

THUNDER in the NORTH

The Official Publication of the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance • Winter 2014



- *MNR Commits \$ to Moose Aerial Inventory*
- *Minister/Nat Resources Announces Bear Hunt Pilot Project*
- *NOSA to host Measuring Event in March*

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NOSA Pro Bass Angling Team Report



team's trolling motor released during a battle in the waves during a storm that struck that morning. The trolling motor snapped in half and the front fish finding graph ripped clean out of the floor. Various items were washed out of the boat on the way to the weigh in. One wave filled the entire boat full of water on the way in as 6-7ft waves smashed the Team NOSA boat.

Atikokan Bass Classic- one week later - the team finished 85th. The residual effects from the trip to Fort Frances the previous week left electronics in need of repair and a spare trolling motor broke down early in the tourney, so team fished without both.

Perch lake Classic - the team withdrew to try to fix their boat.

Shebandowan Fall Classic - Team NOSA's Pro Bass anglers rebounded to finish out the year with a respectable 7th place overall finish in the Shebandowan Fall Classic.

Despite the heart ache associated with the pounding the boat took in the Fort, the team still represented NOSA with class and once again brought the NOSA presence to each tourney they attended. The team even extended themselves to conduct public relations by handing out rods and reels, spinners, hats, shirts, treats and various other items to kids and various other tournament attendees.

In only the second year of their sponsorship by NOSA, the Pro Bass Angling Team of Kyle Huillery and John Glenn suffered tough times on the bass circuit in Northwestern Ontario this year. But the team battled through to some respectable finishes. Here is a summary of their activities for 2013:

Shebandowan Smallmouth Showdown - The team placed 29th.

Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championships - The team placed a dismal 72nd overall but managed 21st spot in the 3rd flight with only 2 fish weighing 8.36lbs, and all this with no trolling motor! The



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DATE: 2013

Pay to the order of SHEBANDOWAN SMALLMOUTH SHOWDOWN \$ 1500.00

Pay to the amount of One Thousand Five Hundred / 00 dollars

Signed by: TEAM NOSA

NOSA Executive Director John Kaplanis presents a sponsorship cheque for \$1500 to SSS Bass tournament Chairman George Clark

NOSA Antler Measuring Event at T.Bay Trapper Convention

NOSA will again host an antler/skull measuring contest at the NorthWest Fur Trapper Assoc. convention to be held Friday February 28 & Saturday March 1st at the CLE Heritage Building. NOSA wishes to invite anyone who might want to have their moose/deer antlers scored and measured, in addition to bear skulls, all for the chance of winning some cash for a 1st, 2nd or 3rd place ranking by category. Last year, the event saw over 40 entries and it was a great addition to the trapper's convention. There is no entry to the convention but a \$10 fee for antler/skull entries is required to make you eligible for a prize! Come out and enjoy the fun of this family oriented event!



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NOSA Supports St. Joe's Care Group

Susan Tennier (left) President of St. Joseph's Care Group Auxiliary was joined by Sharon Owen (middle) as NOSA Executive Director John Kaplanis (right) presented her with the Robert Bateman Lynx print donated by NOSA to help raise funds for St. Joe's Health Care.

NOSA's efforts have assisted the St. Joe's Auxiliary in raising over \$1500 over the past two years. At various events, the Auxiliary volunteers sell raffle tickets on the wildlife prints, thus allowing the group to raise much needed funds for St. Joe's health care programs.



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NOSA Applauds Minister's Support for Youth Trapping Program



In early 2013 Natural Resources Minister David Orazietti announced his approval of a Youth Trapper Apprentice training/education program based on the longstanding Ontario Youth Hunter Apprentice program. Under this program youths at age 12 may participate in the trappers Fur Management Course and after successfully passing all the course requirements, youths aged 12 and above can legally participate in trapping activities provided they are accompanied by a licensed trapper. The program allows youth apprentice trappers to go on and apply for their own trapping license once they are old enough.

By adopting the youth trapper apprenticeship program Minister Orazietti has clearly demonstrated that he appreciates the need to encourage the future of trapping, hunting and angling by including young kids in the conservation education programs that Ontario

offers. NOSA is proud to announce that the youth trapper program was one that we had championed along with many other groups such as the Ontario Fur Manager's Federation and the Ont. Fed. of Anglers and Hunters. NOSA continues to sponsor youth trapper education in the Northwest by allocating funds specifically to sponsor youth trapper education programs annually by paying the way in full for a limited number of youth trappers to take the Ont. Fur Management Course through the NorthWest Fur Trappers Assoc(NWFTA). For more information contact NWFTA.

OMNR Injects \$ to Moose Aerial Inventory for NWR

In light of concerns that Ontario's moose population could be impacted by whatever factors are influencing declines in Minnesota and Manitoba, it would appear that OMNR has listened to NOSA's repeated requests to inject much needed cash into the Provincial Moose Aerial Inventory (MAI).

In a recent meeting between Exec. Director John Kaplanis and OMNR Northwest Region Director Allan Willcocks, it was announced that \$700 thousand additional dollars were allocated to the Northwest Region's(NWR) Moose Aerial Inventory(MAI) budget for this winter. This is extremely welcome news according to NOSA's John Kaplanis who stated, "NOSA has long argued that OMNR's MAI budget of \$300 thousand dollars for the province is far too little to accurately measure moose inventory in a province the size of Ontario." Kaplanis and his NOSA Directors were pleased with the announcement.

MPP Bill Mauro also sounded his support for the MAI and increased funding for moose population monitoring in the region. He and OMNR Minister David Orazietti have seemingly taken much of NOSA's input from earlier meetings and either implemented recommendations put forth by NOSA or provided an open line of dialogue for continued action. NOSA Exec. Director John Kaplanis reports, "NOSA has long regarded our relationship with the

Minister's Office as the most vital factor in getting things done here in the north, and through MPP Bill Mauro and former Min. of Natural Resources Michael Gravelle, we've been able to accomplish a lot." Kaplanis added that he looks forward to continuing this productive relationship with the MPPs and with Minister David Orazietti.



NOSA Sponsors Biathlon Competition



In accordance with our stated bylaw objectives NOSA is proud to announce our sponsorship of the Bruno's CUP Air Rifle Biathlon Competition hosted by Lake Superior Biathlon and Thunder Bay Nordic Trails.

This event will feature safe firearms handling instruction and encourage youth shooters to take

part in a fun filled competition promoting winter physical fitness. NOSA has long supported competition shooting events which highlight the value of responsible firearms ownership in Canada.

This event will take place on Sunday Feb. 9th at Kamview Nordic Centre. Competitors must register before midnight of Feb. 7th by visiting this web site: www.zone4.ca and searching for Lake Superior Biathlon Bruno's Cup on the web search engine.

Cost to register is \$15 plus \$10 for non-Biathlon Canada member's insurance. For more information contact either Dan Guay at: dsguay@lakesuperiorbiathlon.com or Dan Duckert at: jackrabbitdan@shaw.ca and they will assist you in registering if necessary.

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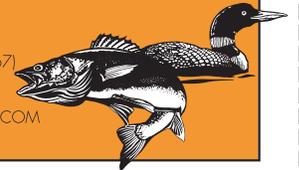
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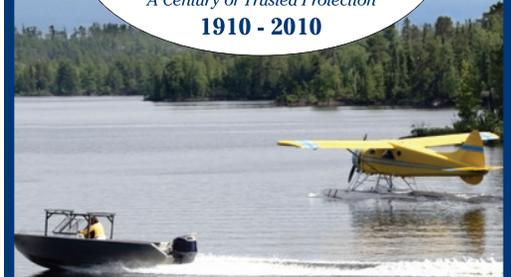
Team NOSA

Members In The Field...

- TOP LEFT - NOSA Director Mark StCyr is a proud whitetail hunter
- TOP RIGHT - NOSA Director Bert Johnson shows his Lake Trout success
- BOTTOM LEFT - NOSA member Mike Weatherston hoists a Lac Des Mille Lacs Walleye
- BOTTOM RIGHT - NOSA Director Shane Baker and a mature Thunder Bay City Buck



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“Early Season” Bear Hunt Pilot Project For Ontario 2014

Ontario’s Minister of Natural Resources, David Oraziotti announced in late 2013 that the Ontario Government would offer a two year pilot early season bear management project in select units of Northern Ontario. This announcement came in response to public concerns over the rise in dangerous nuisance bear encounters and a spike in Ontario bear attacks in 2013.

Not coincidentally, Thunder Bay/Atikokan MPP Bill Mauro had earlier initiated his own private member’s bill calling for the return of the

spring bear hunt. In explaining the rationale for his private member’s bill, Mauro outlined the need for intensive bear management through hunting in the spring in order to reduce nuisance encounters and increase public safety. Mauro’s rationale also goes on to acknowledge that a rising bear population has other impacts such as increased predation by bears on moose calves at a time of the year when they are most vulnerable.



NOSA’s position on the issue of bear management in Ontario has remained unchanged since it was cancelled by the Ontario Conservative Party in 1999; that is, a full return of two months of spring bear hunting, complete with a non-resident bear hunting season, is needed to fully manage black bears conservatively in Ontario. NOSA has long maintained that the status of the black bear in Ontario has been reduced to little more than a nuisance pest which is shot on sight in many cases as rural Ontario residents

take bear management matters into their own hands.

NOSA will continue to work with the Ontario Government as it introduces the “early season” bear hunt pilot project, in an attempt to have a non-resident hunting element included in this pilot project as non-resident hunters will likely harvest more black bears than Ontario resident bear hunters, thus providing the necessary reduction in black bear population growth at a time of the year when it is needed most.

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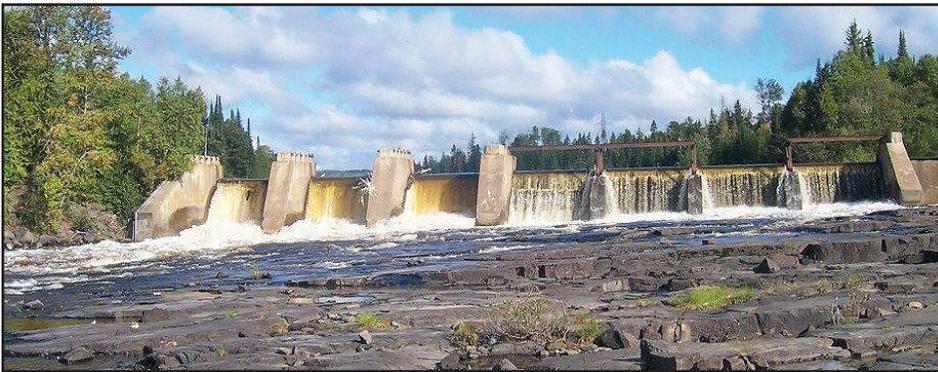
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Report on the Status of Black Sturgeon River Strategic Decision Making Process

By John Hay, NOSA Vice President of Operations



The following is a summary of the comments recently submitted to the Black Sturgeon River Strategic Decision Making team and reflects the position of the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance as set out by its Board of Directors.

It is the position of the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance and their representatives that the preferred option to achieve the goal of walleye rehabilitation to sustainable population levels or historic levels in Black Bay is to remove the dam and build a lamprey control structure on the Black Sturgeon River at the location of Camp 1.

Summary

This is consistent with the preferred option recommendation put forward by FMZ 9 previously. That preferred option was subsequently endorsed by FMZ 6. It should be noted that the Black Sturgeon River and in particular portions of the river affected by any of the options considered by FMZ 9 and this Strategic Decision Making process are in an area defined to be part of FMZ 6.

The opinion and recommendation of FMZ 6 must be considered as pertinent and valuable.

Discussion

Much of the discussion with respect to the options put forward was similar or a repeat of positions and information that were presented to or debated by FMZ 9. The most significant difference between FMZ 9 and the Strategic Decision Making process was the inclusion of the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission including international representation (United States).

There was also a greater presence from lamprey control interests. This included the some of the same representation that participated in FMZ 9 discussions prior. The workshops were provided substantial documentation and valuable professional opinion on many areas of lamprey control including history, control options, control targets, efficacy, modeling and estimated consequences of the considered options. Also included were estimates on costs for the considered options.

The costs presented indicate that for the preferred option offered described above to be only \$150,000/ 4 years. While understanding it is an increase, based on the existing budget for lamprey control it is a reasonable increase.

It is also recommended that consideration be given to enhancing data collection on the lamprey population in the affected watershed. Apart the existing lamprey control methods employed now we believe the DFO and the GLFC investigate the possibility of harvest and commercialization of lamprey as a marketable resource.

The creation of potentially ~ 400K m² of spawning habitat increase has been accepted as the best opportunity to allow walleye rehabilitation to reach sustainable population levels or historic levels.

FMZ 9 and the SDM workshops facilitated by Mr. Jones had thorough discussions on walleye populations, habitat, and growth. While much of the FMZ 9

work was repeated, with new representatives available at the workshops there was opportunity for broader participation and additional information. The additional walleye information and related habitat science did not encourage another reasonable option for the attaining the goal of walleye rehabilitation in Black Bay. The additional scrutiny confirmed the preferred recommendation.

FMZ 9 was thorough with its inclusion of the other values of a rehabilitated and sustainable walleye population, including the positive recreational, consumptive and economic aspects of a vital and biologically diverse Black Bay.

It should be noted that while comments provided in this submission are pointed at walleye rehabilitation, the preferred option of the removal of the dam and construction of a lamprey control barrier at Camp 1 has a positive habitat potential for other species. For example Lake Sturgeon will also benefit from increased access to the Black Sturgeon watershed as will other important species.

It is recognized that changes to watershed will impact all species and there was much discussion around this. That important information was considered in making the recommendation contained in this submission.

Consequences

We agree with the consequences of implementing the recommendation as detailed in the chart provided through the SDM workshops. There is high probability that there will be an increase in suitable spawning habitat that will meet the rehabilitation goals. There will also be access to the watershed for other species.

The costs associated with demolition and construction are consistent with the other construction options. There will be a need for funding sources to be identified.

Based on the costs for additional lamprey control measures, it is a reasonable increase.

Conclusion

In conclusion it is the recommendation of the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance and its representative that the Government of Ontario move forward with the next steps to remove the existing dam and construct a lamprey control structure at Camp 1. Also sources of funding need to be identified for the project.

There should a stakeholder steering committee to act in an advisory capacity on Black Bay/ Black Sturgeon fishery for the creation of a specific fish management plan. This would include mechanisms and agreements to ensure long range planning and data collection is sustained.

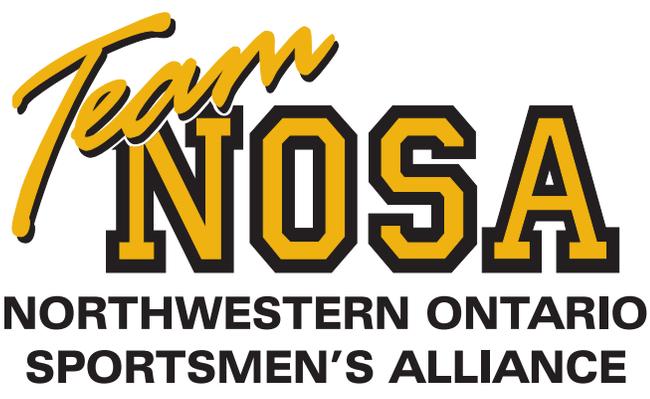
The project is so significant that consideration should be given to identifying it as Specially Designated Waters.



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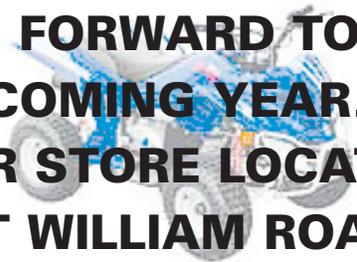
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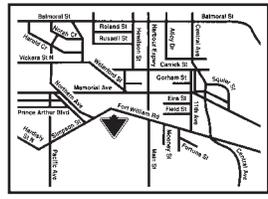
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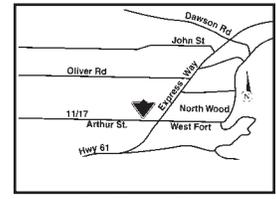


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