https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-fishing-regulations-summary/fisheries-management-zone-15

Existing Stocking Strategies	Proposed Stocking Strategies
Brook Trout	
General Fish Stocking The appropriate use of fish stocking as a management tool is directed by the Guidelines for the Stocking of Inland Lakes (2002). This plan summarizes these guidelines and supports the practice that natural reproduction of fish populations will remain the primary strategy for management within FMZ 15, with enhancements via Put-Grow-Take (PGT) stocking to create fisheries exclusively for public enjoyment. The use of salmonid PGT lakes creates diversionary fisheries which reduce the harvest pressure on naturally reproducing populations. However, there are limited opportunities to expand PGT salmonid stocking in the zone, due to the finite availability of suitable habitat and compatible aquatic community structure, and the plan is realistic about these limitations. Supplemental stocking, or stocking where natural populations occur, is discouraged since this practice can cause undesired impacts to existing natural populations.	**Goal:** Conserve natural Brook Trout populations **Objectives:** **I.** Maintain the number and distribution of natural Brook Trout populations. **II.** Improve the status of natural Brook Trout populations and fishing opportunities. **III.** Enhance angling opportunities for stocked Brook Trout.
Information regarding existing stocking numbers and strategies have been found in the FMZ 15 background information report of 2019 (https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-5715).	***Proposed Stocked Lakes regulation via exception (Additional Opportunities):*** Season: Open All Year Daily Catch Limit: 5(S) and 2(C) Rationale: Maintaining a liberal regulation for stocked Brook Trout Lakes is intended to encourage the diversion of angling effort and harvest away from natural populations.
A total of 229 different waters have been stocked with Brook Trout between 2001-2015. The vast majority are stocked on a PGT basis (127- 168 waterbodies), with small numbers stocked for rehabilitation (7	**Implement stocking strategy for Brook Trout** ***Proposed Stocking Strategies:*** 1) Supplemental stocking of waterbodies where viable natural populations are known to be present will not be done.

waterbodies) or supplemental (26 waterbodies) purposes. Brook Trout stocking is restricted primarily to small lakes on Crown Land that do not support competing spiny-rayed species (e.g., Yellow Perch) and significant natural reproduction does not occur due to the absence of suitable spawning habitat.	Rationale: Supplemental stocking can have detrimental consequences on natural populations via increased competition for resources, predation of natural Brook Trout by stocked fish, risk of genetic introgression and loss of native strains, and increased interest and subsequent angling effort and harvest of natural Brook Trout. 2) Conduct rehabilitation and re-introduction stocking of Brook Trout populations where appropriate, using local genetic strains (e.g. Dickson strain). Rationale: Natural Brook Trout populations and their associated fisheries are facing many threats including introduced species, climate change, and overexploitation in FMZ 15. Rehabilitation including further regulatory restrictions and/or rehabilitative stocking are management tools which may be appropriate actions to take for populations which have been detrimentally impacted. 3) Continue to stock and manage Brook Trout to divert angling effort from natural Brook Trout lakes. **-No change** Rationale: Natural Brook Trout populations which are supporting localized fisheries are rare in FMZ 15. To minimize impacts of overexploitation, liberal regulations are being maintained on stocked Brook Trout lakes to divert effort and harvest from natural populations. 4) Continue to stock Brook Trout to create Brook Trout additional angling and harvest opportunities and look to improve effectiveness where possible. **-No change** Rationale: Brook Trout are a highly valued sportfish in FMZ 15 for recreational and consumptive purposes. Stocked Lakes will provide for Brook Trout angling opportunities year-round.

Lake Trout	
	Goal: Conserve natural Lake Trout populations **Objectives:** **I.** Maintain the number and distribution of natural Lake Trout Lakes **II.** Improve the status of natural Lake Trout populations and fishing opportunities. **III.** Enhance angling opportunities for stocked Lake Trout.
	Proposed stocked lakes regulation via exception: Season: Open All Year Daily Catch Limit: 2(S) and 1(C) Size Limit: None Gear Restriction: None; two lines may be used when angling through the ice. Rationale: Maintaining a liberal regulation for stocked Lake Trout Lakes is intended to encourage the diversion of angling effort and harvest away from natural populations.
	Prohibit the use of live baitfish while fishing for Lake Trout in natural lakes that have not been impacted by introduced species. ***Proposed ban of the use of live baitfish via exception:*** There are 5 natural Lake Trout lakes proposed to have a ban on the use of live baitfish which do not currently have introduced species within their fish community. Rationale: Lake Trout and their associated fisheries are most resilient to threats from climate change and overexploitation when the native fish communities they exist within are maintained.
Between 2001 and 2015, on average, each year, about 33 lakes have been stocked with 61,000 Lake Trout on a PGT basis and 6 lakes with 25,000 fish for rehabilitation or re-introduction. Prior to 2006, about 12 lakes	**Implement Stocking Strategy for Lake Trout** ***Proposed stocking strategies:*** 1) Stocking of waterbodies where viable natural populations are known to be present will not be done.

were stocked annually with 26,000 fish on a supplemental basis. This practice was largely stopped following the recommendations of the Lake Trout Synthesis project. A total of 90 different waters have been stocked since 2001. The number of lakes and fish being stocked for rehabilitation and supplementation has declined greatly since 2001, but PGT stocking has been relatively stable.	Rationale: Supplemental stocking can have detrimental consequences on natural populations via increased competition for resources, predation of natural Lake Trout by stocked fish, risk of genetic introgression and loss of native strains, and increased interest and subsequent angling effort and harvest of natural Lake Trout. 2) Conduct rehabilitation and re-introduction stocking of Lake Trout populations where appropriate, using local genetic strains. **- No change** Rationale: Natural Lake Trout populations and their associated fisheries are facing many threats including introduced species, climate change, and overexploitation in FMZ 15. Rehabilitation including further regulatory restrictions and/or rehabilitative stocking are management tools which may be appropriate actions to take for populations which have been detrimentally impacted. 3) Continue to stock and manage Lake Trout to divert angling effort from natural Lake Trout lakes. **- No change** Rationale: To minimize impacts of overexploitation, liberal regulations are being maintained on stocked Lake Trout lakes to divert effort and harvest from natural populations. 4) Continue to stock Lake Trout to create Lake Trout additional angling and harvest opportunities and look to improve effectiveness where possible. **- No change** Rationale: Lake Trout are a highly valued sportfish in FMZ 15 for recreational and consumptive purposes. Stocked Lakes will provide for Lake Trout angling opportunities year-round.
Lake Whitefish	
Lake Whitefish were stocked for several years into Mary Lake, in Parry Sound district, as part of a re-introduction project. No other	**Goal**: Maintain Lake Whitefish populations. **Objectives:** **I.** Maintain the number of Lake Whitefish populations.

Whitefish stocking has occurred in the zone recently.	**II**. Maintain the abundance of Lake Whitefish **No stocking strategy changes for Lake Whitefish proposed.**
Northern Pike	
	Goal: Maintain the Northern Pike fishery within FMZ 15. **Objectives:** **I.** Maintain the abundance of Northern Pike populations **II**. Minimize further unauthorized introductions of Northern Pike into new waters. **No stocking strategy changes for Northern Pike proposed.**
Muskellunge	
	Goal: Maintain the Muskellunge fishery within FMZ 15. **Objectives:** **I.** Maintain the abundance of Muskellunge populations. **II.** Maintain trophy angling opportunities in waterbodies with demonstrated growth potential. **III.** Minimize further unauthorized introductions of Muskellunge into new waterbodies. **No stocking strategy changes for Muskellunge proposed.**
Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass	
	Goal: Maintain the bass fishery within FMZ 15. **Objectives:** **I.** Minimize further unauthorized introductions of Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass into new waterbodies. **II.** Maintain current abundance of Smallmouth and Largemouth bass

	III. Increase and promote fishing opportunities for Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass **No stocking strategy changes for Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass proposed.**
Walleye	
	Goal: Improve Walleye populations. **Objectives:** **I.** Maintain the number of Walleye populations. **II.** Increase or maintain abundance of Walleye. **III.** Minimize further unauthorized introductions of Walleye into new waterbodies.
Fewer Walleye are stocked in the zone than the other major species. Also, most Walleye are stocked at a smaller size and earlier life stage than most trout due to a combination of limited supply and the challenges of culturing Walleye. On average, only 3 lakes, but a relatively large number of 37,000 fish per lake, were stocked annually between 2001 and 2015 (Golden Lake was not one of these). Fifteen (15) different waters have been stocked during this period. From 2001 to 2006 most stocking was classified as rehabilitation stocking and fry were being stocked each year (Golden Lake is included here but not stocked annually over this period). After 2006, following the Southern Region Walleye Review, the emphasis, or at least the classification, changed to PGT stocking and fry stocking was largely abandoned. *******Ministry stocking of Walleye for rehabilitation, introduction and reintroduction purposes has declined dramatically from the period 2001-2006 (350,720 fish) to the period 2007-2015 (4,417 fish). There has also be a shift in**	**Implement the stocking strategy for Walleye** **Proposed stocking strategies:** ***It is proposed that PGT stocking of Walleye will no longer occur in FMZ. Rehabilitation of Walleye may occur on a limited basis where deemed appropriate. ***We need to emphasize that our proposed cage culture of summer fingerlings and subsequent release of fall fingerlings are for rehabilitation purposes, enhance first year survival and to increase natural spawning walleye populations in Golden Lake. Rationale: Walleye are not native to the majority of FMZ 15 but have naturalized due to illegal introductions in many waterbodies in the last 30 years so there are many more opportunities across the zone than there once was. Walleye will be managed for natural reproduction and, if necessary, the rehabilitation of natural populations will be considered.

stocking sac fry/fry in the period 2001-2006 (155,048) to the period 2007-2015 (zero). Similar declines in stocking of summer fingerlings over the same periods have occurred (205,762 to 141554). This data has been tabulated from Tables 5.12 and 5.13 of FMZ 15 background information report of 2019 (https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-5715). Lack of clear criteria for what is PGT and supplemental stocking and consistency in their application have confounded the classification of some Walleye stocking. (This is a problem!) **Paradoxically, PGT stocking in FMZ 15 of Walleye from 2001-2006 to 2007-2015 increased significantly from zero to 71,331 fish. Supplement stocking also grew from 1275 to 66,911 fish.** Also, the life stage at which Walleye have been reported to be stocked can be misleading; as the terms: sac fry, fry and fingerlings may be used inconsistently. The number of Walleye stocked annually varies greatly due, in part, to the vagaries of Walleye culture success (This has been improved greatly (pers. comm. Tim Drew, White Lake Culture Station). ***Private and Partner Stocking*** Private stocking is stocking done by individuals or groups under the authority of the Licence to Stock Fish. The waterbodies stocked are a combination of private lakes and ponds that do not have public access and accessible lakes that MNRF does not stock. Partner stocking is generally done by private groups with the support of MNRF into publicly accessible waters. Support can be in the form of financial or advisory. Partner stocking is typically done by Fish and Game Clubs. It was formerly authorized as MNRF stocking but is now authorized by licence	

under the auspices of the Community Hatchery Program which is administered by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Since 2001, stocking has been undertaken by about 40 individuals or organizations into Finally, an average of over 600,000 Walleye was stocked privately or by partners into 4 lakes annually between 2001 and 2015. A total of 16 different water bodies were stocked but the number stocked has declined over time with only 6 different lakes stocked by 2 groups (HHOA and Almaguin Community Hatchery Program (ACHP) since 2011. Unlike MNRF Walleye stocking, which is mainly of fingerlings, most partner and private stocking is of newly hatched sac fry. Virtually all was classified as supplemental stocking (the HHOA stocks several lakes with fingerlings on a PGT basis). The number of Walleye stocked annually varies greatly, in large part due to variation in egg collection success.	
Panfish (Black Crappie, Bluegill, Pumpkinseed, Yellow Perch)	
	Goal: Maintain the Panfish fishery with FMZ 15. **Objectives:** **I.** Maintain panfish populations at current levels. **II.** Minimize further unauthorized introductions and range increase of Panfish species into new waterbodies. **III.** Increase angling opportunities and effort for Panfish to maintain current abundance. **No stocking strategy changes for Panfish proposed.**
Splake, Rainbow Trout, and Brown Trout	
	The main purpose of these species is to provide for additional angling opportunities

	and to divert angling effort from natural Brook Trout and Lake Trout fisheries via put-grow-take stocking. A goal statement was not explicitly developed for these species given their limited management role, however, relevant management objectives, stocking strategies and management actions have been proposed. **Relevant Objectives:** **I.** Maintain the number and distribution of natural Brook Trout populations. **II.** Maintain the number and distribution of natural Lake Trout populations. **III.** Maintain angling opportunities for stocked Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout and Splake.
Rainbow Trout, which are non-native to Ontario, are stocked strictly on a PGT basis. On average 38 waters were stocked with about 58,000 fish per year between 2001 and 2015 (Table 5.10, Figure 5.5). A total of 84 waters have been stocked since 2001. The numbers have been relatively stable since 2001. A total of 126 different water bodies were stocked with Splake between 2001 and 2015. Splake are an artificial hybrid produced exclusively for PGT stocking. They are typically stocked into transition lakes that have complex fish communities and are unsuitable for Brook Trout but do not have adequate deep-water habitat for Lake Trout. Brown Trout are stocked on a limited basis in the zone. About 5 waterbodies were stocked each year with about 8,000 fish between 2001 and 2015 (Table 5.11, Figure 5.6). A total of 6 different waters have been stocked between 2001 and 2015, 5 of them were rivers or	**Proposed Stocking Strategies**: Do not stock Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout or Splake into lakes that are managed as natural Lake Trout or Brook Trout populations. Rationale: Supplemental stocking of other salmonids into natural Lake Trout or Brook Trout populations can have deleterious impacts to the natural trout populations which should be avoided. Consider stocking Splake on a PGT basis in specific waterbodies to address fish community objectives and support local economies where management priority is not for natural reproduction. Rationale: In some waterbodies where natural reproduction of Lake Trout or Brook Trout may be minimal, but the socio-economic potential of the fishery is significant, stocking on a put-grow-take basis may be rationalized. Stock Splake in other waterbodies to divert effort from natural Brook and Lake Trout lakes. Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout have negative impacts on Brook Trout populations and should not be supported. Rationale: Given the vulnerability of natural trout populations to overexploitation, it is important to continue to provide diversionary

streams. Brown Trout are not native to Ontario and are stocked strictly on a PGT basis in FMZ 15.	fisheries for other salmonids to help attract angling effort from natural trout populations. Continue to stock Splake to create additional angling opportunities and look to improve effectiveness where possible. Rationale: Splake provide unique angling opportunities and are sought-after by many anglers for recreational and consumptive purposes.
Invasive Species Proposed Management Actions	
	Proposed Regulatory Actions: 11 waterbodies containing natural trout populations within FMZ 15 are proposed to have live baitfish bans. Rationale: The use of live baitfish poses a threat to native fish communities via introductions of non-native species. Algonquin Provincial Park is an aquatic ecosystem that has largely avoided the effects of introduced species. Maintaining this relatively pristine ecosystem is a priority for management.
	Key Proposed Management Actions: **Prohibit the use of live fish as bait on high value and high-risk natural trout waters and waters that flow into Algonquin Park.**