

EASTMAIN-1-A/SARCELLE/RUPERT PROJECT***Effectiveness of Ecological Instream Flow
for Fish***

As part of the Eastmain-1-A/Sarcelle/Rupert project, in addition to maintaining an ecological instream flow of at least 127 m³/s at the diversion point, Hydro-Québec built five weirs, two spur dikes and one rock blanket. The Rupert is well suited to such structures since it goes down to sea level in steps with long, very gently sloping stretches separated by rapids. With these eight hydraulic structures, it is thus possible to maintain the water level along about 50% of the river's reduced-flow section.

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Construction phase.

The weir and the fish pass at KP 290.

Purpose of the ecological instream flow regime

The ecological instream flow regime is designed to preserve the spawning habitat of fish species living in shallow rapids along the lower stretches of the Rupert. Target species include lake sturgeon, walleye, longnose sucker and white sucker, which spawn in spring, and the fall-spawning lake whitefish.

Spawning in 2010 similar to preceding years

For both the spring spawners (lake sturgeon, walleye and suckers) and the fall spawner (lake whitefish), spawning occurred within the same period as before the flow was reduced. Data collected shows that spawning by these species in 2010 was similar to preceding years despite reduced Rupert flow.

Follow-up on target species spawning will continue in 2011, 2012 and 2014.

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