

Questionnaire

ATLANTIC SALMON

Eastern Cape Breton Population “Endangered”

*You can make a difference:
your comments are important!*

Adding a population to the **LIST OF WILDLIFE SPECIES AT RISK**

The process of listing a species under the *Species at Risk Act* consists of several steps. It starts with a status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and ends with a government decision whether or not to add the population to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk.

Status assessment

COSEWIC is an independent committee of experts that assesses and designates which wildlife species are in some danger of disappearing from Canada. The status of various Atlantic Salmon population groups in Canada was assessed in 2010. This assessment was based on the best available information, which includes scientific data, community knowledge and Aboriginal traditional knowledge (where available).

If the population is listed...

If the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon is listed as endangered, automatic prohibitions would immediately come into effect and it would be illegal to kill, harm, harass, capture, possess, collect, buy, sell or trade Atlantic Salmon from this population group. A recovery strategy and subsequent action plan(s) would be developed to identify the measures to be implemented to mitigate the known threats. The critical habitat (i.e. the habitat necessary for the survival and recovery of the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon) would also be protected once it is identified in a recovery strategy or action plan.

Consultation: Let your opinion be heard

The *Species at Risk Act* acknowledges that Aboriginal peoples, interested groups and all Canadians have a role to play in preventing the disappearance of wildlife species. Before deciding whether this Atlantic Salmon population will be added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk, we would like to hear your opinion, comments and suggestions regarding the possible ecological, cultural and economic impacts of listing or not listing this species under the *Species at Risk Act*.

Current situation

The Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon is managed under the *Fisheries Act*, via the *Atlantic Fisheries Regulations*, *Maritime Provinces Fishery Regulations*, *Fishery (General) Regulations*, as well as through licenses issued under the *Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licence Regulations*. All commercial fisheries for Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon are currently closed. There are Aboriginal Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) allocations in the area. Recreational hook and release angling is permitted on the North, Middle and the Baddeck Rivers with barbless hook flies during cool water periods. Atlantic Salmon habitat is currently protected under the fisheries protection provisions of the *Fisheries Act*.



Photos: D. Danvoye

ATLANTIC SALMON

Eastern Cape Breton

Information Summary for the Consultation on Adding the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under the *Species at Risk Act*

January, 2014 to March, 2014

Today, hundreds of wildlife species face the risk of extinction in Canada. Some are symbols in our diverse cultures and heritage; some are the last of their kind in the world – and all of them have an essential role to play in the environments where they live.

CONSULTATION

on the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon

We would like to receive your comments on the potential benefits or impacts of adding the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under the *Species at Risk Act*. The purposes of this Act are to prevent wildlife species from becoming extinct, to provide for their recovery and to conserve biological diversity.

This summary includes information on Atlantic Salmon and the *Species at Risk Act*. You will also find a detachable questionnaire that you can complete to provide your comments.

THE EASTERN CAPE BRETON population group

Atlantic Salmon tend to have adaptations specific to the rivers in which they were born (e.g., differences in body shape and behavior), which has allowed the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) to identify 16 different population groups of Atlantic Salmon in eastern Canada. This consultation focuses on one of these population groups, the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon, which is found in rivers extending from the northern tip of Cape Breton Island around the Atlantic coast to the Canso Causeway. Those rivers in the area that drain into the Bras d’Or Lakes are also included in this population group.



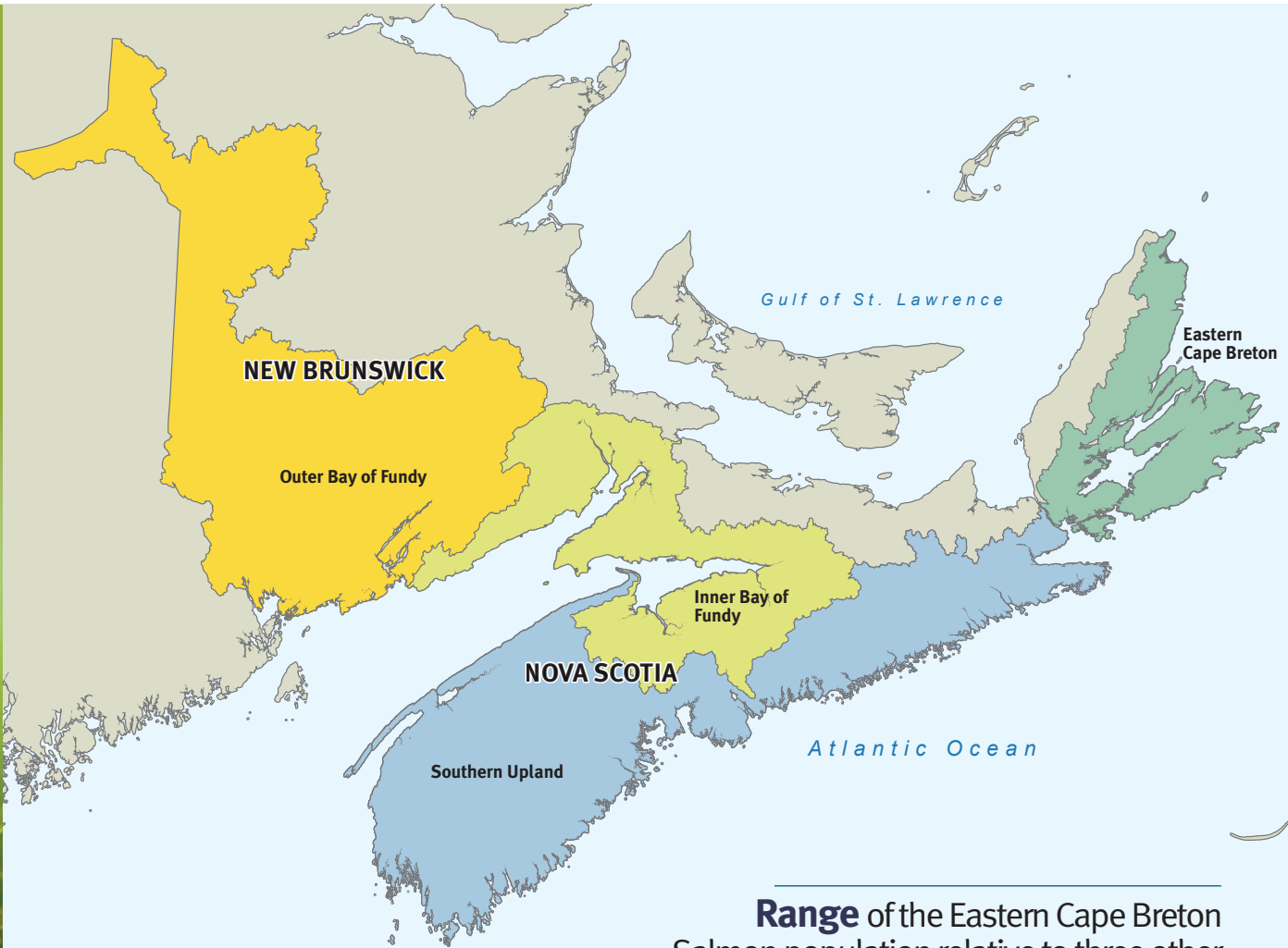
FACTS about Atlantic Salmon

Atlantic Salmon spawn in fresh water, generally in the same river where they were born. Juveniles spend one to eight years in fresh water before migrating to salt water in the North Atlantic. After staying at sea for one to four years, adults return to fresh water to spawn. Salmon rivers or streams are generally clear and cool, with gravel, cobble and boulder river beds.

POPULATION	STATUS	ESTIMATED ADULT ABUNDANCE	DECLINE IN ABUNDANCE	PROVINCE	NUMBER OF RIVERS
Eastern Cape Breton	Endangered <i>Facing imminent extirpation or extinction</i>	1,150 salmon in 5 index rivers	29% over 3 generations (based on 5 index rivers). Meets the criteria for endangered due to a small and declining number of mature individuals (estimated to be less than 2500).	Nova Scotia (rivers from the northern tip of Cape Breton, around the Atlantic coast to the Canso Causeway. Includes rivers in the area that drain into the Bras d’Or lakes)	A minimum of 46 rivers are used by Atlantic Salmon in this area.

Why is the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon ASSESSED AS ENDANGERED?

The abundance of Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon has been variable, ranging from steep declines in some index rivers, to moderate declines or increases in others. Threats to the persistence and recovery of this population in freshwater environments that have been identified with a high level of overall concern include illegal fishing and poaching. Threats in estuarine and marine environments identified with a high level of overall concern include (in no particular order): uncertainties around the occurrence of diseases and parasites, salmonid aquaculture and marine ecosystem changes (*note: threats were identified without considering potential mitigation. Therefore, some activities identified may not represent a threat, or may be ranked at a lower severity, after the application of mitigation measures*).



Range of the Eastern Cape Breton Salmon population relative to three other Atlantic Salmon population groups in the Fisheries and Oceans Canada Maritimes Region

Questionnaire

Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon: Assessed as endangered

Your comments are important!

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain your comments on adding the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under the Species at Risk Act as endangered. If the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon were to be listed as endangered, automatic prohibitions would apply: it would be illegal to kill, harm, harass, capture, take, possess, collect, buy, sell or trade individuals of this Atlantic Salmon population group. The critical habitat (i.e. the habitat necessary for the survival and recovery of the population) would be protected once it is identified in a recovery strategy or action plan.

You may use extra pages for your comments.

1. Do you support listing the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon population as “endangered” on the List of Wildlife Species at Risk? Why or why not?

2. What would be the potential POSITIVE environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts of listing the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon population as “endangered” on the List of Wildlife Species at Risk?

3. What would be the potential NEGATIVE environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts of listing the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon population as “endangered” on the List of Wildlife Species at Risk?

4. In which province do you reside?

5. Do you have any other comments on the listing of the Eastern Cape Breton Atlantic Salmon population as endangered on the List of Wildlife Species at Risk?

Your name (optional):

Name of organization/industry/Aboriginal community you represent (optional):

To submit your answers or receive more information, please contact:

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Thank you for completing this questionnaire.