

## Stocking as a Management Tool Policy

**Policy No:** 10-05

**Policy Title:** Stocking as a Management Tool

**Policy Statement:** Stocking has a very limited role in Restoring Healthy Fish Populations.

### Principles Applied:

- Priority is given to native, naturally reproducing species within their natural habitats and range;
- Existing naturalized, non-native populations hold significant social value and should be managed as fisheries where they currently exist;
- Development of new fisheries should only use naturalized stocks and be implemented where there is evidence that no social and/or ecological conflicts exist;
- Transfer of wild fish is preferred when little to no risk is posed to either the donor population or receiving waterbody;
- If hatchery stocking is required, the least genetically divergent stock should be used; and
- Restoring/ protecting habitat is the most cost effective and ecologically sound management approach.

### Policy Rationale and Considerations:

#### Stocking or Reintroduction of Native Species

- Where native fish populations already exist, habitat rehabilitation and modified harvest regulations are preferred for the rehabilitation of these native species.
- Where population rehabilitation is the goal and no remnant population exists, an assessment is necessary to determine if conditions are conducive for the proposed species before stocking or re-introduction is initiated.
- Hatchery strains should not be considered for supplemental stocking for rehabilitation; rather genetically similar populations of the specific native

species that are geographically proximate should be considered in order to maintain regional/watershed genetic integrity and health.

#### Stocking or Reintroduction of Non-Native Species

- Supplemental stocking of an existing naturalized populations should include a monitoring program to quantify success and establish effective conditions, densities and release locations for future stocking and future projects.
- Establishment of new fisheries or expansion of existing fisheries will only be supported where there is no negative impact on native species or established naturalized species.

#### General Considerations

- In all cases a pre-stocking assessment needs to be completed.
- In all cases, details including numbers of individuals, source, time of year, transport conditions, stocking densities and stocking locations should be professionally evaluated and recorded.
- All stocking programs require permits.
- Stocking native and non-native species in isolated put-and-take locations can be an effective management tool to divert pressure from stressed native and naturalized fisheries.

#### Objectives of Policy Statement:

The intent of the policy is to clearly demonstrate Freshwater Conservation Canada priorities to native, naturally reproducing fish populations and the habitats that sustain them. The policy also recognizes the value of naturalized fish populations where they do not pose a major threat to native fish populations.

#### Implications to Organization:

This policy fits within the intent and direction of Freshwater Conservation Canada's mandate and to the policy statements on Habitat Conservation and Rehabilitation and Fish Species Management.

#### Delivery:

This policy is to be delivered through all our day-to-day dealings through our Chapters and our programs.

#### Supporting Information:

A Position Statement with supporting information has been prepared by S. D'Amelio 09/09/2004.

Effective Date: December 13, 2010

Last Board Approval Date: August 14, 2017