



Hammond River Angling Association



Hammond River Salmon Count!

By Sarah Campbell

On October 24th, about a dozen volunteers joined HRAA staff and DFO employees to perform a visual assessment of the adult salmon population in the Hammond River. Teams assembled at Silver Hill early that morning, where more than twenty grilse and salmon could be seen in the pool below. The three teams were assigned their pools and set off to count salmon, two groups to perform visual counts while the other would perform swim-throughs.

With the help of our devoted volunteers and advice from DFO employees, we performed our most successful visual assessment yet. A total of 15 pools were hit, with 7 of them being assessed by the swim-through method. This is our third consecutive year performing this type of assessment and, heeding the advice of DFO staff, we decided to snorkel through the pools this year, instead of scuba diving as we have in the past. By reducing the amount of gear the swimmers required, we were able to speed up the process without exhausting them. This enables us to hit more sites and assess them more thoroughly.

While perfecting our techniques and improving overall methods is an exciting step for all of us at HRAA, the real good news story is

the number of grilse and salmon that were spotted through this endeavor. A total of 22 adults and 93 grilse were observed in a single day on the Hammond River. When you consider that we really only covered a small portion of the watershed and that the fall run had likely not come up by this time, the HRAA is ecstatic with these numbers. We



DFO's Ross Jones surveys the Silver Hill pool; water temp 3°C. Photo: S Campbell

also collected 9 fish for our broodstock collection in August and since the count we have observed

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Rock face at Tabor Bridge pool is changed forever

By Tom Benjamin

Our community lost a major landmark this summer. If you haven't driven over the bailey bridge at Tabor Pool lately, be prepared for a shock: bridge construction currently underway has demolished much of the unique rock face that made this salmon pool one of the most picturesque scenes on the river.

A construction project is underway to replace the metal bailey bridge that was installed when the original wooden covered bridge was damaged many years ago. The new concrete bridge is being constructed upstream from the existing bailey bridge, and will straighten the road access on each end of the new bridge.

The beautiful rock face that lined the pool has been blasted to make footings for the new bridge.

HRAA staff and board are concerned about the timing of the construction as well. Permits originally required that all in-river activity cease by Sept. 31, but the permit deadline has been extended by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to the end of December.

Tabor Bridge Pool is a significant staging pool for migrating Atlantic Salmon, and usually holds several large salmon and grilse. Any changes or degradation to the pool would be of great concern in this critical habitat area. Downstream spawning and juvenile nursery habitat is at great risk as well.

In some cases, HRAA has used this pool as a source for broodstock collection.

A heavy rainstorm in late October saw many of the silt fences at the site overwhelmed by the rush of water. We are concerned that gravel or silt could infill the holding pool. The armour rock that will be placed at each bridge abutment may create an opportunity for ice jams during spring freshet, and change the nature of the pool. Ice jams could cause scouring of the pool bottom.

Tabor Bridge Pool has long been the subject of photographs and paintings, with artists attempting to capture the sinuous upheavals of the sedimentary rock face.



How the cliff face at Tabor Bridge used to look. Photo: unknown

How does it look today? See page 8

Executive Director's Message

I'm pleased to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of the Hammond River Angling Association. It's great to have the opportunity to work with this fine organization after spending several years as a member before moving to positions on the board and executive of the HRAA.

Let me tell you a little about myself: I'm a long time resident of Quispamsis, and raised my three children here. I'm a committed envi-



ronmental, fly-fisherman and fly-tyer. The Hammond has always been one of my favoured spots to wet a line.

As well, I hold other positions with salmon

conservation organizations in the province. I'm currently president of the NB Salmon Council, a role I accepted in March of this year, for a two-year term. Part of my responsibilities includes meetings with other regional council presidents to discuss regional issues facing Atlantic salmon. I am in regular contact with the presidents of the Councils from eastern Canada, Quebec, Maine and New England.

I'm also a director of the Atlantic Salmon Federation. And, I also serve as a member of the provincial board of the Atlantic Salmon Endowment Fund, where my role is to review proposals from within the province to utilize the \$30 million fund established to give financial support to salmon conservation initiatives in the province. (The HRAA was the recipient of funds from the ASEF, and is currently working on a project to assess the adult salmon population of the river, and to develop a watershed management plan.)

I'm really pleased to have this opportunity to work with the staff, board and members of the HRAA. I've gotten to know many of you through the years, through various HRAA events. I'd like to ask you all for input and advice on our organization. One area I'd like to focus on is increased membership involvement: more social events, and more use of the building by our members. We'd like to open the centre up for more use for association activity for our members.

I'll be working closely with the existing team. Also, I'd particularly like to thank the efforts of Arnie Boer, who assisted the staff as

By Tom Benjamin

a consultant for the past several months. Some great work was accomplished, particularly the finalization of a Strategic Plan. This document defines our strategy for the future development of the HRAA, and includes a well defined Mission Statement that we will use in all future planning for the organization.

I think the HRAA has a great deal of potential to grow and develop, and continue the great work we've done to protect the watershed and our wild Atlantic Salmon. We've built a great reputation amongst the salmon conservation community in the province, a reputation I'd like to build on and continue.

These are exciting times at HRAA. We have a capable staff, working on a variety of projects to benefit the watershed and our salmon. Significant efforts are underway to provide an accurate count of returning adults. Part of this project involves innovative use of underwater cameras to record images of migrating salmon. This has been tied in with swim-throughs of key pools, and visual counts from some of our dedicated volunteers.

The results on Oct. 24 were great: a count of 115 salmon and grilse in the small number of pools that were viewed. This is the highest number of confirmed fish we have been able to count in recent years. Plus, we know we captured eight fish during broodstock in August, and we're seeing additional fish enter the system with the fall rains bringing higher water levels.

All in all, encouraging news! I'm looking forward to seeing more of all of our dedicated members at HRAA events!

Hammond River Angling Association is a not-for-profit community group focused on salmon preservation through watershed management, education and public outreach.

HRAA's office is located at:

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www.hraa.ca**

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Fax 832-2077**



HRAA 2008 Board of Directors, And Committee Chairs:

Executive Committee

President— Barry Carr
1st Vice Pres— vacant
2nd Vice president— vacant
Secretary— Roy Marchand
Treasurer— Jody Middleton

Directors:

Al Guay Jean MacDonald
Wayne Love Susan Ainsworth
Randy Phillips Gerry Munn
Peter Estabrooks

Committee Chairs

Dinner Committee: Randy Phillips
Annual Angler's Draw: Jim Gillespie

Fish'N'Jam: _____
Maintenance: Al Guay
Membership: Peter Estabrooks
Fly-Tying and Casting Committee:
Andy Dollar & Harry Pickrell

Staff:

Tom Benjamin: Executive Director-
Tombenjam@gmail.com
Sandy MacKay: Education and Public
Outreach ed@hraa.ca
Sarah Campbell: Watershed Management Specialist biology@hraa.ca
Paula Boyle: Office Manager
office@nbnet.nb.ca
Shawn Prosser: Natural Resources
Specialist tech@hraa.ca
Colleen Gallant— Hall Maintenance

Volunteer Activity: Update on HRAA Actions

The new **HRAA Welcome Sign** was put up this summer, on Highway 100, built by HRAA members Chuck Sr, Joe-lene and Chuck Jr. Thanks to Shaw Signs for the help with this new emblem announcing our presence in the community.



The **HRAA Website** is complete and available— visit www.hraa.ca and have a look. Thanks to Jeff Matheson of Atlantic Musician for setting that up for us.

HRAA's **2008-2013 Strategic Plan** is available for members to have a look at, Look at the [downloads section](#) of our website, or call the office for a copy.

The HRAA Dinner Committee has begun meetings, planning the 14th Annual Hammond River Fundraising Dinner. Interested in helping out with Fundraising Activity? Randy Phillips is the chair of that committee.

FISH N JAM— Thanks to HRAA member **Mark Roberts**. For many years, Mark Roberts has been the tireless volunteer taking responsibility for the Weekly Fish'n'Jam. Mark has opened the place

up, set up the bar and ensured the place was in correct order for the Fish'n' Jam participants. Mark also played bass with the jammers every week, took care of the cash and closed the place up. Mark's donation of his personal time to manage the Fish'n'Jam has been in the hundreds of hours. Over the last few months, Mark has been working with a



Mark Roberts managed the Fish'N 'Jam for 5 years. Photo: S Campbell

number of volunteers to build a successor to his role as Fish'N'Jam chair. As Mark steps down from this role, he deserves a very big **Thank You** for the work he has done.

Community issues: Community group addressing Natural Gas Storage in the Hammond River Watershed: Citizens from the Hammond River watershed or-

ganized a group called the "**Quality of Life Initiative**" to ensure that local residents have a strong voice regarding potential environmental impacts. Corridor Resources Inc is conducting a feasibility study regarding the storage of Natural Gas in natural caverns called "salt domes". The salt is flushed out with millions of litres of fresh water and the remaining cavern used for natural gas storage. The resulting brine would be piped to the Bay of Fundy. There are potential negative effects on groundwater resources and wells, potential leakages of pressurized gas and danger to human health. This group holds regular meetings. To get more information on the next meeting date, see the map of the proposed exploration area (which is 1/2 the Hammond River Watershed) or to get a schedule of meeting dates or learn more about this issue, visit <http://www.the-quality-of-life-initiative.info> .

Congratulations to **Geoff Giffin**. Geoff spent a number of years as Vice President of the Hammond River Angling Association, and has recently been named as the New Brunswick Regional Director of the Atlantic Salmon Federation. Geoff has stepped down from his role with HRAA.

In a related story, Geoff's dad, former HRAA president **Randy Giffin** recently purchased 11 bricks for the HRAA Brick Board. By purchasing brick plates, Randy enshrined all 11 of his grandchildren's names on the HRAA Brick Board. Plates on the board are \$50 each, and of the original 195 spaces available, only about 40 are left.

Salmon Count: con't from page 1

three more salmon move up into the system using our underwater video surveillance system. This moved the total count up to 127 spawners being observed in the system by October 26.

In 2009, the HRAA is planning to continue with visual assessments as well as incorporate a mark/recapture plan into the adult assessment. The mark recapture may give us one of our best estimates for the number of returning adults in the Hammond River system. We'd like to send out a special thank you to Ross Jones, Leroy Anderson and all of the volunteers that came out to help with this count. Watch out for even more opportunities in the coming year to get out and spy some salmon!



Lowell Henderson watching at Kilpatrick's pool Photo: S Campbell

Kids R Cool's 8th year saw numbers of campers peak, new activities like organic gardening and a butterfly hatchery and a new array of staff, counsellors-in-training and volunteers helping out. The program is built on the concept that as young people learn about river recreation, they can also learn to be good environmental stewards of NB's freshwater resources—the program's core activities are kayaking,



Campers investigating invertebrates from the river learn how species biodiversity reflects water quality. Photo: S Mackay

swimming, fishing, science games, and arts & crafts.

2008 Camp coordinator Mallory Driscoll began accepting registrations in early May, and before camp began in late June, more than half our available camp spots were pre-booked. HRAA had to begin limiting campers' total

weeks. In 2009, we'll continue to limit how many weeks each camper can attend.

By engaging Andrew Browne as the Camp Biologist, we were able to bring a new level of science activity to camp. With advice from local naturalist Jim Wilson, Andrew set up a monarch butterfly hatchery. Campers were amazed to watch the development of caterpillars to chrysalis and the eventual emergence of fully grown butterflies from their casing. Butterflies were tagged for monitoring purposes with help from Mr Wilson.

"This was my daughter's first time at the KidsRCool camp and she absolutely loved it. Things seemed to be well organized and the days were full. Counsellors were knowledgeable and seemed to genuinely interested in the kids and providing a good experience. Nicole wants to "definitely" go back next year." E.M.

Zara Boyce and Callum Young were on hand to ensure campers' safety—both these staffers were lifeguards. Thanks to the constant vigilance of the 2008 camp staff, we had another safe year. Minor mishaps were handled professionally, and there were no major incidents.

In addition to these 4 core staffers Kids R Cool also enjoyed assistance

from exchange students from Quebec and Switzerland as well as Counsellors-in-Training. The CiT program now feeds staff into Kids R Cool—unfortunately, we don't always have space on staff for the students who have received training with us.

Although the campers love fishing, we continue to have difficulty teaching fly fishing. In 2009, we will be looking for more volunteers to assist with this activity. We are finding that fly fishing needs to be taught in very small groups with close attention to each student. We may also host a specific "fly-fishing" week for a limited group in order to improve training opportunities.

Special thanks to volunteers Mary Jo Boyce, Gary Cooper, Jim Wilson, Geoff Giffin, and Fundy Solid Waste and all the volunteer CiT's. Another successful year!

Lily Lake Fishing Derby

On June 7, 2008, HRAA volunteers Jim Gillespie and Arnold Boer organized the **2nd Annual Fishing Derby** at Lily Lake. Scheduled to coincide with NB Fishing Days, this activity brings many anglers young and old to Lily



Lake to encourage protection of wildlife by engaging new anglers. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped out with registration and food. Thanks as well to Cooke Aquaculture and the Greater Saint John Community Foundation for sponsoring this event! This activity raised awareness about fishing in NB and also raised funds for other projects.



Kids R Cool teaches participants and staff important lessons about maintenance, boat safety, proper use of transport equipment. Photo: S MacKay

Public School Education and Member participation by Sandy MacKay

High School Program- Discovering Watershed Ecosystems

HRAA is offering field trips to high school biology, outdoor education and environmental biology classes. Teachers have the option to choose from a number of activities, each designed to meet specific curriculum needs. The watershed

survival monitoring, and insect collections. Water quality discussions, conducted in the cow pasture to add learning opportunities regarding the need for co-operation between agriculture producers and environmentalists.

In total, over 600 students have participated in Discovering Watershed Ecosys-

HRAA's High School project is sponsored by the NB Environmental Trust Fund.

Community Activity:

HRAA members have been hard at work this spring and fall, working out in the watershed. Many members signed onto "Green Teams"- groups of people who participated in trips through the watershed to collect garbage, take photographs and help out with visual salmon collections and assessments.

Over a three month period, these teams picked up a total of 15 bags of loose garbage and many other large single items. Several large dumpsites were found as well, and clean-ups will be scheduled. Members also participated in kayaking trips in the spring and fall, hosted by HRAA's kayaking instructor Mallory Driscoll.



Biology and film students from Hampton PALS kayaked up the river and learned about erosion first hand, seeing new sediment deposits. The students had to slow their upstream progress as a herd of cattle crossed the river, giving evidence. Photo S Mackay

Project WET Training

HRAA will continue to host workshops for formal and non-formal educators in the coming months. Project WET activities engage students with hands-on interdisciplinary lessons that teach important concepts about the most precious resource on the planet- water. Workshop attendants receive training on use of the Project WET Curriculum and Activity Guide in a 3-hour workshop.

overview tour is given at the Hammond River Park- thanks to help from the Town of Quispamsis for letting us use that facility in the Spring and Fall. HRAA designed a site specific data collection sheet to help students gather information on different species of trees, plants and wildlife that use different parts of a watershed. Special focus is given to the unique feature of the Hammond- the salmon that still inhabit these waters.

Riparian tours take place in the floodplains across the river from the Conservation Centre, and include tree planting and

tems, including classes from Saint John High, Hampton High, Saint Malachy's, Rothesay High. HRAA also helped out the 2008 NB Envirothon Champions, the Fundy Home Educator's M2B3 team from Rothesay.

Another group of students-the Hampton PALS- participated in planting efforts to rehabilitate degraded industrial sites on Palmer Brook. Sites that once bled tonnes of soil into Palmer are now becoming stabilized due to the efforts of these students along with remarkable efforts by landowners.

New Education plans for 2009

Watch for the development of a new Biodiversity and Benthic module this spring. Scientists use insects to monitor Water Quality- we plan to teach students how the different kinds of bugs in the river inform us about water quality.

HRAA projects are sponsored by...



Cooke
Aquaculture



Your Environmental Trust Fund at Work

New  Nouveau
Brunswick



...and a lot of help from community members.

Juvenile Density Surveys:

The Wildlife Trust Fund sponsored the HRAA’s fourth summer of juvenile density surveys, assessing the populations of young salmon in the Hammond and its tributaries. This year 19 sites were assessed for salmon, with all but 2 containing young salmon. Since 2005 the HRAA has been surveying sites throughout the Hammond River monitoring the populations of all fish species with an emphasis on Atlantic salmon juveniles. Sarah Campbell, watershed management specialist for the HRAA, has been working to survey populations and locate areas of concern within the river system. Over the past three years Sarah and her summer staff have worked to re-establish and restore salmon habitat throughout the Hammond River. With stocking survival figures on the rise it is apparent the efforts have been successful.

The HRAA has continued to gather population data submitting it to the aquatic data warehouse for further analysis. This HRAA will also maintain records at the conservation center for analysis and future comparisons to monitor populations over many years.

Figures for the summer of 2008 show stabilization from the increase of 2007. The HRAA assessed three main stem sites with one being a closed 3 sweep assessment and the other two as presence absences. The remaining 16 assessments were conducted on

Year	Average # Fry per site	Average # Parr per site	Average# Brook Trout per site	Overall, average per site
2007	16.9	4.4	14.5	108
2008	11.8	9.8	11.2	100

various tributaries throughout the Hammond River watershed.

Average densities found during summer assessments of 2007 and 2008 presented as fish per 100 square meters. Assessed in the Hammond River watershed, by the Hammond River Angling Association.



Above. Juvenile Salmon found in a tributary of the Hammond River 2008. Photo: Shawn Prosser

Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation sponsors HRAA’s Underwater Cameras:

Through sponsorship through the Atlantic Salmon Endowment Fund , HRAA has been able to embark on a unique attempt to count salmon by using underwater video cameras and capture data on computers. This idea was sparked by Professor Matt Litvak’s use of underwater cameras to monitor sturgeon in the Kennebecasis River, near the confluence with the Hammond.

Considerable research went into the technological requirements for underwater video monitoring. Staff learned quickly that the problems that beset HRAA crews in the late 90’s with trapnets would also recur with underwater cameras. Placed on the river bottom and attached to cinder blocks, the cameras fed underwater video directly to monitors at the Conservation Centre. Cameras were set up to cover a complete cross section of the river– motion sensors would trigger the cameras to capture any fish moving past the cameras.

The first difficulty was encountered once the night-time videos began streaming in– differences in light sources meant that cameras ran all night and captured only a short distance of footage, but no fish at night. Staff and volunteers discussed methods to improve the process.

Then came the heavy rains in early September. Rain gauges indicated that more than 140mm of rain fell, and as a result, the Hammond river changed drastically over the next few days. The cameras were washed downstream by the heavy waters. A few days following, HRAA divers brought the cameras back to the surface. As well, HRAA staff and volunteers had a session with advisors regarding the logistics of placement. The cameras were dried out and repaired, refitted with heavier blocks and lights. Suggestions included finding a pinch point in the river to capture more footage, but the camera sites were limited by the length of our cables.

By mid-October the cameras were remounted and replaced in the river and began transmitting information again. On the 27th of October, another heavy rain washed large amounts of debris downstream. The cables connecting the lights gathered debris, and the cameras rolled downstream, snapping the wires. Extra precautions had been taken to protect the cameras, so they weren’t damaged. One camera stayed in stream, three came out again for repairs. This one camera, hidden behind a rock continues to stream live footage of salmon, trout and striped bass like the one below. HRAA will continue to work the bugs out of the process for the duration of the project, and use footage to help quantify adult assessments.



Guess who’s coming for dinner? Our underwater cameras have captured more than 30 large striped bass since August. More underwater camera video footage is captured on the internet on YouTube; the channel is hrra1977.

Watershed Management Plan

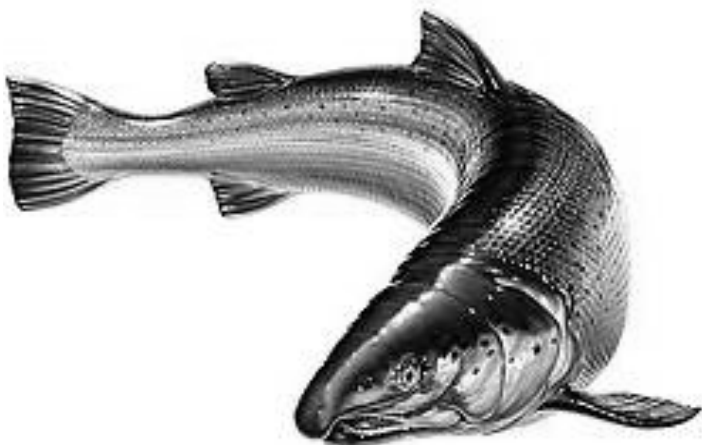
By Shawn Prosser

Currently the HRAA is compiling data collected over recent years from stream habitat assessments, electro-fishing surveys, and water quality assessments conducted in the watershed. The data will be used to inform the creation of a watershed management plan. The watershed management plan has three basic goals; restoration of the watershed, education, and protection. With these three goals the HRAA is looking to write a manual on the direction the association should take on managing the watershed to ensure sustainability. The plan will outline all actions that need to be taken to best preserve the health of the watershed.

The restoration portion of the management plan will identify issues currently impacting the health of the Hammond River. Problem areas, especially on the three C class brooks, have been assessed to identify the sources and, corrective actions required to improve the water quality and overall habitat conditions. This section will look at each reach and tributary as a separate section to better develop a strategy for restoration. The goal is to identify areas of concern and methods of restoring the sites to a natural, healthy state.

The education section of the plan looks to direct future education ventures by creating goals with targeted outcomes. Under the direction of Sandy Mackay, Director of Education and Public Outreach, the HRAA will develop plans for educating students and the public at large on issues facing the watershed. The HRAA will work within the community to deliver the education targets for key areas of concern in the watershed and develop implementation strategies. This will address major concerns within the watershed by empowering the surrounding communities.

Protection of the river system is the primary goal of the plan, although this section will identify areas that currently do not require restoration, but require awareness. Research is determining areas within the watershed that help to maintain the overall health of the river. These valuable sites are at risk of degradation by expanding development, harmful land use practices and industrial impacts. We will also address areas where current stability is not present and action may be required to be taken given any unforeseen damage, at which time it would then move from protection to restoration.



~ HRAA Calendar ~ ~ Upcoming Events ~

Every WEDNESDAY Night 7pm

FISH'N'JAM

Fly-tying and music- Canada's only accompanied fly-tying event. Open to the public, this is HRAA regular weekly social event. Don't want to tie one on; don't feel like singing? Drop in to visit with folks.

Thursday November 20th 7pm

Speaker's Series: Jim Wilson

Birds of the Kennebecasis Valley

Saturday Nov 29th 7pm-

Watershed Coffee House,

featuring Mary Blenkhorn, George Urquhart, Jim Clark and the Banned, Shirley McFee and the Fundy Ayre Fiddlers, Richard Mercer and 39 Toes

Members \$3, non-members \$4 Please bring a donations for the KV Food Bank. Call 832-1230 to reserve tickets.

Wednesday December 3rd- 7pm

Dinner Committee Meetings

Meetings are underway for the Annual Fundraising Dinner. Members are welcome to join the committee to help out.

Saturday December 13th- 2-6pm-

HRAA Potluck

HRAA members and family friends are all welcome to attend this excellent event. Prizes and raffles, music and good cheer. Can you cook a turkey? Give us a call- 832-1230!

Thursday January 15th, 7pm

Speaker's Series- Jim Wilson

The Bay of Fundy: A Seabird Magnet

Naturalist Jim Wilson studies seabird action all over this region, and will present a remarkable show about the plethora of birdlife travelling through the fundy region.

Thursday February 19th 7pm

Thursday March 19th 7pm

Speaker's Series- TBA

Friday -Saturday, March 27/28

Dieppe Fly Fishing Forum

March-April- Angler's Dream Draw

May-Annual Fundraising Dinner

Visit the NEW HRAA WEBSITE at www.hraa.ca
for an ongoing list of events.

A Similar Journey

The year 2008 has been an exciting and encouraging one for anglers, scientists and conservationists throughout eastern North America. Wild Atlantic salmon returned to their freshwater homes to spawn in numbers that were unexpectedly strong, especially when compared to the general prediction that returns would be low after 2007 proved to be such a disappointing year from Newfoundland to New England. This year served to remind everyone that Atlantic salmon are a mysterious creature that continue to return home in the face of hungry predators, the reduction of habitat through sedimentation, pollution and dams as well as countless other unknown pressures in the open seas.

Earlier this fall, I had the good fortune to bear witness to the mystery of these great travelers right here in our own Hammond River when I assisted HRAA, DFO and other volunteers in an adult salmon assessment. While Sandy swam through the icy pools with Ross Jones and Leroy Anderson of DFO in their dry-suits (and I hope those suits lived up to their promise!) to count salmon in various pools, I provided support from shore and visited a number of pools to perform a visual count. Looking down into the gin clear autumn waters to see groups of salmon that had been born in the Hammond

perhaps 4-5 years earlier and had traveled thousands of kilometers to feed and grow, I felt humbled. These fish are truly remarkable. Each and every one faced inconceivable odds in making it so close to completing their natural reproductive cycle.



It is up to groups like HRAA and other conservation organizations in New Brunswick and beyond to work with federal, provincial and local governments and industry to ensure that these great wild fish have a safe home to return to, and healthy habitat in which to spawn and rear the next generations.

Amid the excitement of increased returns came moments of stark realization and disappointment... One day, as my wife Robyn and I were traveling to St. Martin's for a hike along Big Salmon River, we drove across Tabor Bridge where rumour had it that the

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What does Tabor Bridge and environs look like today?

Captured during a recent high water event, the photos below show what's happened to that rock face, and the in-stream structures currently in place. The metal trestles are supports for concrete spans—once the concrete spans are in place, the two trestles and the supports, including in-stream concrete abutments

and the pad- tonnes of loose rock on the old beach- will be removed. This is scheduled to occur before the river ices over.

HRAA is working with officials from DENV DFO and DOT to ensure that any damage to the Tabor Bridge salmon pool is minimized, and that downstream spawning and nursery habitat is not in-filled.

The photo above shows the remnants of the remarkable folds in the rock face. Photo by Tom Benjamin.



Con't from previous page

old bailey bridge was being replaced. What we encountered broke my heart. For those not familiar with the Tabor Bridge Pool, there is (or shall I say "was") a rock wall on the south side of the river that is (er, *was*) a geological wonder. Layers of rock, millions of years old were forced into a most unusual wave pattern that somehow seemed impossible. In the great wisdom of replacing the old bridge, a decision was made to blast out most of that rock wall to provide footing for the new structure.

What took millions of years to form surely took only hours to destroy. And once again, I was reminded that in the great game of rock, paper and scissors, it is paper (in the form of construction plans) that, sadly, still beats rock. The former glory of that formation remains in our memories and our photos... I'll forever treasure the picture I have of my son Ben learning to cast a fly with the rock standing prominently in the background.

Not only had nature's sculpture been destroyed, the construction activities were threatening one of the most valuable holding sanctuaries for our returning salmon. I am extremely happy to see that HRAA has taken an active role to work with enforcement authorities at DFO and the Department of Environment to ensure that all measures are taken in the remainder of the construction phase to protect this sensitive area in the years to come. I urge HRAA to take the next steps and find out how the organization can be involved in the development planning stages to prevent similar events from unfolding.

Lastly, as some of you may know, I recently accepted a position with the Atlantic Salmon Federation as the NB Regional Director. One of the main responsibilities I have in this new job is to work closely with the NB Salmon Council on matters pertaining to wild Atlantic salmon conservation here in our home province that has been blessed with majestic rivers. It is a privilege for me to embark on this new career of conservation work. Sadly, as part of accepting this new position, I have had to resign from the Board of HRAA.

But something struck me about this new journey that I am on and how it is similar, in a way, to that of the Atlantic salmon. Just as young smolts descend their home rivers to the sea where they will grow and develop, the position I now hold at ASF is drawing me from my home waters of the Hammond (and of the HRAA) and into what I hope will be an ocean of opportunity to learn more about rivers and the many complex issues they face in this modern age. I realize that this analogy is loose at best (... and I do hope that I won't be running a gauntlet of predators!) but it sort of fits. I look forward to learning from the amazing work that people are doing each and every day to address their unique issues and to protect these ecosystems. And I look forward to bringing this knowledge back to my home waters of the Hammond.

Smallmouth Bass on the Miramichi

By Tom Benjamin

Anglers and salmon researchers alike were concerned about the news released in October: smallmouth bass have been discovered in Miramichi Lake, which drains into the main Southwest Miramichi River.

Smallmouth are an introduced, invasive species that could have a significant impact on the Miramichi's famous salmon runs, as well as the native brook trout population.

The introduced fish could potentially carry disease or parasites. And, they are known to be a significant predator of salmon at different life stages. In the Saint John River system, as an example, smallmouth are known to be a significant predator of migrating smolt.

A committee of watershed groups and government departments formed quickly to try and determine the extent of the problem. Extensive electrofishing was carried out in the lake's outlet, to determine how far the small mouth had spread from the lake. Several age classes of fish were located, indicating that they have been in the lake for some time now.

At least one specimen in the eight inch range was located in Lake Brook, which connects the lake with the Miramichi River. While it is not known how the bass were introduced, suspicions are that the bass were deliberately, and illegally, introduced to the 520 acre lake. Fines of up to \$100,000 can be levied on anyone convicted of such introductions.

Potential control measures are complicated by the size of the lake: 520 acres in surface area. One control measure is to poison the lake with Rotenone, but that would be very expensive, and difficult to do in a lake of that size. That technique was used recently to remove a population of pickerel from Despres Lake, also on the Miramichi drainage.

Efforts are now underway to build a containment fence, with small-size mesh screening, to prevent further fish movement. With colder water setting in, it's less likely that the bass will be moving through the system before spring. The intent is to control the movement of the fish as quickly as possible, to allow time to develop an effective technique to eliminate them from the system.



Andy Dollar telling Peter Estabrooks about the one that got away at the Wednesday Night Fish'n'Jam.
Photo: unknown



This handsome 85cm Hammond salmon was captured during the Broodstock Collection last August. On Nov 13th, he provided milt for eggs for the fish friends program, sediment tubes and stocking. He'll be released back into the Hammond prior to ice up. Photo: S Prosser

We Fish You A Merry Christmas...

Seasons Greetings! It's an honour to have you as a member of the Hammond River Angling Association. As the New Year approaches, we would like to update our 2009 membership list with all of our active members. Please send a cheque to HRAA (no cash by mail). If you would prefer another form of payment you may call Paula and pay by phone with your Visa or MasterCard at 832-1230. We are in the office from Monday to Friday 9:00 - 5:00 for those of you who would prefer to pay cash.

*If you've already renewed your 2009 membership, thank you very much! HRAA's **AGM** will be late winter this year, and active membership is required for voting. Please share this with friends and family who support conservation in the Hammond River Watershed. We're always looking for new members to support our youth education, conservation and watershed management activities. (Save the photo!)*

With all our thanks, on behalf of the Executive, Board Members, and Staff of the HRAA.

**Membership fees: \$10– Senior or Student
\$20– Adult \$35– Family \$150– Lifetime membership**

\$50– Support HRAA by purchasing a Brick– (please include the text you would like inscribed on your brick).

If mailing in your payment, please return this form with your payment, including:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, I'd like to Buy a Brick. Please inscribe the following text on my brick:
(Max 40 characters)	

Email _____

Yes, I'd like to receive the HRAA e-letter via this address

Volunteer opportunities: *I'd like to get more involved. Please pass my contact information to the appropriate committee chair, and have them contact me. I'd like to get involved in:*

- | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Communications Committee | Social Committee (Coffeehouse, Fish'nJam) | Field Work | Fundraising |
| Building and Grounds Maintenance | Membership | Dinner Committee | |