



Regaining Control Of Our Traditional Fisheries

On April 17th around 40 people from Listuguj gathered at the Bingo Hall to talk about salmon. This was part of the series of public meetings where the Salmon Fishery Advisory Committee (SFAC) presented the progress of their work. This committee brings together volunteers community members, technical advisors, resource people, Elders, youth and leadership and was created to act in the capacity of advisors to the Chief and Council.



Joe Wilmot facilitated the last meeting on salmon fishing

The Salmon Management Project – also known as the Plamu Project – has been underway since December 2011. The short-term objective of this Project is to update the harvesting component of the management plan in time for the upcoming salmon season that will start on June 06.

The long-term objective of the Plamu Project is to review the management activities related to the salmon fishery. Further, the committee, acting in its advisory role, will submit recommendations to Chief and Council to improve the management of the salmon fishery.

The public meeting included opening remarks from Chief Allison Metallic, presentation of the LMG Operational Plan 2012 by Billy Moffat where he talked about the fishing regulations and the Ranger Program. Dr. Fred Metallic, Project Lead and an active fisherman himself, presented a report on the progress of the work that the Salmon Fishery Advisory Committee is leading

There were two proposed projects

submitted to the public. The first one is to enhance the Scientific Research Program: we would collect harvesting data from our fishing effort in order to determine the health and abundance of the salmon. This data would be for the exclusive use of the LMG. As well, the intent of this work is to recognize the Mi'gmaq traditional knowledge of the

salmon.

The second proposed project is a communal fishing effort. This project would assign specific fishing days to catch a certain quantity of salmon for distribution to elders, Powwow committee and other communal activities. This will be supplemented by salmon donated from fishers and those seized by the Rangers. All the salmon would be stored in one location and prepared for distribution by Pam Isaac and her team. Every year the fish seized by the Rangers are distributed to Elders without reaching all of them. This year, the hope is that through the Plamu Project we will coordinate our effort and continue our ancestral practice of communal responsibility so that we continue to share the benefit from the fishery.

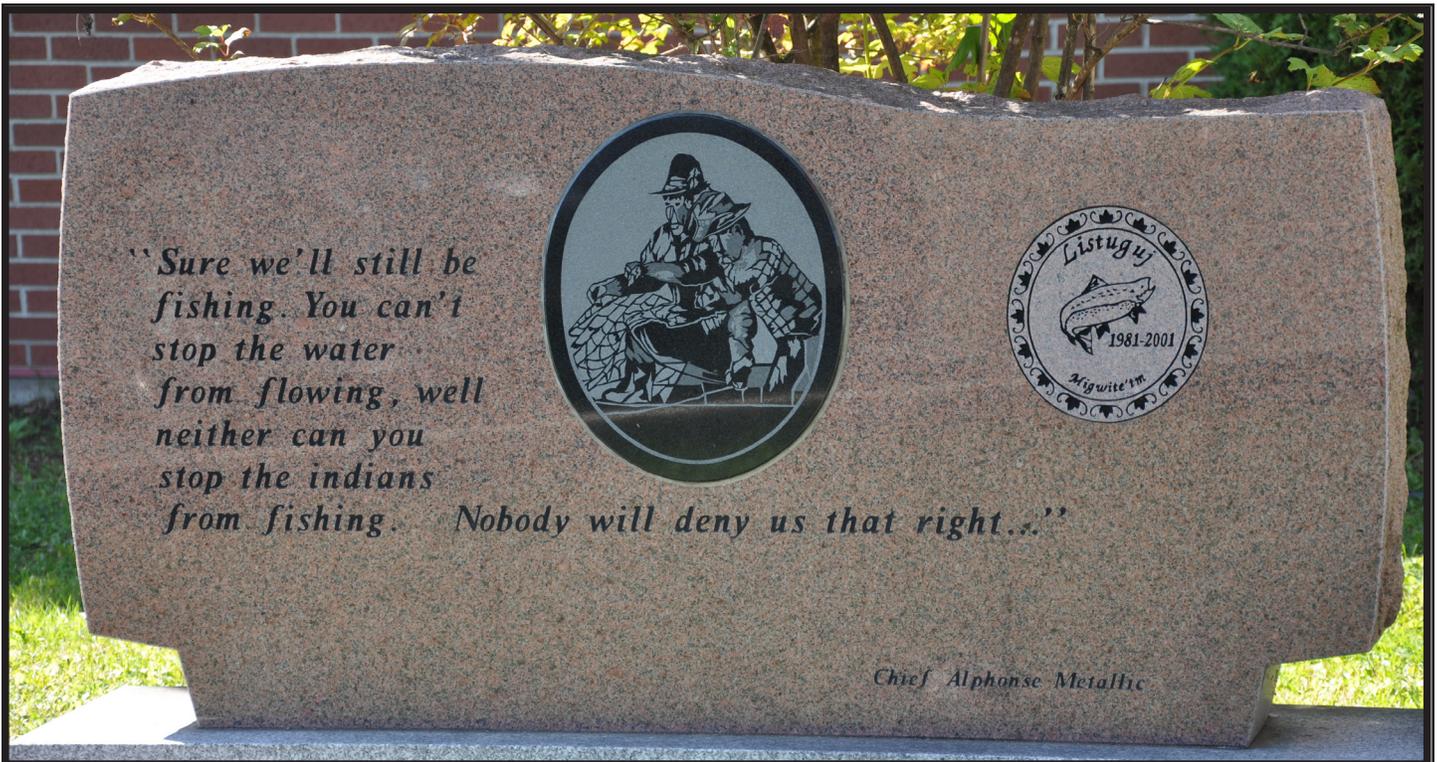
The Listuguj Salmon Season

Start: June 6, 2012.

End: July 26, 2012.

**The schedule will start on:
Wednesday 16h00 and end
on Sunday 08h00.**

Off days will be Mondays and Tuesdays.



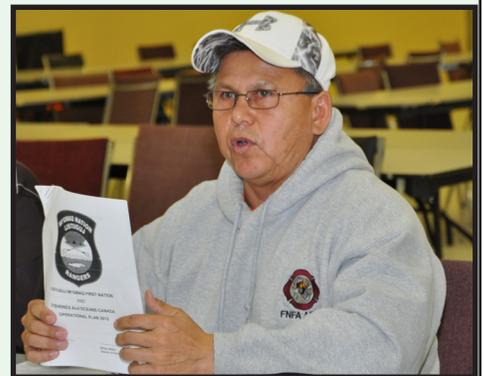
The Harvesting Plan

In 1995, Listuguj enacted the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation Law on Fisheries and Fishing. Through this law, we asserted our inherent right to harvest and manage the salmon fishery within our territorial waters.

This Law has not been revisited since 1995. The Salmon Fishery Advisory Committee indicated that there are certain provisions in the yearly Operational Plan that need to be reviewed. The laws, policies, regulations, and vision for the Listuguj salmon fishery need to reflect the interests of Mi'gmaq today and the need to protect the salmon for future generations. There is a need to understand the fishery from our perspective as Mi'gmaq, including the cultural, spiritual, ceremonial and economic aspects.

At the April public meeting, community members, fishers and non-fishers took the opportunity to comment on the current Plan, pointing out changes that need to be integrated into this year's fishing plan. The public meeting was a needed dialogue. The 1995 Mi'gmaq Fishing Law requires dialogue with community, however, until recently, this has not been fully implemented.

Today, as we are updating our plans for the salmon fishery, we need to recognize and respect our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights to harvest and manage the salmon. As stated by the Elders at a community meeting, "We need to be aware of what the community's vision is for the fishery. We need to take into account the health of the salmon so that future



generations will continue to benefit from the salmon fishery."

More meetings will be held during the year so that the LMG can continue to share information about the Plamu Project, and also to receive guidance from community members about the work.



The following (see page 3) is a list of general recommendations based on the work conducted to date by the S.A.F.C.. These recommendations, in no specific order, pertain to the harvesting component, the management, and the work that will be required by the committee. These recommendations were presented and accepted by the Chief and Council at a duly convened meeting held on April 19, 2012.

General Recommendations from the S.F.A.C.

#1

Recommended that the LMG develop a catch-monitoring plan for our fishery. The purpose of this monitoring is to assist the LMG in determining the health and abundance of the salmon. We need to know how many fish are being caught in comparison to how many are entering the river (including the condition of the salmon along with the river).

– *Scientific research technicians will monitor the harvesting activities for the 2012 season.*

#2

Recommended that the rangers improve and enhance their monitoring of the fishery. We need to know the exact location of nets, the number of nets, and where fishermen are exerting the greatest fishing effort. There is a recommendation that we use GPS technology to track our fishing activity.

- *Information gathered by the monitors (quantitative and qualitative) along with data collected through the use of GPS technology will allow us to better assess the impact of our fishing effort and maybe determine whether or not we are meeting our conservation targets.*

#3

Recommended that the data collected from any monitoring activities remain within the control of the LMG and be used only for LMG's management development purposes.

#4

Recommended that the updated Listuguj Salmon Plan have an economic development component specifically geared for fishermen.

#5

Recommended that the LMG organize and coordinate a Community Fishery Pilot Project. There is an identified need to provide more salmon at community events and to Elders. Although rangers confiscate salmon from nets found in water after 8 a.m. or on Mondays or Tuesday, the amount of salmon confiscated and distributed to Elders and organizations does not meet the food, social and ceremonial needs of our community. The community fishery would allow volunteer fisherman to fish for our Elders, as well as provide much needed salmon for community events.

#6

Recommended that the LMG develop a protocol agreement with watershed River managers. The protocol would identify the procedures by which Listuguj fishermen would access the fishery up river and increase awareness about our Mi'gmaq Rights to fish salmon within the watershed.

#7

Recommended that the LMG better position itself when the time comes to re-negotiate our contractual agreements with government. (These agreements will be re-negotiated in 2013 and 2014.)

– *We need to determine whether these agreements will affect our ability to exercise and implement our rights to not only harvest but to manage and govern the fishery in the future.*

#8

Recommended that the updated plan, and the implementation of the plan, protect our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.



Members of the Salmon Fishery Advisory Committee

- Chief Allison Metallic LMG
- Brenda Gideon Miller LMG Council Liaison
- Dean Vicaire LMG Council Liaison
- Delphine Metallic LMG Council Liaison
- Kevin Methot LMG Council Liaison/Active Fisher
- Loni Vicaire LMG Administrative Assistant
- Joe Wilmot LMG Education
- William Moffat Listuguj Police Department
- Isaac Metallic Elder/Active Fisher
- Madeleine G. Dovauo Elder
- Peter Metallic Listuguj Rangers
- Pamela Isaac LMG Scientific Research
- Harvey Martin LMG Police/Active Fisher
- Serge Gray Youth/Active Fisher
- Francis Sorbey LMG Scientific Research/ Active Fisher
- Tim Dedam-Sorbey LMG Technical Advisor/ Active Fisher

**For more information contact:
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Listuguj Salmon Fishery

Working towards a Salmon Management Plan for the Restigouche River Estuary and Watershed

Our History – Mi'gmaq Governance and Law

- We have been fishing in the waters of our territory for thousands of years.
- We established laws and regulations for the management of natural resources in our territory.
- We signed treaties, which affirmed our right to mutually benefit from the resources.
- Supreme Court Rulings recognize and affirm our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.
- Our right to govern, manage and harvest natural resources has never been extinguished...however Canada and Quebec have different views on Mi'gmaq rights!

Overview of the Salmon Fishery (*)

- 1960s - Fishing at night “illegally”
- 1970s - Agreement signed with Government
- 1980s - Conflict (jurisdictional) over the fishery
- 1990s - Development of our own Mi'gmaq Laws
- 2000 - Commercial Fishery established in Listuguj
- Today - Reviewing our plans for the salmon

Our Mi'gmaq Fishing Law

On May 19, 1993 the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation took over the management of the salmon fishery in the Restigouche River.

We took over the management of the river by passing, implementing, and enforcing a law. This law is not a by-law of the Indian Act.

The law is a Mi'gmaq Law – it was “an assertion and manifestation of the nation's right to fish and to govern its people, lands, and waters in its own ways

(*) - 1922 Canadian government gave Quebec jurisdiction over Atlantic salmon in Quebec waters

1972 Commercial fishing is banned in Chaleur Bay.

1970 Despite Conservation agreements, Listuguj citizens are charged with illegal fishing or illegally selling, up until 1992.

1990 Sparrow, FSC right to fish over other resource users once conservation goals are met.

1993 Mi'gmaq law passed, rangers sworn in, quebec pulls funding out. In 1995 plan is accepted and funding restored.

1995 ASF gives award to Listuguj for having best managed river system.

Constitution 1982
Simon 1985
Sparrow 1992
Marshall 1999
Haida Taku 2004
Alhousalt 2009.

Looking back at the fishery, there have been a lot of changes over the past fifty years. In Listuguj, we have fought hard for our right to harvest and also to govern our fisheries according to our laws. Today, we are reviewing the way the salmon fishery is being governed (that is our laws and management practices).