



EGBSC Update 2008-05

2008 Lake Stewardship Workshop

Theme: State of the Fishery Resource; canaries in our lakes.

On June 26, 2008, the Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council (EGBSC) in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources held its annual Lake Stewardship Workshop at the Bobby Orr Community Centre in Parry Sound. The theme of this year's workshop was the *State of the Fishery Resource* and how fisheries act as indicators of ecosystem health – or canaries in our lakes.

Target audience for the workshop consisted of representatives from cottage associations, municipalities, First Nations and any group or individuals who have an interest in the fishery resource. Over 50 representatives from more than 20 organizations were in attendance. The intention of the workshop is for representatives to relay the stewardship messages presented, to their own association or constituent members.



Lake Huron Conservation Officer – Jim McMullen, addressing attendees at the 2008 Lake Stewardship Workshop

The workshop included presentations by:

- Karl Schiefer, professional ecologist and private consultant who provide a historical and present-day perspective of a depressed fishery resource and mounting human pressures upon it.
- Arunas Liskauskas, Management Biologist with the Upper Great Lakes Management Unit – Lake Huron Office. Arunas spoke on the changing fish community structure of Georgian Bay; a historical and contemporary review of the commercial fish industry; state of the recreational fishery and the changing ecology of Georgian Bay.
- Steve Scholten, Parry Sound District Fisheries Biologist. Steve addressed the direction of fisheries management in Ontario pursuant to the Ministry's strategic document: *An Ecological Framework for Fisheries Management in Ontario*. The three pillars of the framework include: regulations (FMZ management units, standardized regulatory options, a coordinated review/approval process and simplification/streamlining of regulations), state of the resource reporting and stewardship (FMZ councils to advise the Ministry).
- Lake Huron Conservation Officer, Jim McMullen gave a short presentation on the Lake Huron and Georgian Bay enforcement program. This was followed by a lengthy and lively question and answer period. Jim's timeslot provided the best audience-speaker interaction of the day with great discussion of issues and concerns expressed by those in attendance as well as enforcement personnel.
- Eric McIntyre, Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council Coordinator wrapped-up the session with some thoughts on what the public can do to help improve the state of the fishery resource. Items touched upon on a personal or local level included: public engagement and involvement, maintaining or improving environmental quality, guarding against exotic species, catch-and-release fishing, reporting illegal activities and projects for enhancing fish habitat.

Others participating in the event with information booths included: Erin Hamlyn (OFAH / EGBSC and GBBR partnership) with information on invasive species; Kelly Eggers of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Cate Ahrens of the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve (GBBR).

The Council also wishes to express a sincere thank-you to Karen Buck of the Clear Lake Association for making our workshop a 'waste-free' event; a great example of local stewardship and individual initiative!

The EGBSC looks forward to its fourth annual workshop in 2009. If you would like to be on the distribution list of invitees, please contact Eric McIntyre (information below).

For further information on the workshop, visit the website of the EGBSC at www.helpourfisheries.com. For information on any of the initiatives of the EGBSC, please contact Eric McIntyre, Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Coordinator, at 773-4218 or Eric.McIntyre@Ontario.ca.