# MNR holds fisheries open house

**THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES,** Terrace Bay District, held an open house on Feb. 1st, to gain public input and comments on its fisheries management plan.

By Ken Lusk
The *News*

Linda Ferguson, district biologist with the MNR, told the *News* there was a good turnout but, considering the number of anglers in the district, it could have been better.

The MNR's management plan's main objective is "to protect, rehabilitate, enhance, and maintain Ontario's fish communities and their environments to provide an optimum contribution of fish, fishing opportunities, and associated benefits to society".

The plan extends to the year 2,000, and works in five-year intervals.

It is hoped that by March or April of this year, the plan will be completed and implementation of the objectives can begin.

As examples, in the first five-year period, the MNR plans to stock specific lakes and make certain areas more accessible, said Ferguson.

One such plan is for an access point to Lake Superior in Marathon. Ferguson said the ideal situation there would be to have the MNR build the access point, the township maintain it and James-River Marathon donate the land.

**Terrace Bay waterfront**

The Township of Terrace Bay's Waterfront Development Study also comes into play in the MNR's plan.

The township has agreed to expand its waterfront development study to include an engineering study of the mouth of the Aguasabon River and one other potential marina site.

The cost of this part of the study will be paid by the MNR. Part of the study will look at what can be done to stop the river mouth from filling in with sand.

**Fish targets**

Included in the MNR's plan are fish numbers targets.

The MNR hopes to meet the demand for fish by 2,000 within the limits of the optimum sustainable yield.

**Sport fish**

As the MNR puts it, "the recreational fishing target, or sport fish target, is to meet the demand by the year 2,000 of 122,000 angler-days, at an angler satisfaction level of one kilogram per angler-day, or an annual harvest of 122,000 kilograms of fish".

Simply put, it means to have 122,000 kilograms of sport fish available by the year 2,000.

The target of 122,000 was increased from the previous number of 100,000 kilograms due to a projected population increase in the district near Marathon and Manitouwadge.

The MNR has the figure of 144,510 kilograms as the most sport fish that *could* be caught.

Some examples of how the MNR plans to reach this and the other objectives are by fish stocking, changing regulations to suit the need, and perhaps closing seasons earlier during the spawning season if need be.

MNR Biologist Linda Ferguson told the *News* that the MNR will be stocking Santoy Lake for two more years as part of this objective.

After that time, Ferguson hopes the fish will maintain their own numbers at Santoy.

**Commercial fish**

The commercial fish target for the year 2,000 is 150,512 kilograms.

Ferguson said there are presently five licenses in the Terrace Bay District for commercial fishing.

This target of 150,512 was revised and lowered from a previous amount of 535,000.

Ferguson said 535,000 was definitely too high. The amount was calculated a while ago, she said, and had to be updated.

In 1986, the licenced commercial fish operators harvested 46,792 kg of fish from the Terrace Bay District portion of Lake Superior.

**Management activities**

The MNR has several methods it will be utilizing to reach the targets for 2,000.

One such way is an improvement of environmental quality. This includes: increasing efforts to determine the extent of fish contaminants and contaminant problems; preventing the degradation of fish habitats; and rehabilitating lost fish habitats.

Another area of strategy will be to minimize user conflicts.

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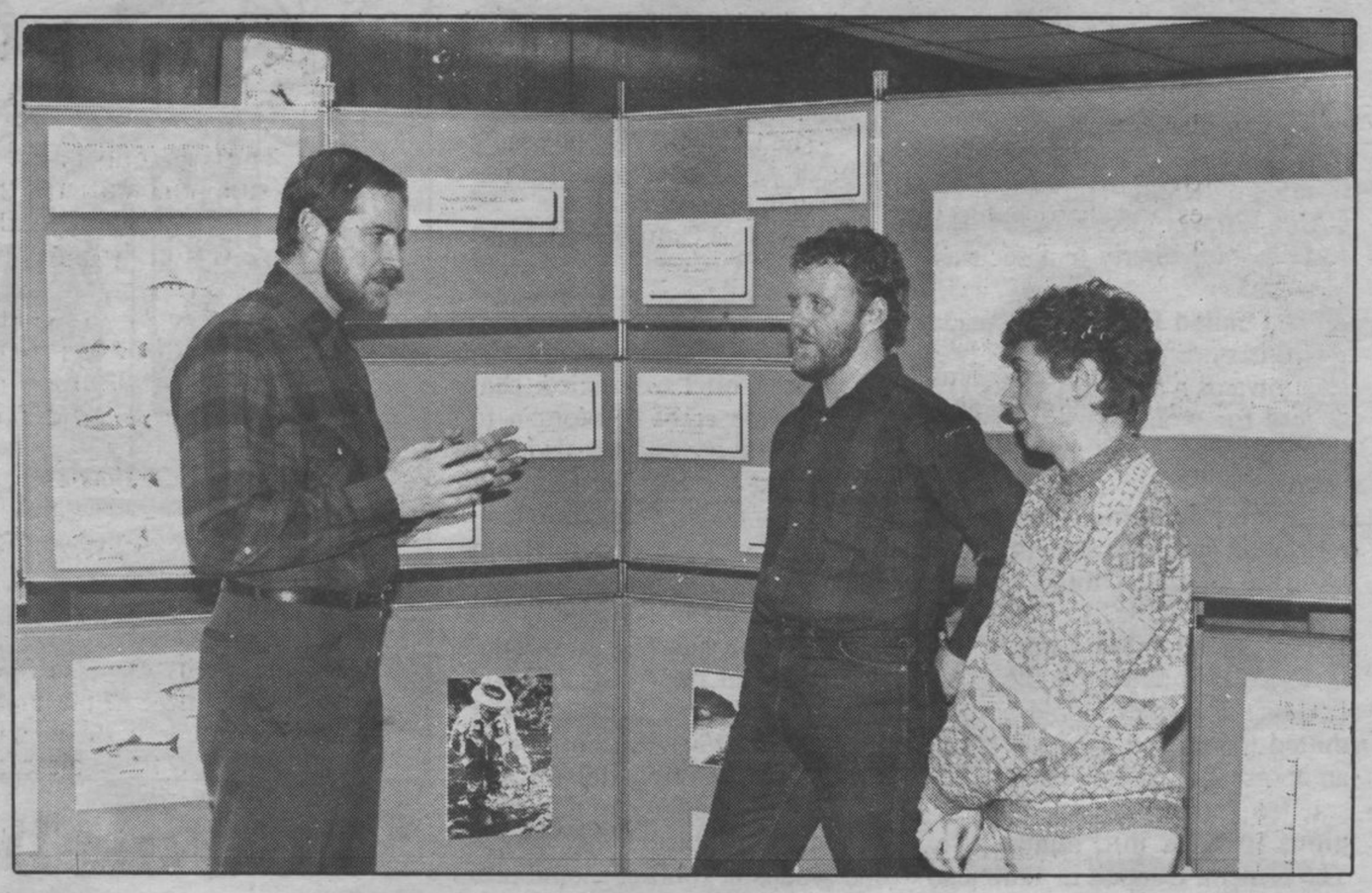

**Open House**

Shown above at the MNR open house are, from left, Ron Running, district manager, Ralph Whitelock, fish and wildlife technician, and Linda Ferguson, district biologist.


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