

Wildlife and Fisheries Branch  
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CANADA

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C-Jae Breiter, M.Sc.  
Conservation Affairs Committee Co-Chair  
Past-President  
The Wildlife Society- Manitoba Chapter, Inc.  
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Dear C-Jae Breiter;

Thank you your email of February 16, 2018, to the Honourable Rochelle Squires, Minister of Sustainable Development, regarding fisheries consultation, eco-certification and fisheries monitoring/data collection. I have been asked to reply on her behalf.

The Department is appreciative to hear that The Wildlife Society - Manitoba Chapter is supportive of the government's efforts to enhancing marketing choices for fisheries in Manitoba; its work towards maintaining sustainable fisheries; the Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan; as well as, its continuing efforts to secure certification of Manitoba's commercial fisheries. These efforts will continue to be top priorities for the Department of Sustainable Development.

As you are already aware, on August 16, 2016, the Government of Manitoba announced that it was moving to create flexible marketing options for commercial fishers in the province. Since then, the government has undertaken a number of important steps to move the commercial fishery into a flexible and open marketing system. To date, there have been 19 Fish Dealer Licences issued which offers a wider range of marketing and selling opportunities available to Manitoba's commercial fishers. The department is currently looking at additional regulatory and administrative changes aimed at improving and strengthening the flexible marketing system.

In response to the request from fishers, local communities, local political leadership and commercial tourism operators representing 10 separate fisheries located throughout the province, the department has been working to:

- Continue and/or initiate activities necessary to either maintain certification standards or achieve certification status of these commercial fisheries.
- Position these fisheries to pass an independent, third party assessment to either maintain re-certification and/or achieve full certification status of their commercial fisheries under the Marine Stewardship Council.
- Secure partnerships with other provincial/federal departments/agencies to assist and support these efforts to secure and maintain certification of Manitoba's commercial fisheries.

The department, especially through its Sustainable Fisheries Unit, has initiated a number of activities aimed at improving our stock monitoring practices and programs. Co-operative stock monitoring programs have either been implemented or are being developed on a number of fisheries located throughout the province. These co-operative fisheries manager/community stock-monitoring programs are designed to strengthen partnerships with fishers, local political leadership, communities and resource users; as well as, enhance data collection capabilities and quality of sampling. The Sustainable Fisheries Unit, in cooperation with Regional Fisheries staff, are looking at ways to implement commercial sampling programs on a number of commercial fisheries. Commercial catch sampling is a management tool used to assist fisheries managers as part of the overall stock-monitoring program. Commercial catches provide information necessary to determine year class strengths in the fishery relative to fish populations in the lake.

However, the department recognizes that further work and effort is still required to achieve a robust stock-monitoring system and is looking at additional options. One example of these efforts is the development and implementation of a data collection protocol. This protocol identifies how data and other management information such as commercial production, will be collected, deposited and stored for future analysis of the fishery and application in the management decision-making process. A key component of achieving this goal is having a database capable of meeting all the demands and requirements of an effective and modern fisheries management regime. To this end, the department is looking at several options to ensure that it possesses a functional and effective centralized and standardized database.

The department also remains committed to developing and implementing positive adaptations to fisheries management that will serve Manitoba's fish populations into the future. One such example has been the department's decision to reorganize the former Sport and Commercial section of the Wildlife and Fisheries Branch into the new Sustainable Fisheries Unit. The mission of this unit is to create maximally productive fisheries able to meet sustainable fishing certification standards, by working collaboratively with stakeholders and using sound science and community knowledge. The department will continue to be adaptive to change to do its best to ensure that Manitobans can continue to benefit from our incredible fishery resource for years to come.

The department wants to thank you for your thoughtful insight and valuable suggestions on how to better to manage Manitoba's fishery resources sustainably for the benefit of all Manitobans who rely on this important resource. Your Chapter's offer to assist the department in creating sustainable fisheries management in Manitoba is much appreciated and welcomed. I have requested that the Sustainable Fisheries unit contact you to discuss ways we can work together in developing and implementing sustainable management practices and how to enhance science-based policy and management decisions for the benefit of the fishery resource.

If you require any further assistance and/or assistance, please call Mr. Bill Galbraith, Sustainable Fisheries Manager, Wildlife and Fisheries Branch, at (204) 945-7811 or email: [Bill.Galbraith@gov.mb.ca](mailto:Bill.Galbraith@gov.mb.ca).

Sincerely Yours,



James Duncan  
Director

cc: Honourable Rochelle Squires  
Bill Galbraith