

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Reports of Tampering with Lawful Fishing Nets

August 19, 2020 – Nipissing First Nation (NFN) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) have been notified of multiple incidents of tampering with commercial gill nets in Lake Nipissing, and remind recreational and commercial fishers of their rights and responsibilities related to the fishery we share.

Tampering with gill nets is an offence

It is an offence under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* to interfere with, or tamper with, gillnets set for commercial or scientific use. If you observe anyone tampering with commercial fishing gear, please report it immediately to one of the following agencies:

- NFN Natural Resources Office: 705-753-2050
- MNRF Tips Line: 1-877-847-7667
- Crime Stoppers: 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or online at nearthcrimestoppers.com

Enforcement officers respond quickly to reports of nets that have been lost, abandoned or tampered with. Commercial fishers are encouraged to clearly mark their nets in order to minimize tampering and waste.

Tampering with nets is not only an offence, it wastes fish that would otherwise be harvested responsibly. Again, we ask anyone who sees this activity occurring to contact NFN, MNRF or Crime Stoppers to report it.

Commercial fishing is an inherent and treaty-protected right

NFN is committed to principles of sustainability and the protection of resources while maintaining the practice of our rights in a responsible way. We regulate our own fishery through assessments, active monitoring, data exchange and harvest reporting, and we work with the MNRF to enforce our *Fisheries Law*.

NFN members have inherent and treaty-protected rights to commercially fish the waters of Lake Nipissing, as we have done since time immemorial. Ontario recognizes NFN's *Gichi-Naaknigewin* (constitution) and *Fisheries Law*, a first for the province. This recognition supports a new cooperative approach to fisheries management and nation-to-nation relationship building that has shown success over the past five years, largely through the continued signs of improvement in the Lake Nipissing walleye population.

NFN's Chief and Council continue to affirm the inherent and treaty-protected rights of the NFN membership, and are committed to maintaining safe harvest levels within our commercial fishery, consistent with Aboriginal and treaty harvesting rights.

Enforcement

NFN enforcement officers conduct joint patrols with MNRF officers to monitor for compliance with both the *NFN Fisheries Law* and with provincially regulated recreational fishers, and to continue to promote responsible, sustainable and safe recreational and commercial fishing practices.

NFN's leadership in the management of the commercial fishery on Lake Nipissing is vital to its long-term health and sustainability. We all need to do our part to ensure that we can continue to enjoy the resources that Lake Nipissing provides for all of us, for generations to come.

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Learn more about the cooperative work between NFN and the MNRF here:

[Lake Nipissing Memorandum of Understanding Update: 2019-2020](#)

More Resources:

[Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act](#)

[NFN's Fisheries Law](#)

[Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary](#)

[Safe Boating Guide](#)

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