

EASTMAIN-SARCELLE-RUPERT COMPLEX



Cree Traditional Knowledge in the Follow-up on Cisco in the Nottaway

Discussion group during the first day of the workshop

In July 2008, the participants in the workshop on Cree traditional knowledge about anadromous lake cisco noted that the Nottaway contained a cisco population that was different from the community in the Rupert and Broadback rivers. In 2009, genetic analyses supported this information from Cree traditional knowledge. At the request of the Monitoring Committee, a supplementary study was carried out in 2011 to determine whether cisco from the Rupert/Broadback population travelled up the Nottaway. This study had two parts:

Biology

- Check for Rupert/Broadback cisco presence in the Nottaway by analyzing a sample of the cisco caught in the lower part of the Nottaway during the summer and fall of 2011.
- Determine whether the cisco in the Nottaway have biological characteristics (total length, weight, age, fecundity, etc.) that differ from the Rupert/Broadback cisco.

Cree traditional knowledge

- Meet with Crees who use the lower Nottaway (from *Kâcîkâsikw* rapids to the mouth) to collect their traditional knowledge about cisco in this river.
- Find out from the Cree users how they distinguish between cisco from the Nottaway and those from the Rupert.

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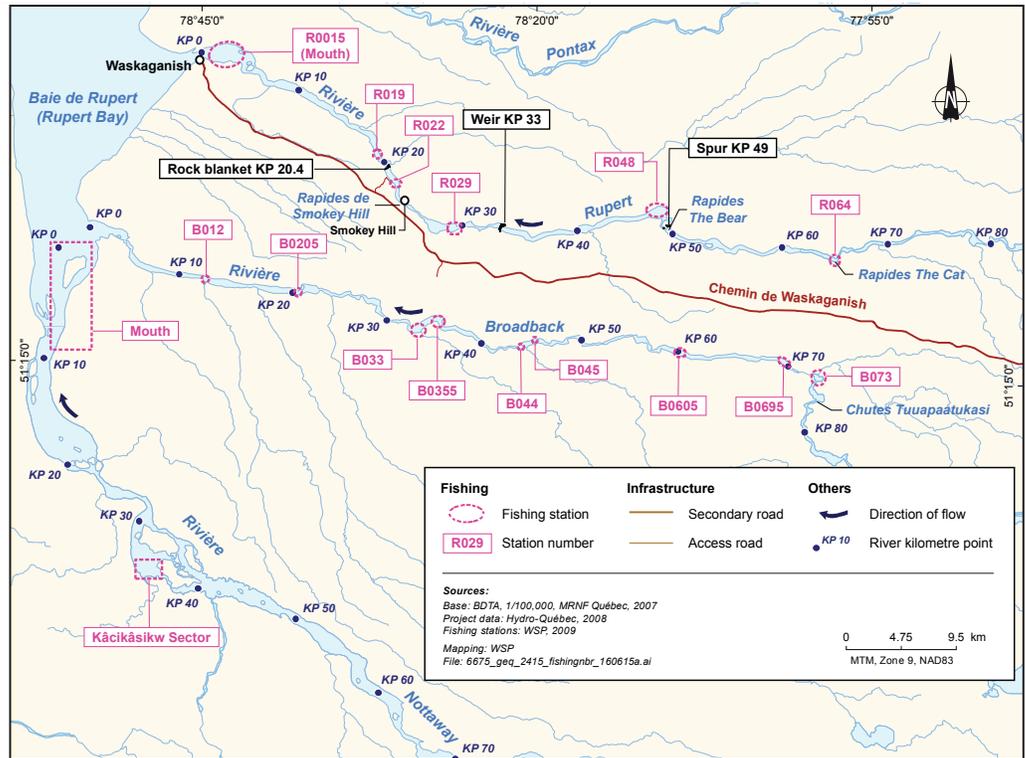
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Cree traditional knowledge and biology: the same observations

The Crees interviewed in 2011 said that the cisco caught at *Kâcikâsikw* rapids in the Nottaway are different from cisco caught at Smokey Hill in the Rupert. The Nottaway cisco are caught in early summer, at the end of July and at the beginning of August. This fish has a greenish back, small eyes and large bones. It is also larger, its back shaped narrower and a bit darker, its eggs are smaller and its mouth and chin are also different.

The biological study also confirmed that the Nottaway cisco population, especially those caught at the end of July, have different characteristics from the Rupert/Broadback cisco population. On average, the Nottaway specimens were older and longer and weighed more than the Rupert/Broadback cisco. They were generally less mature, which could explain the small eggs that the Crees observed.

One interesting fact is that both types of cisco were occasionally found in rivers other than the river with which they are linked. Note that the supplementary study in 2011 revealed that the proportion of Rupert/Broadback cisco in the Nottaway remained very similar to what it was in 2008.



Information document for consultation by parties concerned. For any other use, contact: Géomatique, Hydro-Québec Équipement et services partagés.

Two cisco populations: two different names

The Crees also have different names for the two types of cisco: *Kâcikâsikumekw* for the Nottaway cisco and *Nûtamesânîw* names for the Rupert/Broadback cisco. These terms refer to the location where the Crees usually catch them. Literally, they are *Kâcikâsikw* fish (name of the rapids at Nottaway KP 35) and *Nûtamesânîw* fish (name of the Smokey Hill rapids).



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