



Hay River Fish Processing Plant Complete and Operational Plan in Place

With construction of the Hay River Fish Plant completed, the GNWT has contracted the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) to operate the new Fish Plant to help transition and grow the NWT fish processing capabilities.

The FFMC's mandate is to purchase all fish lawfully harvested and offered for sale within the NWT, while also ensuring an orderly market. The FFMC aims to promote international markets, boost fish trade, and maximize returns to fishers.

As part of its agreement with the FFMC, the GNWT has initiated a transitional period focused on capacity building for the NWT's commercial fishing sector, with the new fully functional plant locally staffed and operated.

While the construction of a new processing plant is a milestone in the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) revitalization strategy for the Great Slave Lake Fishery, steps are also being taken to rebuild and strengthen the industry itself.

The long-term goal is to return the management and operations of a vibrant and restored commercial fishing industry to the companies, organizations and fishers that make up its membership North and South of the Great Slave Lake.

In the immediate short term, increased fish volumes are needed for the new plant to maximize its production levels and financial returns to NWT fishers.

The GNWT is collaborating with fishers and stakeholders to enhance the business skills of the NWT commercial fishing industry. Additionally, the GNWT is assisting current fishers in upgrading and modernizing their fleets and resources, while attracting new fishers to the NWT.

Additionally, a receiving station was established in Yellowknife, and is in its second year of operation, to enable fishers North of the lake to transport fish to the Hay River plant.

Following the 2024 summer season, the GNWT will continue to work with fishers to also revitalize the Great Slave Lake's winter fishery under the [Strategy for Revitalizing the Great Slave Lake Commercial Fishery](#). In 2025 the GNWT will deliver training for residents to gain entry-level certification as deck hands during this open water fishing season.

Funding for the Hay River Fish Plant was \$21,751,000, with significant contributions from CanNor and Infrastructure Canada under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan (ICIP).



- CanNor - \$2,226,000
- Infrastructure Canada - \$6,654,000

Transformation of the FFMC

In November 2023, the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) announced it will pursue an open, transparent, and competitive process to transform the FFMC to provide harvesters and communities greater control over their industry. The GNWT supports the federal governments process to review and transform FFMC and will provide advice and assistance throughout the transformation as requested.

The Northwest Territories (NWT) is the only remaining jurisdiction subject to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Act. Harvesters in other jurisdictions may sell to FFMC under contract, and many in Manitoba currently do so.

The transformation of the FFMC represents a significant shift of the corporation's operational environment that requires coordination of the complex relationships between harvesting, processing, and marketing of freshwater fish.