



NBWF P.O. Box 549 Moncton NB E1B 8L9

Media Release

Release date September 14, 2016

Angler Creel Census Reports

Now this year's angling season is coming to a close, New Brunswick Wildlife Federation President Charles LeBlanc urges all anglers to complete their creel census reports for 2016.

Mr. LeBlanc said “ These reports are very important for the management of our fisheries. Without good data it is difficult to manage our resources.” He also noted the New Brunswickers have been historically poor reporters, and biologists have to rely on old numbers in their attempt to put management plans in place. Good information from the creel censuses is important so our fish populations can be well managed.

The websites for the Department of Energy and Resource Development creel census sites are:

English - <http://dnr-mrn.gnb.ca/AnglingRecord/?lang=e>

French - <http://dnr-mrn.gnb.ca/AnglingRecord/Default.aspx>

Your angling license number and email address will be required to report there.

The websites for the Federal Department of Fisheries striped bass creel survey are:

English - <http://www.inter.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Gulf/FAM/Recreational-Fisheries/Creel-Census>

French - <http://www.inter.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Gulf/GPA/Peches-recreatives/Releve-Prise>

Fred Wheaton, long time Chair of the Federation's Fisheries Committee, said "It is particularly important that anglers report their angling activities for striped bass as they were on a serious decline some 30 years ago. NBWF worked very hard with DFO to stop this decline and this resulted in the current high populations that we are now seeing." Mr. Wheaton also said that while some are saying striped bass are impacting on salmon smolt, that is not borne out by scientific studies to date. Stomach content analyses of bass near their spawning areas have been done for three years and show the stomachs are almost all empty, with those that are not, having few smolt in them. He also noted it may be that more science has to be done, particularly further down the Miramichi estuary near the Gulf of St. Lawrence. To date we cannot blame striped bass for the decline of salmon. "It is high seas mortality, not striped bass or anglers, that is the cause of low salmon populations" he said.

Mr. Wheaton also urges anglers to complete the on line creel census reports. That information is critical to resource managers he said.

President LeBlanc also pointed out that while resident salmon license numbers are slightly up from 2015, they are well below historical averages of some 20,000 per year. He noted regular salmon and live release license this year were 9,716 to the end of August, compared to 8,620 for 2015. He also noted the rivers are void of anglers. Resident anglers are staying away from the river, both because of the low warm water, few returning salmon and the mandatory release of all salmon including grilse (small salmon). He said while the Federation supports the hook and release concept, we also believe in the wise use of our natural resources. That is particularly so for grilse that are mostly male and do not contribute eggs for spawning. We have taken the position that we should return to the 2014 regulations and that anglers should have the personal option of retaining grilse on the Main Southwest Miramichi and the Restigouche where we believe populations warrant this measure.

The New Brunswick Wildlife Federation has been representing outdoors people from around the province since 1924.

Thank you

Charlie LeBlanc

NBWF President

cleblan618@rogers.com

phone 506-866-4345