

**Title**

DOCUMENTING CRITICALLY SENSITIVE FISH HABITAT

**Model Forest**

Western Newfoundland Model Forest

**From**

July 1996

**To**

December 1996

**Keywords**

Fish Habitat, Conservation, Water Quality, Salmon, Spawning Habitat

**Objective**

To identify and document critically sensitive salmonoid fish habitat in the Western Newfoundland Model Forest.

**Description**

All of the watersheds in the Western Newfoundland Model Forest support salmonoid fish populations which, in many cases, have a significant recreational, social, and economic benefit. Habitat requirements of salmonoid fish are well defined, and it is generally accepted that the most critical and fragile environmental component is the spawning habitat (the gravel areas where salmonoid fish deposit their eggs). Protection of salmonoid spawning habitat is essential, as disruptions resulting from changes in water quality can cause mass mortality of eggs and newly hatched alevins.

The process of identifying critically sensitive fish habitat was spurred by the fact that protection measures generic to fish habitat do not adequately reflect the greater sensitivity of areas such as prime spawning habitat. In recognition of the importance of documenting and protecting these areas, this project was initiated to (i) determine a methodology to protect the productive capacity of critically sensitive salmonoid fish habitat, (ii) document the locations of critically sensitive fish habitat within the Western Newfoundland Model Forest, and (iii) provide recommendations for the level of protection needed, on the basis of specific site characteristics.

**Reports and Products**

**Documentation of Critically Sensitive Fish Habitat, Western Newfoundland Model Forest, 1996.** Gibbons, A; Pittman, A. 1996. Western Newfoundland Model Forest, Corner Brook, Newfoundland. WNMF: 8-304-001, 116p.