

Fish Futures Inc.

Conservation and Enhancement
of Freshwater Fisheries



www.fishfutures.net

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Fish News

LAKE STURGEON ENDANGERED SPECIES REPORT



Also in this Issue:

Xtreme Banquet - Namao News - Summer Events

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**In
This Issue**

Fish Festival..... 2
 Lake Sturgeon Report..... 3
 What is Fish Futures?..... 4
 Quick Strikes..... 4

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**SPRING BANQUET 2005
X**TREMELY SUCCESSFUL****

The record crowd at this year's Xtreme Banquet raised over \$50,000 for the conservation and enhancement of Manitoba's fisheries resource. Thank you to the volunteer members of the 2005 Banquet Committee: John Armitage, George Bones, Paul Fia, Clancy Hildebrand, Jerry Kruczek, Andre Lambert, Don Lamont, Tom MacNair, Duncan Ross, Rob Sproule, Bob Williams (Chairman), and Stephen Yuffe.

The Committee will use a portion of the Banquet's proceeds to work in partnership with the government to construct a deck area at the Whiteshell Fish Hatchery. The proposed deck will be located opposite the fish rearing ponds, and will be cantilevered out over the river to serve as a meeting place and viewing platform. Interpretive signage will explain the habitat in the Whiteshell River, and also identify the different species of fish. Fish Futures also has a number of projects planned this year. Look for a project report in the next issue of *Fish News*.



Appreciation Award to Budd's Gunisao Lake Lodge

Above, Bob Williams presents Dusty Budd with the Appreciation Award. Budd's Gunisao Lake Lodge has supported Fish Futures by donating trips to the Banquet auction for each of the past sixteen years.

These trips consistently demand top dollar, because Gunisao Lake is one of the best trophy walleye fisheries in Manitoba. The Budd's were one of the first to actively manage the resource by promoting catch and release and slot limits. Our sincere thanks to Dr. Jim and the Budd family for attending the banquet and being so generous in their support of Manitoba's fishery.

MANITOBA'S LAKE STURGEON ENDANGERED

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) exists to provide Canadians and their governments with advice regarding the status of wild species that are nationally at risk of extinction or extirpation. On May 6th, 2005, the Committee reported:

“The Lake Sturgeon was assessed as Endangered in western Canada and as Special Concern in the eastern parts of its range. This species has been affected throughout most of its range by a variety of threats including historical over-harvest and habitat loss from the construction and operation of dams.”

“The Western Canadian populations of Lake Sturgeon have experienced an overall decline estimated to be at least 77% in the latter decades of the twentieth-century due to exploitation, and habitat loss and degradation related to dams, impoundments and changes in patterns of water use.”

“There are limited population data available for Lake Sturgeon in the southern Hudson Bay and James Bay areas. There have been declines in habitat, and possibly populations decline related to exploitation and the multitude of dams. The increased access to relatively unimpacted populations, and the likelihood of increased hydroelectric development in some areas are causes for concern.”

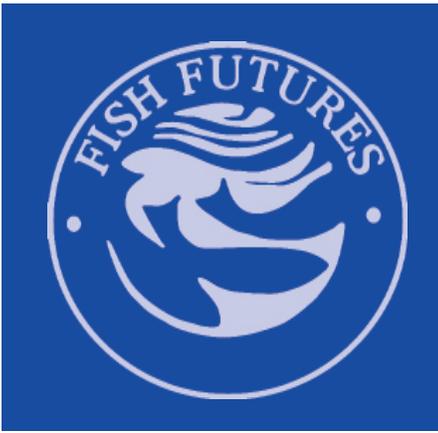
In Manitoba, the Lake Sturgeon is found primarily in the Nelson, Saskatchewan, and Winnipeg rivers. They are also present in some of the east-side Lake Winnipeg tributaries, and to a lesser degree, in the Red and Assiniboine rivers and Lake Winnipeg. This recommendation could change how people interact with the Lake Sturgeon's environment in areas such as hydroelectric and industrial development, commercial and sport fishing, agriculture practices, and commercial and residential development.

A twelve to eighteen month public consultation process will take place before the Lake Sturgeon is officially listed as endangered by the Federal Environment Minister. Following the Minister's decision, it could take another year before the recovery plan is completed.

This assessment is an important step towards the conservation and enhancement of the Lake Sturgeon resource in Canada. Please look for further updates on this process in future issues of “*Fish News*”.



Jim Beyette, Walt Lysack, and Ray Shewfelt tag and release this lake sturgeon as part of Manitoba Fisheries ongoing programs on the Winnipeg River.



*"Working Today
for Tomorrow's Fisheries Resource"*

What is Fish Futures Inc.?

Fish Futures Inc. is a non-profit, registered charitable organization dedicated to the conservation and enhancement of freshwater fisheries through:

- Sponsorship, development and encouragement of research projects.
- Habitat preservation, enhancement and management projects.
- Public education to increase awareness of the value of freshwater fisheries and the need for conservation and enhancement of fish stocks and habitat.

Fish Futures is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of members of the public and representatives of government, industry and the scientific community.

For more information about Fish Futures Inc. please contact us at:

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Quick Strikes

The Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium now owns the *Namao*

This former Coast Guard vessel is used to educate students and to conduct research on Lake Winnipeg. With private ownership, the Consortium should now have greater access to research funding, especially for long-term projects. Fish Futures is a supporter of the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium. We have contributed to the *Namao* and its research activities for a number of years.

Congratulations to Ken Stewart and Doug Watkinson

Their book, *The Freshwater Fishes of Manitoba*, won two Manitoba Writers and Publishers Guild awards for 2004. It received the Best Illustrated Book of the Year, and the Mary Scorer Prize for Best Book of the Year by a Manitoba Publisher. Ken has been a volunteer member of the Board of Directors for Fish Futures for many years, and he serves as the Board's scientific advisor.

The Winnipeg Fish Festival

This annual event will be held July 9th at the Forks. There will activity stations on fish identification, fish habitat, and conservation, and as always, plenty of fun, prizes, and surprises. Don't miss this free event for the whole family.

The Fall Urban Fishing Derby

This one-day event showcases Winnipeg's recreational fishery. The derby provides an opportunity for families to participate in a program that promotes angling into the fall season. This year's event will be held September 10, 2005 along the Red River walkway at The Forks between 10:00 am and 3:30 pm. Admission is free.

Ask The Professor

Do you have questions about fish biology or fish habitat? Your questions will be answered in upcoming issues of *Fish News*. Please e-mail AskTheProfessor@shaw.ca.