

Napu'saqnuk

(Na-Boo-Sa-Hanook)

ST. MARY'S RIVER

DID YOU KNOW?

- Napu'saqnuk is one of the most natural watersheds in Nova Scotia, with very little development, no dams impeding fish passage, and no aquatic invasive species.
- It provides important habitat for the Southern Upland Atlantic Salmon population and is one of two rivers used by DFO to monitor this population.
- Napu'saqnuk provides habitat for some culturally significant species including American Eel and Atlantic Salmon.
- Mi'kmaq historically used this river for travel, fishing, hunting and living.
- The river is core habitat for legally protected species at risk: Brook Floater and Wood Turtle.
- Many organizations, individuals, locals and the Mi'kmaq are coming together and working hard to restore and conserve Napu'saqnuk.

If you have knowledge, stories or information (current and historical) of the Napu'saqnuk area that you would like to share, or a general interest in this initiative please email us at: DFO.MAREP-EPMAR.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

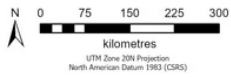
Credit: Scott Leslie



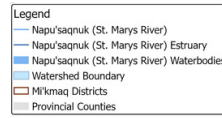
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*Please note: Mi'kmaq district boundaries represented in this map are based on best available knowledge.



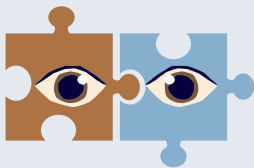
The **St. Mary's River** is approximately 200 km from Kijipuktuk (Halifax). The entire watershed and estuary, contained within the Eskikewa'kik district of Mi'kma'ki, are being considered as part of an **Ecologically Significant Area (ESA)** case study for the area.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is exploring the potential of an ESA for Napu'saqnuq (the St. Mary's River) in collaboration with the Mi'kmaq and other partners. This is among the first of its kind in Canada.



What could an ESA mean for Napu'saqnuq?

- An ESA, made under Canada's *Fisheries Act*, is a new way to **protect important areas for fish**, like the St. Mary's River, which is home to a variety of fish and species at risk.
- It is not expected that an ESA would impact Mi'kmaq rights or limit access to aquatic resources, but the Department is hoping to learn more as we continue to work with the Mi'kmaq.
- ESAs are focused on fish habitat protection, including riparian zones (with legal protections focused on Crown Land).
- Non-aquatic cultural and medicinal species may indirectly be protected.
- If an ESA were to be established for Napu'saqnuq, most current uses would continue.
- Some activities that have the potential to impact fish or fish habitat may be restricted or effectively prohibited (mainly industrial scale activities), depending on the sensitivity of the area.
- ESAs are not intended to regulate fishing.



The Department will use a two-eyed seeing approach to guide work and relationships and will continue conversations to learn about Napu'saqnuq from the Mi'kmaq.

For more information on ESAs, visit talkfishhabitat.ca



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