



FISH HABITAT AND FORESTRY

Fish habitat means spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply and migration areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes No person shall carry on any work or undertaking that results in the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat.

Fisheries Act, Section 31

Introduction

Much of Canada's wealth is stored in natural resources. Consequently, the economic and social prosperity of all Canadians depends on the wisdom and foresight with which this treasury is managed. Conservation of non-renewable resources such as oil and minerals has long been recognized as necessary to ensure the self-sufficiency of future generations. Now, in the 1980s, Canadians are learning the importance of the word "renewable" as it applies to the resources we harvest from our forests, streams, lakes and oceans. These resources are not exhaustible, except by mismanagement, nor can one be developed without affecting another. In recent years, resource users and managers have faced



serious environmental and socio-economic concerns when fish habitat losses have been attributed to forestry practices. The evidence is clear. Future viability of our renewable resource base depends on fully-integrated strategies for resource management and protection.

Forestry and Fisheries Interaction

Forests are Canada's most valuable renewable resource. Forestry ranks third among the primary industries which contribute to Canada's gross national product, while forest products rank first among the country's export

commodities. With 10 per cent of the world's forest reserves, Canada supplies 30 per cent of all international pulp and paper sales and controls 22 per cent of the international market for manufactured forest products.

United Nations forecasts show that to maintain Canada's current share of world markets, this country's forest harvest would have to increase substantially. Meeting this demand will create increased pressure on watershed components such as river systems, streams, and estuaries. Thus, we see how issues affecting the forestry sector translate directly to issues affecting fish, fish habitat, and certain important fisheries in Canada.

The same biological and physical conditions that produce Canada's abundant forest lands also create some of the world's most productive fish habitat. In fact, commercial and sport fisheries ranks fifth among Canada's primary industries, contributing more than \$3 billion annually to the national economy in 1982 dollars.

Problems between forestry and fisheries arise where improper forestry practices may damage fish habitat. The most sensitive fishery resources are those found in streams and rivers, estuaries, and nearshore coastal waters. Salmon,