



# The Coastal Current

A Quarterly Newsletter Keeping You Current on Marine Protected Areas Issues in Your Community

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## This issue

A busy summer in Gilbert Bay pages 1 & 2

Minister Hearn announces MPA Management Plans page 1

Eastport Lobster Tag Return Program page 1

MUN research in Eastport page 2



## A Busy Summer for Gilbert Bay MPA



*Young cod in Gilbert Bay*

Gilbert Bay continues to be the site of scientific work. In early August, Dr. John Green carried out plankton tows to collect samples of larval Gilbert Bay cod. He also retrieved tags from cod that were previously tagged and tagged additional cod and released them in the MPA. The tagging is done to monitor movement, growth rates and provide data for continued population estimates of Gilbert

Bay cod. There was also some regular tagging done with floy t-bar/spaghetti tags. Dr. Green will continue the tagging and recapture study to determine the size of the cod population in Gilbert Bay.

Another project that has been ongoing for the past three years is the monitoring of the sewage outfall in William's Harbour. Tonya Warren conducted the

*Article continued on page 2*

## Minister Hearn Announces MPA Management Plans

Fisheries and Oceans Minister Loyola Hearn chose a beautiful July morning in Terra Nova Park to announce the release of management plans for the Eastport and Gilbert Bay Marine Protected Areas. The Minister said he was proud to announce the first MPA management plans in Canada, and pointed out that the plans came about as a result of collaboration between DFO and the communities.

The management plans are designed to help the Steering Committees stay on-track as they work towards achieving MPA conservation goals. Congratulations to everyone involved!



## Eastport Tag Return Program Brings Home the Data



This year, MPA staff at DFO decided to offer a gift certificate from Mercer's Marine as a prize to be drawn amongst all lobster fishers who returned tag information from the commercial fishery. Response was excellent, with almost 250 returns—more than double the number from previous years. Also, more fishers gave complete information that can be used in the database, so the program has to be considered a success. The winner's name was drawn at the Sea Fest celebrations, with the prize going to George Feltham, and T-shirts for everyone who participated.

We're on the Web!



www.gilbertbay.com



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### Busy Summer *continued from page 1*



Wayne Russell, always a friend of the Gilbert Bay MPA

water sampling in her new role with the Marine Environmental Quality Program, assisted by MPA coordinator Marilyn Parr-Penney and Wayne Russell. This monitoring will continue to ensure that the outfall doesn't negatively affect the MPA.

There has been very little activity in the scallop fishery this year due to low prices, but log-books were given to scallop fishers to record their fishing activities in the Gilbert Bay MPA. Dr. Joe Wroblewski also plans to conduct scallop research in the MPA this fall.

#### Steering Committee Meeting

On August 17, 2007 a steering committee meeting was held at

the Alexis Hotel in Port Hope Simpson. Agenda items included the MPA Management Plan, the variation-order closure of Zone 3 to recreational cod fishery, the MPA Terms of Reference, and action planning for the future. A public meeting will be planned for the fall to discuss the activities that have taken place and to create awareness of the Gilbert Bay MPA. People in the area will be informed about what is taking place and invited to discuss future plans for the MPA.

The Gilbert Bay Steering Committee would like to thank Tonya Warren for her dedication as Acting MPA Biologist and wish her all the best in her future endeavors. We look forward now to working with Elizabeth Bennett who currently fills the MPA Biologist position.

#### Closure of Zone 3 to Recreational Fishery

This year, as in past years, Zone 3 of Gilbert Bay MPA was closed to the recreational fishery. This variation order was put in place to protect the Golden Cod in the MPA. Prohibition of recreational cod fishing within Zones 1 & 2 is also in place.

#### Golden Cod Festival

The 6<sup>th</sup> Golden Cod Festival took place on August 18 in William's Harbour. MPA Coordinator Marilyn Parr-Penney attended the festival and hosted a booth to share information about the Gilbert



Marilyn Parr-Penney hosts the festival information booth

Bay MPA. Promotional items such as brochures and magnets were given out, a presentation on Gilbert Bay was displayed and copies of the Management Plan were available for viewing. There were prize draws for Gilbert Bay T-shirts, caps, bags and other items. The day was filled with fun and activities for all and ended with a Fish and Brews dinner and an evening of entertainment.

Article by Marilyn Parr-Penney

### MUN Research Team Investigate Larval Distribution



MUN grad students clean their fine-mesh neuston net and check their sample jars after a successful day of towing for lobster larvae in Newman Sound. Researchers will be back in Eastport in October to take up settlement trays put out to capture first-year lobsters for count and release.