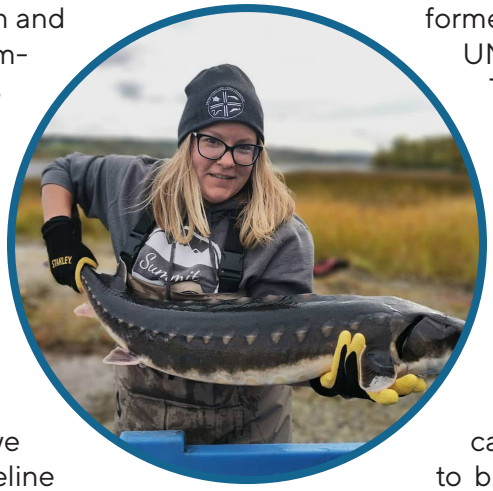
NORTH SHORE
Mi'kmaq Tribal Council

ANQOTUM RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

END OF SUMMER BULLETIN 2025

KOMKUTAMU STUDY

NSMTC Anqotum Resource Management has launched a one-year project to study komkutamu (Atlantic sturgeon), a Species at Risk listed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as Threatened in the Miramichi watershed. This initiative aims to locate critical sturgeon habitats to address the current knowledge gap that limits protection and recovery efforts. From May to November, staff will conduct visual surveys using ROVs (Remotely Operated Vehicles) and diving, angling activities, and eDNA sampling. Any sturgeon captured will be tagged and tracked through acoustic receivers maintained by the Atlantic Salmon Federation and Canadian Rivers Institute, allowing us to map sturgeon movement across the watershed. By the end of the project, we will have established the first baseline population data for the species in the Miramichi, guiding future conservation measures and habitat protections.



Alongside this research, Anqotum continues to raise awareness of Species at Risk in our communities. Through our Promoting Lifelong Learning program, staff visit local schools to teach Indigenous youth about the importance of species like komkutamu and share how traditional knowledge and modern science work together to protect our rivers and ecosystems.

BROOK FLOATER PROJECT

Anqotum continues its work to protect the jipu'ji'j weskito'kwejit e's (brook floater), a freshwater mussel listed under the Species at Risk Act. This project focuses on identifying host fish species for brook floater glochidia and locating mussel beds in the Miramichi watershed using eDNA and lab analysis.

Our biologists and technicians collect glochidia from Atlantic salmon and brook trout, including community-harvested specimens. DNA work is performed in-house and in partnership with UNB to confirm species relationships. These efforts help us understand how brook floater relies on local fish populations and where its habitat may be most at risk.

This project also includes a strong outreach component. Summer science camps were delivered in four communities to teach youth about Species at Risk and encourage careers in science. These activities aim to build capacity and inspire long-term stewardship.

2025 SUMMER STUDENTS

This summer, we were pleased to welcome back two returning students to the NSMTC Anqotum Resource Management team.

Kayla Russell is a student in Environmental and Sustainability Studies at Acadia University. During her summer Kayla she supported our field technicians, revised internal policies, and was involved with project planning. Cameron Ward, who studies Computer Science/Business Administration at Mount Allison University, contributed to communications and digital outreach, helping share our work with the public.

Both students took the lead on delivering our Summer Science Camps, guiding activities and engaging youth in hands-on learning about environmental science and Species at Risk. With support from Anqotum's field tech Nelson Cloud, they helped create meaningful experiences that blended culture, conservation, and education.

In addition to their leadership at the camps, Kayla and Cameron attended powwows in Natoaganeg and Metepenagiag, assisted with day-to-day operations in the office, and brought energy and commitment to every task. We're proud to support their continued growth and grateful for their contributions to the team.

ECOLOGICAL BASELINE RESARCH

Anqotum Resource Management is entering the third year of a four-year project to establish stable isotope baselines for carbon (^{13}C) and nitrogen (^{15}N) in industrially developed coastal areas of New Brunswick. This research focuses on three key locations: the Little River estuary in Saint John, influenced by fossil fuel activity; Black's Harbour, an area of open-water aquaculture; and Marsh Creek in Saint John, which has been affected by historical creosote deposition.

Biologists and field technicians from Anqotum, in collaboration with partner organizations, are collecting marine sediment samples and a variety of aquatic organisms, including invertebrates and fish. These samples are analyzed at the Stable Isotope in Nature Laboratory (SINLAB) to develop isotope-based food web models for each site. Results will be compared to the Musquash Marine Protected Area, providing a reference point to measure how industrial activity may alter local ecological baselines.

By building a clearer understanding of food web dynamics in these environments, this project will help guide long-term monitoring and support evidence-based decision-making for coastal conservation and restoration initiatives.

Photo credits: Nelson Cloud
Pg. 1: Anqotum field technicians Taylor Colford and Katie Patles tagging an Atlantic sturgeon (header); Anqotum field technician Katie Patles holding Atlantic sturgeon.
Pg. 2: Anqotum summer student Kayla Russell teaching Nukumi House kids about survival skills (left); NSMTC summar students Kayla Russell and Cameron Ward (right).