funding and \$415,280 in ATP, resulting in a revised mandate of \$2,305,280. \$990,000 was spent on Co-Management and \$1,315,280 on ATP expenditures.

### **Number of Agreements and Employment**

During 2004-2005, the Newfoundland and Labrador Region had AFS Agreements with 5 groups. Four Agreements included FSC fisheries components. All 5 groups received funding for their Aboriginal Guardian Programs and 4 groups received ATP funding.

These agreements resulted in seasonal employment for 53 Aboriginal people. 37 were employed as fishery guardians and 16 were employed in other areas of fisheries management.

### **Commercial Access**

Newfoundland Region was able to actively participate in the Allocation Transfer Program again in 2004-2005.

\$1,315,280 was used to retire licences, gear and vessels as follows:

Innu Nation	Middle distance (65 - 100') fixed gear enterprise licences including: Atlantic Cod, Greenland Halibut; Atlantic Halibut; access to competitive fisheries for several other stocks i.e. snow crab, temporary shrimp and scallop	\$900,000
Federation of Newfoundland Indians	Fishing Equipment and Gear	\$125,000
Labrador Metis Nation	Fishing Equipment and Gear	\$200,000
Conne River	Fishing Equipment and Gear	\$90,280
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,315,280</b>

## Key Projects

### ***Labrador Innu Nation Acquires Their First Fishing Enterprise***

The Innu Nation represents approximately 1500 Innu in two bands in Labrador. In 2005, the Innu Nation acquired a 98' multi-species enterprise through the ATP.

There are only 9 such enterprises in this category in Atlantic Canada and this acquisition will position the Innu Nation to establish a significant presence in the commercial fishery and launch its fisheries development strategy to develop a viable year round fishing operation.

The vessel is currently licensed to fish shrimp and offshore groundfish, with enterprise allocations of cod, halibut and turbot. The long term strategy will see the enterprise, entitled "Ueshuk" meaning "flatfish" in Innu-aimun, directing for turbot and halibut this season and expanding into other fisheries in the coming years.



*"Ueshuk" - Vessel for the Innu Commercial Enterprise*



## **Significant Issues for the 2004-2005 Season**

### **At Sea Mentoring Initiative and Fisheries Operations Management Initiative**

On February 26, 2004, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans announced funding of \$7 million for two new initiatives designed to further assist First Nations affected by the Supreme Court of Canada's 1999 *Marshall* decision.

The first initiative, the *At-Sea Mentoring Initiative*, is designed to help eligible First Nations' fishers further develop fish harvesting skills to fish safely and effectively in various fisheries, including vessel maintenance and replacement, through the use of on-board fisheries mentors. Participating First Nations are developing training plans to determine who will receive at-sea mentoring. To date, 25 communities are working on training plans and 11 draft plans are under review by the Technical Advisory Committee. In addition, 20 communities participated in the Vessel Maintenance program with a total of 192 boats winterized. DFO will contribute a total of \$6 million -- until March 31, 2008 -- in a graduated cost-sharing arrangement with participating First Nations communities.

The second initiative, the *Fisheries Operations Management Initiative* has funding of \$1 million ending March 31, 2008. It is designed to support First Nations in their efforts to strengthen fisheries management practices.

Both of these programs will help ensure that First Nations on the East Coast are able to make the best use of access issued under the ATP as well as the *Marshall* Response Initiative.

## **Impact of Climate Change on Aboriginal Fisheries**

Environmental and climate changes in the world's oceans are impacting Canada's fisheries in the Pacific, Arctic and Atlantic Oceans. Subtle changes are already being felt by aquatic species in the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic Oceans, including smaller and generally weaker individual fish, reductions in run sizes and changes in run timing. Scientists generally agree that the effects on salmon, a species extremely sensitive to even slight changes in the temperature of their environment, are already evident.

In addition to the impacts a general overall warming trend in the three oceans, DFO research teams studying the Northeastern Pacific have discovered that the mid-winter mixed layer of waters near the ocean's surface, the source of much of the nutrients on which salmon live while in open seas, is about 25 per cent shallower now than it was 30 or 40 years ago. The layer results from the mixing of cold and salty waters rising from the depths and sun-warmed fresh waters close to the surface. It provides an ideal habitat for the organisms that form the foundation of the ocean food web. In recent years, however, the mixing process appears to have weakened, possibly because of increased precipitation falling on surface waters. As a result, concentrations of nutrients have fallen dramatically, producing smaller fish with weaker health.

The impact on fish and aquatic species on fisheries are two-fold:

- a reduction of stocks available for harvesting; and
- constraints on harvesting endangered stocks by government.

These impacts will affect all fishers, whether commercial, recreational or Aboriginal (and will have secondary and tertiary impacts in the fish processing industry, suppliers of fishing equipment and so on). However, for many small Aboriginal communities, fishing and ocean harvesting is more than just a livelihood; it is a way of life. Negotiations during the Coho closure in 1998 indicate that Aboriginal communities will not relocate in order to "follow the fish"; and they also indicated a strong reluctance to consider other economic ventures as an alternative to fishing. There can be little doubt the reduction of aquatic resources due to climate change will strain the socio-economic fabric of many Aboriginal communities.

In addition, during the 1998 Coho closure, a number of Aboriginal communities advanced the theory that they were being asked to solve a problem created as a

result of decisions by the Government of Canada; and that therefore the Government had failed to meet its fiduciary responsibility. This could lead to difficulties managing the fisheries during any period of large scale reduction or closure of harvestable aquatic resources. Due to these concerns, it would be useful for DFO to begin, as soon as possible, planning an approach to Aboriginal fisheries during a down-turn in abundance.