

Aboriginal Fishery Guardian Program

Helps communities build the technical capacity to manage their own food, social and ceremonial fisheries by hiring one or more fishery guardians.

Fishery Guardian

Technical expert designated under the *Fisheries Act*

- 'Field' activities: stock assessments and habitat management
- Collect data: fisheries, habitat and/or aquatic resources
- Monitor catch and fishing activities
- Enforce rules set for fishing and any other *Fisheries Act* violations
- Community engagement and education activities

Given certain enforcement powers under authority of the *Fisheries Act*

- Seize small items that are part of a fishery offence (e.g., fishing nets, rods, and small quantities of fish)
- Collect, gather and give evidence related to a violation (e.g., observe, record and report)

Employed by, and report to, First Nation or Indigenous organization

- Annual work plan set in Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy agreement
- May work with Fishery Officers to do joint patrols or share training opportunities and equipment
- May work with other federal or provincial officials (e.g., conservation officers, police officers)

Training

- To carry out duties and learn defense tactics

90 Indigenous Fishery Guardians in 25 communities across Canada



First Nations Fisheries Council Focus Group
Four-pronged model: multi-jurisdictional, integrated, accredited, and flexible

Reviews of the Aboriginal Fishery Guardian Program

1999 National Review Recommendations

- Clear program objectives
- More flexibility in guardian level of authority (e.g. cross-delegation of authorities)
- Supervision, control and support standards
- Training standards and methods
- Coordination between enforcement and technical roles

2007 Evaluation Recommendations

- Program guidelines to clearly identify roles and responsibilities, objectives and expected results

2012 Conservation and Protection Review Results

- Began developing document to articulate objectives and roles
- Began exploring potential partnerships and options for local training
- Completed two pilot projects

2016 Compliance and Enforcement Evaluation Recommendations

- Assess if guardians could expand into other regions to protect fish stocks and habitat; especially, inland