



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

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PRESS RELEASE

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Tribe's Environment Division Receives Contract to Study Fish

Research Will Benefit Region's Fisheries

Akwesasne - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has awarded a \$278,315 contract to the Water Resources Program of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Environment Division. The purpose of the contract is to conduct research on threatened and endangered species of fish in the tributaries to the St. Lawrence River. "We appreciate the fine work that Tony David and his staff have done in securing this important grant," said Ken Jock, Director of the Tribe's Environment Division. "This study is an important part of preserving environmental resources for the next seven generations."

The Fish Enhancement Mitigation and Research Fund awarded the contract. The relicensing of the Robert Moses Hydropower dam, operated by the New York Power Authority, established the fund source. The project is a partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey and Tunison Laboratory of Aquatic Science in Cortland, New York.

This work will concentrate on the Salmon and St. Regis Rivers on Northern New York. The Tribe's research will enable state and Tribal fisheries managers to better understand the locations and distributions of rare fish species such as the American eel, lake sturgeon, pug-nosed shiner and the eastern sand darter. They will be catching the fish by seine net, gill net and electrofishing equipment. "The grant will provide for the salaries of existing employees and for the Water Resources student intern program," noted Tony David, Water Resources Program Manager for the Tribe's Environment Division. "That portion will be for two university students in the field of natural resources. The Tribe will also contribute to the overall knowledge base of migratory sport fisheries and help advance the New York State Wildlife Action Plan. This study will provide a significant benefit to the health of the fisheries, on a regional basis."

The data generated by the study will update the NYS rare fish database and take an intensive look at areas with no fish data. The goal is to expand the understanding of the abundance and distribution of rare fish in Akwesasne and the surrounding area. "Once we have a better understanding of where these fish are, we can protect or enhance their habitat and ensure their continued survival for years to come," added David. These data will be used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other biologists in the St. Lawrence River valley to prioritize future restoration efforts. The contract and grant will commence in June 2012 and be of two-year duration.

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.

Helping Build A Better Tomorrow

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