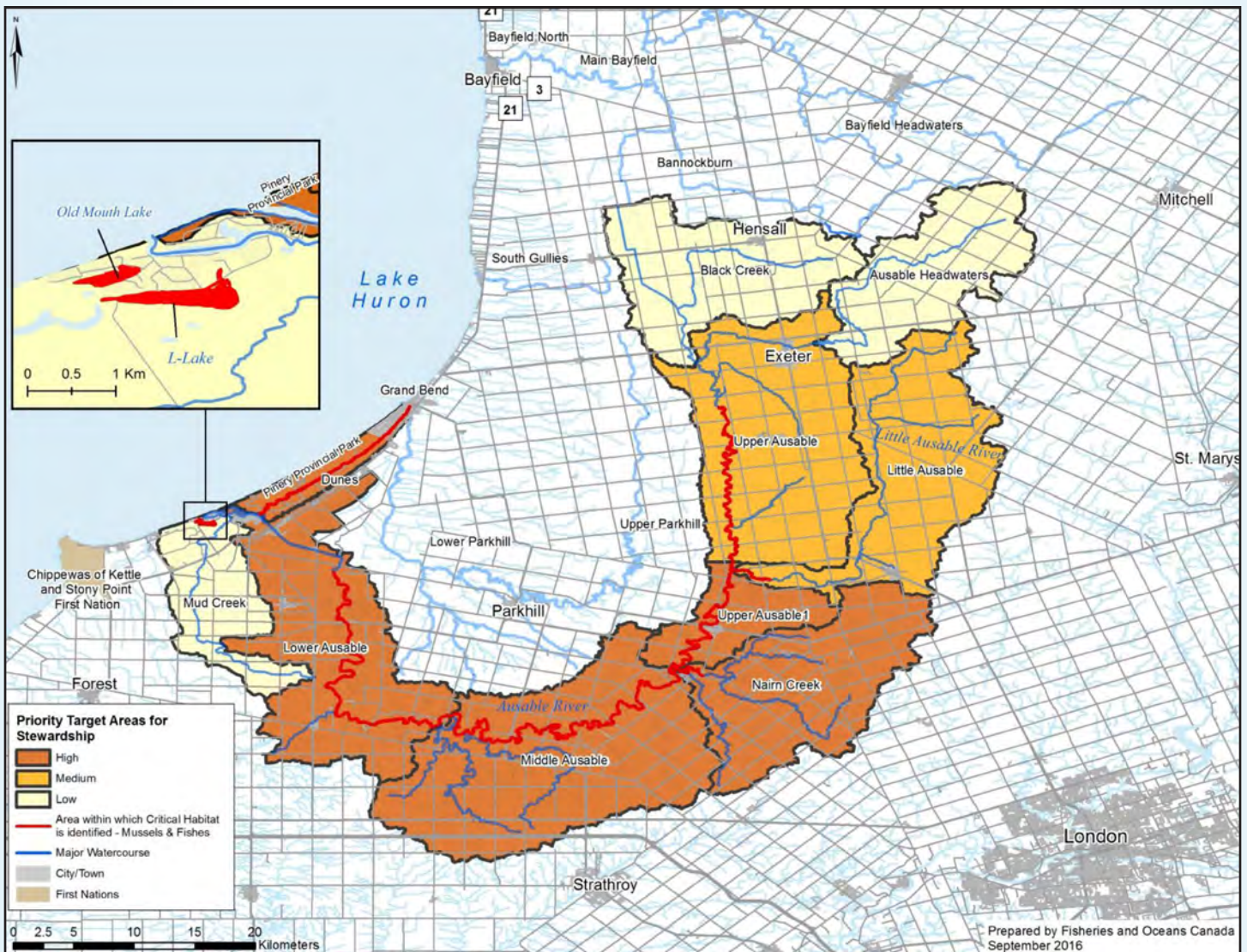


About the

Proposed Action Plan for the Ausable River in Canada

What

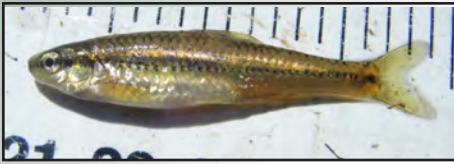
The proposed *Action Plan for the Ausable River in Canada: An Ecosystem Approach* is an update of the Ausable River Recovery Strategy developed by the Ausable River Recovery Team in 2002. The proposed Ausable River Action Plan updates the education, voluntary stewardship actions and monitoring approaches for aquatic species at risk in the Ausable River. The Ausable River Recovery Team is made up of watershed landowners and staff from the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and local municipalities. These partners started taking new conservation actions in 2002 and the collaborative efforts undertaken since this time have supported hundreds of rural stewardship projects.



Map of Priority Target Areas for Stewardship – from the *Proposed Action Plan for the Ausable River in Canada*.

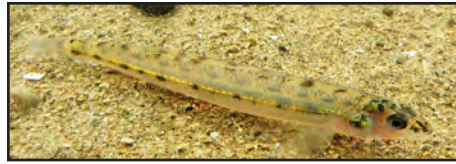
Where

This proposed Action Plan is for the Ausable River Watershed, including its tributaries and wetland habitats. These areas support Critical Habitat for aquatic species at risk (SAR). The proposed Action Plan identifies Critical Habitat areas that are vital to the survival and recovery of SAR freshwater mussels and fishes.



Pugnose Shiner (*Notropis anogenus*)

– Endangered



Eastern Sand Darter (*Ammocrypta pellucida*)

– Threatened



Lake Chubsucker (*Erimyzon sucetta*)

– Endangered

Alan Dextrase/MNRF Photo

Why

The Ausable River supports one of the most diverse communities of aquatic fauna in Canada. At least 26 species of freshwater mussels and 85 species of fish have been found here. Seven of the eight turtle species found in Ontario are found in the Ausable River watershed.

Many aquatic species in this watershed have been assessed by federal and provincial agencies as Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern. Five freshwater mussels (Kidneyshell, Northern Riffleshell, Snuffbox, Mapleleaf, and Rainbow) and three fishes (Eastern Sand Darter, Lake Chubsucker, and Pugnose Shiner) are the focus of this ecosystem-based plan.

There are many threats to the survival and recovery of aquatic species at risk in the Ausable River. In particular, sediment loads, nutrient enrichment, altered flows, low oxygen concentrations, and invasive species are impacting SAR populations.

Who

Voluntary stewardship activities to reduce sediment and nutrient inputs in the Ausable River watershed are important and continued work is needed. Agencies have led education, monitoring, and management actions since 2002 to reduce threats to these important animals and these efforts continue.

When

This proposed Plan includes timelines to complete actions that are categorized as high, medium and low. Critical Habitat areas are highlighted as priority areas for recommended actions to improve habitat.

How

Species recovery actions supported by the Ausable River Recovery Team include:

- Monitoring of species and habitat
- Increasing awareness of species at risk through education and outreach
- Completing best management practices (BMPs) such as: riparian buffers; non-riparian erosion control; and protection and enhancement of natural areas including wetlands



For more information and your opportunity to comment, please visit this link:

http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default_e.cfm?documentID=3325



Kidneyshell

(*Ptychobranthus fasciolaris*)

– Endangered



Northern Riffleshell

(*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*)

– Endangered



Snuffbox

(*Epioblasma triquetra*)

– Endangered



Mapleleaf

(*Quadrula quadrula*)

– Threatened



Rainbow

(*Villosa iris*)

– Endangered