



Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Activities Update

North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium Meeting
2-3 November 2016

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Overview

Recovery planning

- SARA documents
- Critical habitat

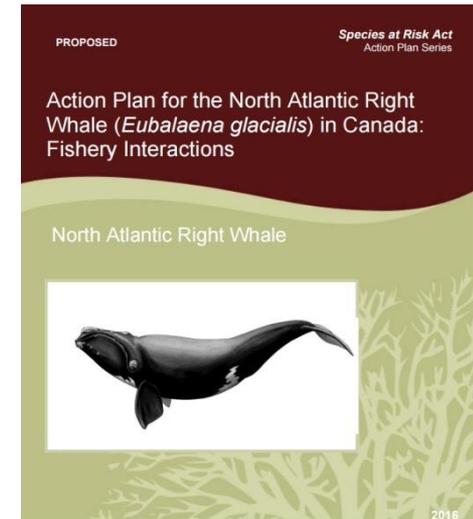
Management and mitigation

- Fishery Interactions
- Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Planning
- Monitoring and Incident Response



SARA Documents

- Right whale Endangered – *Species At Risk Act (SARA)*
- SARA Recovery Strategy published 2009, amended 2014
- Action Plans:
 - I. Fishery interactions – Public comment period, 17 Aug – 17 Oct 2016; final in preparation
 - II. Other threats – stakeholder workshop and survey January 2016; draft in preparation



<http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca>



5-year report on Recovery Strategy implementation (2009-2014)

- Published October 2016
- Activities undertaken in Canada by DFO & other organizations
- Mixed progress on 6 objectives & 20 performance indicators
- Looking ahead:
 - More research on NARW distribution & habitat use e.g. GoSL, Scotian Shelf
 - Measures to reduce entanglement risk
 - Understand & reduce effects of noise and other identified threats
- Under SARA, requirement to publish report every 5 years; next 2015-2020



Critical Habitat

- Identified in 2009 Recovery Strategy: Grand Manan Basin, Roseway Basin
- Functions identified:
 - Adult foraging and feeding
 - Calf nursing and rearing
 - Socializing and resting
- Protection order posted May 2016 for public comment
- Destruction of critical habitat is prohibited
- Supplements protection in place – e.g. *Fisheries Act, Canada Shipping Act, Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*
- Research underway to understand suitable habitat in other areas



Management & Mitigation: Fishery Interactions

DFO multi-sector working group (Maritimes Region)

- Identify measures to reduce risk of injury and mortality from fishery interactions
- Support development and implementation of management strategies to reduce risk of right whale - fishing gear interactions
- Work with commercial fishery Advisory Committees to collect information on:
 - Gear configuration
 - Voluntary Standard Practices (VSPs) – adopted by several fixed-gear fisheries



Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Planning

- DFO - environmental response coordination for Maritimes Region
- CANUSLANT (Canada-US Coast Guard Joint Area Response Plan)
- Area Response Plans for pilot areas of Bay of Fundy, Chedabucto Bay and St. Lawrence Seaway



Surveillance and Monitoring

- DFO Conservation & Protection surveillance flights and vessel patrols document marine mammals observed; initiate response if required
- Data provided to DFO Atlantic Canada whale sightings database & NOAA
- Marine mammal flights and vessels directed for right whales when looking for active entanglements



Incident Response

DFO Conservation & Protection Fishery Officers

- All FOs are trained in species ID, and support role protocols for incident response
- Air and water surveillance involved in response through Resource Management coordination
- Some FOs across the region trained in response and support techniques for stranded, entrapped, entangled animals
- DFO relies on specially trained experts to lead large whale disentanglement response
- Collaboration with U.S. partners



Incident Response

National Marine Mammal Response Program (MMRP)

- Supports partner organizations and regional networks involved in marine mammal incident responses on all coasts including:
 - Track and respond to marine mammal entanglements, strandings (dead & live), ship strikes, contaminated animals (oiled), and other threats; and,
 - Quantify threats affecting marine mammal species, with a focus on species assessed as at risk
- Active and regular coordination between DFO regions to ensure consistent delivery of program in regions



NARW Incidents Maritimes Region 2016

- 1) Successful disentanglement – FDR (#4057)- Campobello Whale Rescue Team
 - Aug. 13th near Grand Manan; removed >300' of ½" and 5/8" (7/16" and 9/16" ??) line and 2 round polyform buoys from severely entangled large NARW; gear analysed – to be archived

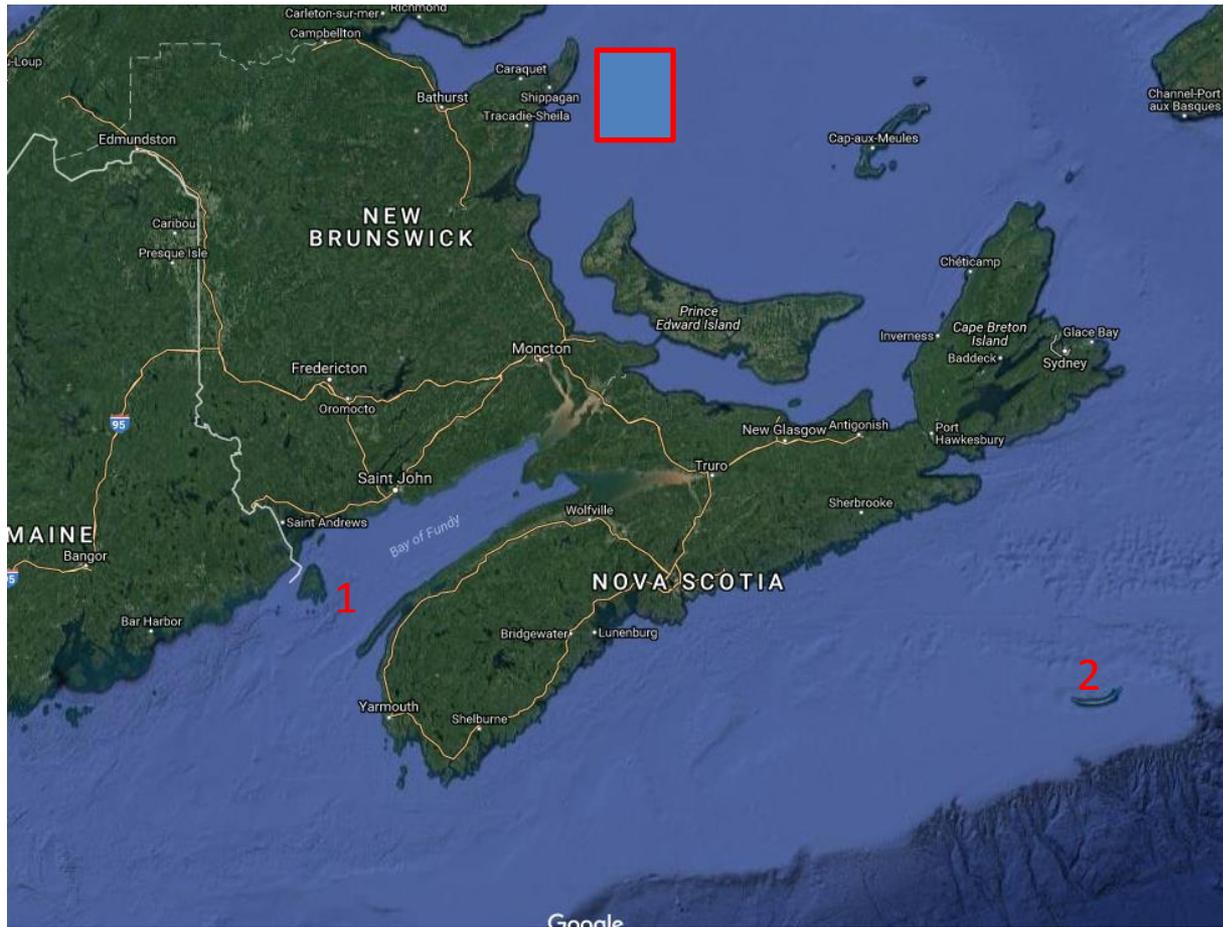
- 2) Mortality of entangled NARW found on Sable Island
 - Aug. 31st ; very poor condition; line and 2 buoys to be collected, analysed and archived

- 3) Gear shed without assistance
 - Aug. 16th near Barrington N.S.; Fishery Officers responded to call; appeared to be smaller line and single buoy suggesting lobster gear

- 4) Single observation of entangled NARW by whale watching vessel
 - Aug. 28th near Long Island N.S.; rope with no visible buoy
 - Fishery Officers responded, unable to relocate after 4 hour search

Incidents 1 and 2

- Considered snow crab fishing gear with the same gear markings
- Originating in the general area of Miscou Bank in June 2016



Incidents 3 and 4

