

CALA Participation on Fishery Management Zone (FMZ) 11 Advisory Council – Jan 2011 update

MNR has undertaken a process to review and, they hope, simplify regulations for the Fisheries Management Zones (FMZ's) across the province. This has already been underway in several zones, and the review of FMZ11, which includes the waters of CALA, was initiated in the fall of 2010. The process includes a public advisory council that is comprised of various communities of interest within the zone, and Jim Vance is representing CALA on the council. The council will recommend actions to MNR at a later stage, followed by public information and consultation sessions, after which MNR will make final recommendations for updating of regulations to the Provincial Government.

Zone 11 extends from Lake Nipissing to Latchford, and from Sudbury to Mattawa, and it is relatively small in comparison with other zones in the north. The committee has about 15 members including representation from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), Northern Ontario Tourist Operators (NOTO), and persons from the various major sportfish lakes of the zone. Members are expected to provide the general views of the organizations they represent, as opposed to only presenting their own pet peeves and ideas. MNR provides organizational and administrative support and provides expert knowledge from staff biologists and others, but does not have a voting position on the council.

To date there have been 3 meetings held in Sept, Oct and Nov, 2010, with the next meeting scheduled for Jan., 2011. After the initial formative meeting that outlined the mandate and objectives of the council and provided general background information on the fishery, the council has been provided by MNR biologists with various in-depth discussions including, at the latest meeting, detailed information on walleye biology and management. Similar updates on the other game fish will be given at future meetings.

At the most recent meeting, the council worked to develop a list of the main concerns for a sustainable fishery in FMZ11. This included development of a list of elements for a desired future state of fish populations and fisheries (such issues as maintaining the health of the fishery and maintenance of aquatic ecosystems); and a listing of obstacles to achieving desired fish populations (including such issues as conflicts with other uses –i.e. hydro, forestry, recreation etc – and capacity to enforce regulations).

The Advisory Council is working with MNR to finalize an FMZ11 Background Information Document that provides much valuable insight into the environmental and fishery particulars of the zone. This document, when finalized, will be made public and I will provide the Internet location to CALA members when it becomes available. In the meantime, if any CALA members have questions, concerns or ideas they want to discuss with me, please feel free to e-mail me at jvance501@hotmail.com.