

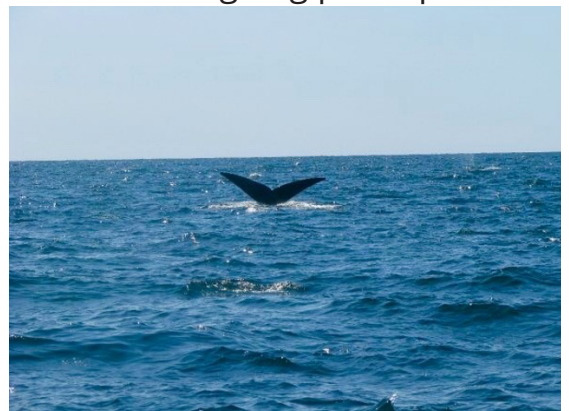


Mainland Mi'kmaq Marine Mammal Response Program

By: Jillian Arany (MCG Fisheries Biologist)
Mi'kmaw Conservation Group
The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq

The Mainland Mi'kmaq Marine Mammal Response Program is a new project at the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq – being run by the Mi'kmaw Conservation Group (MCG). The overall goal of the project is to gain Mi'kmaq perspectives to increase the protection of marine mammals, increase the capacity for incident response, and assist with the development of best practices for marine mammal response. The project currently has four key components: information sharing, training and capacity building, partnerships and outreach and education. First, information sharing involves informing mainland Mi'kmaw communities about the Marine Mammal Response Program through meetings, events, and workshops. These information sharing opportunities are allowing us to get feedback from community members about the Marine Mammal Response Program (MMRP) and they provide an opportunity to discuss developing the project for future years. Second, training and capacity building involves researching training opportunities applicable to marine mammal response and building capacity by providing these training opportunities to community members. The training required for marine mammal response can vary from learning how to properly report a distressed or dead animal to becoming trained to assist with disentanglement and stranding incidents. Third, developing partnerships and building relationships with organizations/associations that have experience in marine mammal response and marine mammal work is very important. There are only a few groups across Canada that are permitted to respond to marine mammal incidents so learning from these groups and working together will assist with training, education, and capacity development. The Maritimes region is fortunate to have groups like the Marine Animal Response Society (MARS) and the Campobello Whale Rescue to learn from. Lastly, outreach and education will involve on-going participation in outreach events to share about the project and provide educational materials.

As mentioned, this is a new project at MCG, and we would love to hear your input! If you have an interest in marine mammals and/or marine mammal response and would like to get more involved or learn more, please reach out to Jillian at 902-890-9961 or jarany@mikmawconservation.ca.



A North Atlantic Right Whale observed in the Bay of Fundy.