

# **ONE PEOPLE ONE PLAN**

## **INUVIALUIT PLAN FOR FISHING ON THE INUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY**

**February 2, 2017**

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that the access to the land created by the all weather road between Tuktoyaktuk and Inuvik does not increase fishing pressure and negatively affect fish and fish habitat along the Highway corridor. This plan was discussed and agreed upon by consensus decision at community meetings held in November 2016 in Tuktoyaktuk and Inuvik, NWT, and a group meeting held in Tuktoyaktuk on February 2, 2017, with participation of the HTC's from Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik and Aklavik. It is a voluntary plan, with no associated regulations under the Fisheries Act except those related to sport fishing by non-beneficiaries<sup>1</sup>. It is also a working plan that will be reviewed annually (or as needed) to assess and improve its effectiveness, and to incorporate recommendations from all groups who rely of the fish resources in the affected areas.

<sup>1</sup> This plan recognizes the rights of the Inuvialuit to harvest fish for subsistence use within the ISR, as described within the IFA below:

“14.(31) The Inuvialuit shall have the preferential right within the Inuvialuit Settlement Region to harvest fish for subsistence usage including trade, barter and sale to other Inuvialuit. If subsistence quotas are required to be set out in order to ensure conservation of the resource, they shall be set jointly by the Inuvialuit and the Government pursuant to subsections (61) to (72).“

This plan describes the actions the Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk HTC's are jointly taking to regulate themselves to ensure fish stocks are maintained for future use. This self-regulation is not enforceable under the Fisheries Act. They are voluntary guidelines that HTC's expect their members to adhere to, with plans for HTC by-laws to enforce these actions in future. This recognition of rights and description of actions also includes the Gwich'in, who also have aboriginal fishing rights in the area.

This description of the Plan does not include the Recreational Fishing Regulations under the Fisheries Act (Action 4). Changes to the Recreational Fisheries regulations will be sought to enforce these actions.

## **GOALS**

1. Maintain the existing stocks of fish in a way that ensures our ability to harvest and maintain traditional and economic activities for generations to come in keeping with the spirit of the IFA.

**Continue taking care of and protecting the environment and fish populations (all fish species) so that harvesting (fishing to provide food), traditional activities (going out to a fish camp, not fishing but helping cut/cook fish), and economic opportunities (such as eco-tours) is still an option for Inuvialuit/ISR residents/tourists now and for future generations.**

2. Ensure that our interactions with the fisheries maintain the integrity of the fish and the fish habitat.

**Make sure how we travel and the actions we choose that affect fishing in any way do not harm the fishes' (amount of fish, health of the fish) and their homes.**

3. Increase our understanding and knowledge of fish and fish habitat along the Tuk-Inuvik highway.

**There have been scientific studies that have been done (Paul Sparling, Ben Kissinger and others) but our current understanding of what fish and how much fish are in what lake or stream is not well known.**

**Goal 3 is to get a better understanding and learn more about the fish (species, health, home) along the ITH.**

4. To create and maintain monitoring and guardianship programs related to the preservation of fish and fish habitat in a manner that provides community education and self-regulation of the fishery.

**In order to achieve the above goals, we need to depend on the Inuvialuit (elected board members, HTC membership, town citizens, etc) to be our ears and eyes. This can be done with guardianship (Definition of guardian: protector, defender, custodian, one who looks after - example: hiring a trustworthy, knowledgeable Inuk to do seasonal patrols and pass along valuable information to those that will use the ITH). This can also be done through monitoring (data input from CBMP; collecting scientific samples such as what is done in Paulatuk and Ulukhaktok; Beluga Monitoring program).**

# **ACTIONS**

## **1. Gill netting restrictions.**

A/ Husky Lakes      Seasonal closures to restrict gillnetting from April 10 to June 1 so that gillnetting does not conflict with angling, and a second closure period between August 15 and October 15 to protect Lake Trout spawning.

B/ Other Areas      No netting (gillnets or dip nets) between the highway and Husky Lakes and no netting within 5 kilometers of the highway in areas not bordered by Husky Lakes. No netting in Jimmy and Noell Lakes.

## **2. Access Restrictions**

Access will be restricted to designated points along the highway corridor in accordance with decisions made at multi stakeholder meetings held by the Inuvialuit Land Administration (ILA) in Inuvik, NT on December 20 and 21, 2016. At this time two access points to Husky Lakes have been identified, one on the Inuvik side and one on the Tuktoyaktuk side.

## **3. Signage**

Signs will be posted at both ends of the highway and at each highway pullout location. The signs will indicate the regulations outlined in this fishing plan. The exact wording for the signs will be agreed upon by all stakeholders prior to printing.

Posters and brochures with similar information as presented in the signs will be created and distributed/ posted in appropriate locations including highway check stations, tourist information centers, airports, private air line offices, HTC offices and will be attached to all ISR fishing permits.

Signs will be posted at each bridge crossing stating that fishing from the bridge deck is prohibited.

## **4. Fishing Guidelines for Licensed Fishermen (non-beneficiaries)**

Catch and release fishing will apply to all licensed sports fishermen for all fish species on Husky, Jimmy and Noell Lakes and within a 10 kilometer corridor on either side of the highway. This regulation is to be enforced by the incorporation of a variation order to direct NT fishing guidelines (consultation for these changes are in process).

Sports fishermen will be requested to not use downriggers and that no sports fishing occur during the gillnet closure periods (April 10 to June 1 and August 15 to October 15).

Sports fishermen and fishing guides will be asked to record the number of fish caught by sports fishermen and report the information to the check stations or the HTC.

Sports fishing on the ISR private lands require registration with the HTC in addition to a regular angling license. Education of the public as to this requirement needs to be developed.

## **5. Check Stations**

A check station will be set up at the entrance to the road at either end. The check station will be staffed during peak seasons of fish harvesting and road traffic. The check station will offer poster information, brochures and other information regarding this fishing plan. The station will also be used as a post for data collection from returning fishers.

## **6. Monitoring/ Education/ and Guardianship**

A/ Monitoring: The Inuvialuit Settlement Region Community Based Monitoring Plan (ISR CBMP) will be the basis of the monitoring program however in addition, an increase in biological monitoring including; weight, length, and aging structures will be pursued as will creel censuses and catch effort information will be collected during heavy fishing periods.

B/ Education: Educating the community members and other users of the fish resources will be key to the success of this plan. The initial information as to why this plan has been created will be distributed in a poster/brochure format at locations throughout the community and at strategic points along the highway. Information gained from monitoring programs will be delivered back to the communities and re-evaluated in the future and this plan will be revisited on an annual basis. It is critical that the community members understand that information collected by this program is in their best interest so that the long term understanding of the resource is maintained.

C/ Guardian Program A guardian program will be implemented in addition to the monitoring program to promote compliance and understanding of the fishing plan. The guardian will embody a diplomatic character with good communication skills and knowledge of the land that has been gained from fishing experience in the area.

**Further information and actions required for the completion of this plan and its implementation.**

- Determination of the text and locations for Highway signs to be posted; A) at both ends of the highway, B) at highway pullouts and C) at bridge crossings.
- Both Tuktoyaktuk and Inuvik HTC's will be required to pass bylaws to cover action item 1.
- Funding of the monitoring and Guardianship programs is being pursued by the FJMC and the local HTC's. Both Federal and Territorial governments will be lobbied.
- Better develop the mechanism to obtain/purchase the ISR fishing registration.
- Natural Resources Enforcement will need to be included in prescribing action item 4 in territorial fishing regulations.
- Mechanisms to collate information collected by the monitoring efforts into report formats to provide guidance necessary for the review of the fishing plans
- Annual review of this fishing plan will occur in 12 months from the writing of this plan
- The information from this plan will be shared with HTC's, RRC's and CC's from the surrounding areas.