

SPAWNING SANCTUARIES

Charleston Lake Opinicon Lake

Starting in 2024, there are designated spawning sanctuaries in Charleston and Opinicon lakes. The new regulations and the descriptions of the sanctuaries are included in the OMNRF's official 2024 Fishing Regulations. Within the spawning sanctuary boundaries, all fishing is prohibited from April 15 through the Friday before the first Saturday in July.

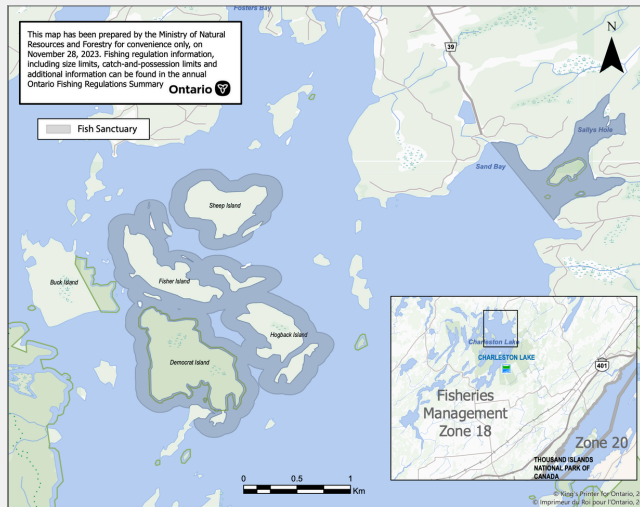
Scan to see the new regulations:



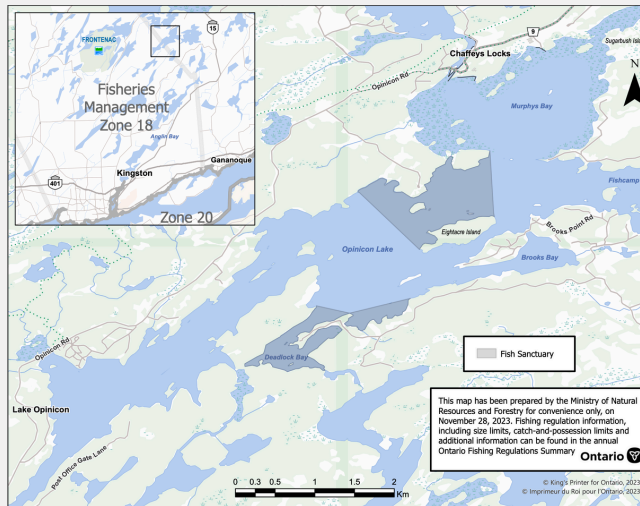
WHERE ARE THE SPAWNING SANCTUARIES?

The maps below show the locations of the two spawning sanctuaries in Charleston Lake and the two in Opinicon Lake. Signs showing the boundaries of the spawning sanctuaries will be posted on the shorelines to make them easy to identify.

CHARLESTON LAKE



OPINICON LAKE



Ontario

No Fishing
Pêche interdite

April 15 to Friday before First Saturday in July
15 avril au vendredi précédant le 1^{er} samedi de juillet

Provincial Fish Sanctuary |
Réserve Provincial de poissons

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Report Resource Abuse
Signalez les infractions

1-877-TIPS-MNR

Look for signs at the boundaries of the sanctuaries



ENFORCEMENT: Increased attention will be given by the OMNRF to educating anglers about this regulatory change and enforcing these new spawning sanctuaries. It will now be a citable offense to fish for any species within a spawning sanctuary during the closed season.

WHAT IS A SPAWNING SANCTUARY?

Spawning sanctuaries are seasonally designated areas within a lake where all forms of fishing are prohibited during the critical period when fish such as largemouth and smallmouth bass are spawning and guarding their young. They are an innovative conservation approach to improve and maintain the abundance of fish and the quality of recreational fishing.



WHY ARE SANCTUARIES IMPORTANT?

Spawning sanctuaries will fully protect all species of fish that spawn within their boundaries from the disruptions to reproduction caused by angling. Species such as largemouth and smallmouth bass go through a series of reproductive behaviors that includes courtship, nest building, spawning, and guarding their young until they are old enough to survive on their own and disperse. When any of those activities are disrupted, the number of surviving offspring from that parent is reduced. If those disruptions happen to many individuals within a lake, the number of surviving offspring and ultimately the number of surviving adults declines.

MONITORING

To determine how well the spawning sanctuaries protect nesting largemouth and smallmouth bass from pre-season angling, a coalition of research scientists will be conducting studies to determine: 1) how well do spawning sanctuaries protect bass from pre-season angling? and 2) how does this protection affect the production of young bass?



RESEARCH APPROACH

Snorkel Surveys: Snorkel surveys will be conducted across designated shoreline transects throughout and after the spawning sanctuaries' closure period. These surveys will allow us to assess how many largemouth and smallmouth bass build nests, spawn, and produce offspring.

Opinion Surveys: To help assess the levels of angling activity, compliance, and satisfaction, team members will be boating throughout the study lakes taking opinion interviews on what anglers feel about the new regulations, as well as serving as outreach resources to explain the basis for the study and answer any questions.

Tracking Fish Movements: An acoustic telemetry study will be initiated in the spring of 2024 to track the movements of largemouth and smallmouth bass throughout the year.

PARTNERS



QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
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For additional Information,
scan this code

