

Natural. Valued. Protected.

Ecological Framework for Fisheries Management

Monitoring the Health of Ontario's Inland Lakes

Fact Sheet

Introduction

Recreational fishing is enjoyed by more than 1.3 million anglers and contributes nearly \$2.5 billion to the Ontario economy. The Ministry of Natural Resources works to maintain healthy fish stocks as they are an important environmental indicator. Healthy fish stocks ensure that present and future generations continue to enjoy high quality fishing and the associated social and economic benefits.

In 2004, the ministry introduced the Ecological Framework for Fisheries Management to enhance fisheries management in Ontario. This new framework has more public involvement, simplifies regulations, and helps the ministry better manage fisheries for the future. Increasing our understanding of inland lakes and their fisheries is an important part of this approach.

In 2008, the ministry began a long-term program to monitor the health of Ontario's lakes. The program will allow the ministry to better understand the current state of fish and other aquatic resources, identify stresses on these resources, and report on changes over time. The program is already providing information critical for managing our fisheries more effectively.

2008 Monitoring Highlights

Across Ontario 189 lakes were monitored – 55 in the south, 54 in the northeast and 80 in the northwest.

Fish were sampled to estimate abundance and describe such characteristics as length and weight.

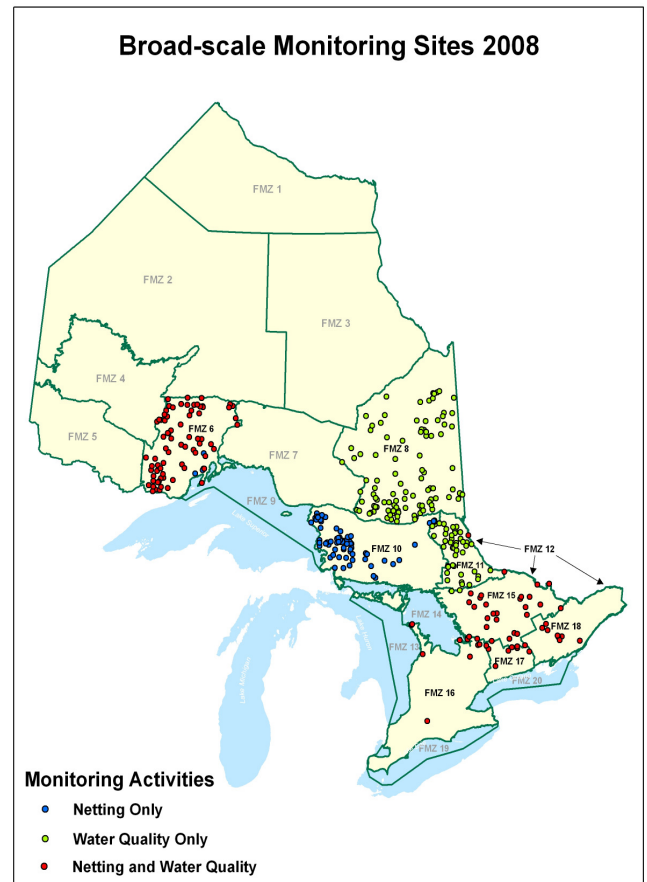
Fish were also tested for contaminants. The results of the testing provided information for 65 new lakes for the 2009/10 *Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish*.

Water temperatures, oxygen levels, and clarity were recorded, and samples from about 225 lakes were sent to the Ministry of the Environment for water quality analysis.

178 lakes were examined for invasive species such as spiny waterflea and rock bass. Invasive species were found in a number of new lakes.

Aerial surveys were used to estimate summer fishing pressure by counting boats on 80 lakes in the northwest and 26 lakes in the south.

For more information, visit ontario.ca/fishing.



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