

Donation by Kimberly-Clark improves fishing

By Dave Chmara

Fishermen in this area will have an increased opportunity to catch Rainbow Trout in the not too distant future.

Thanks to Kimberly-Clark's environmental control lab, 1,300 Rainbow Trout were released into Fox Lake recently.

As part of the MOE required testing, Cory Legebokow, a biologist with the environmental control lab at K.C., uses the young Rainbow Trout for environmental testing purposes.

Legebokow said the fish must be between .5 and 2 grams for proper testing. He explained that once the fish become larger than 2 grams, they become too hardy and are no longer suitable for testing.

The lab purchases quantities of Rainbow Trout from a recognized Ontario hatchery. They are kept in a large tank and are removed from it as required for testing.

But once the fish are over two grams in size, they can no longer be used for testing.

Legebokow had an idea of what to do with the remaining untested fish.

He got in contact with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of the Environment to receive permission to give the fish to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The untested fish are certified healthy so the Ministries gave the go-ahead.

The MNR then had to find a lake that had been previously

stocked with Rainbow Trout.

Paul Dennis, a conservation officer with the MNR, said this is done so a new species isn't introduced into a lake. For a new species to be stocked requires an Environmental Assessment Process which involves public hearings. The whole process can take quite awhile.

After some searching, Dennis found the only lake in the area that had been previously stocked with Rainbow Trout.

Fox Lake was the candidate and on Friday, May 19, Dennis and Legebokow took the 1,300 fish to the lake.

The lab at K.C. purchases Rainbow Trout on a regular basis, so every three months, Legebokow said they will be able

to donate about 1,000 of the overgrown fish to the MNR.

Dennis said this is a put-and-take stocking program because he doesn't expect the trout to breed in the lake.

He said the main problem encountered with this stocking program is that of predation.

Because the fish have been in an artificial environment all their life, they have never encountered predators and may not readily know how to protect themselves (i.e. where to hide or even to hide).

Dennis said Rainbow Trout are fast growing and can be angled year round. He added they are good eating and are a good sports fish (they put up a fight).



Cory Legebokow pours a few hundred Rainbow Trout into Fox Lake. The fish are too large for testing purposes at Kimberly-Clark's Environmental Control Lab and are certified healthy. The stocking program was done in conjunction with the Ministry of Natural Resources and is expected to be carried out about every three months.
Photo by Dave Chmara

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