



2024 Project Update

1. Atlantic Ecosystem Restoration Fund: Our restoration work along Salt Springs Brook has turned out great! This past season, we were able to add riprap along 100m length of Salt Springs Brook to fortify the severely eroding banks. We then hosted volunteer tree planting opportunities- during our fall planting, we were fortunate to have the Hampton U13 Timberwolves hockey team join us for some tree planting! This first section of Salt Springs brook is now complete, with stabilized banks, trees, and grass seed! We will be continuing to expand upon this vital work and will be targeting another 100m length stretch of Salt Springs Brook in 2025- stay tuned for more exciting volunteer surveys!
2. Cyanobacteria Monitoring: All of our AlgaeTracker devices have now been retrieved from their watercourses for the season. Throughout 2024, we did not document any cyanobacteria blooms within Darlings Lake, and it will take us a bit of time to analyze the vast amount of data collected this past year with previous years to help us understand why the lake has bloomed in the past but not this year. Our field crew were also able to visit multiple other lakes that are listed on the Government of New Brunswick's Provincial Health Advisory Cyanobacteria List, including Lake Herkert, Irishtown Nature Park, Chamcook Lake, Lake Utopia, Washedemoak Lake and others. During these lake visits, we collected drone footage and samples that we were able to use our new BloomOptix equipment to determine cyanobacteria genera presence/absence in each of these lakes. We will continue to expand upon this project in 2025, and we will have a very exciting announcement coming soon on our cyanobacteria research!
3. Electrofishing season is now a wrap! In addition to surveying sites within the Hammond River watershed, we were also able to assist both the Kennebecasis Watershed Restoration Committee, Belleisle Watershed Coalition and ACAP Saint John perform electrofishing surveys in their respective watersheds! During our survey work with the BWC, we collected adipose tissue samples to determine if there is hybridization occurring between Atlantic salmon and brown trout- we anticipate having results from this undertaking in 2025. Additionally, we were able to collect tissue samples and perform Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tagging in the Irish River with ACAP Saint John, as we continue to expand our knowledge on the Inner Bay of Fundy Atlantic salmon population. We are in the early stages of analyzing all of our electrofishing results; however, we know that our top 5 fish

species present within the Hammond River are the blacknose dace, common shiner, slimy sculpin, brook trout, and Atlantic salmon!

4. In November we hosted our Annual Volunteer Redd Count Survey! In total, we were joined by 18 volunteers, and we surveyed 6 hotspots in the watershed looking for signs of Atlantic salmon spawning! In one day, we counted a total of 74 redds, which is a great way to kick off our redd counts!
5. Our monofilament bins have once again been brought back in for the season! We were thrilled at how much fishing line these bins continue to collect! We also had great feedback from our partners across New Brunswick on how much fishing line they are collecting as well. While we do not have plans to build more of these units for 2025, we will continue to deploy them for years to come!
6. Our FlyBrary bins were a great success this past year! These are built on the concept of “have a fly, leave a fly; need a fly, take a fly” to encourage more people to get in to fly fishing (especially where the vast majority of the Hammond River watershed becomes fly fishing only in July)! Throughout the year, we could see that older flies were being taken, and new ones left in their place! Speaking of fly fishing, our Fly Tying group has started and they meet once a week from 6pm-9pm! Fly Tying nights will be every Thursday and it is open to everyone 14 years and up, no experience necessary!
7. In October, HRAA’s President John Blenis, and HRAA’s Project Manager, Sarah Blenis, were invited to attend the prestigious Lieutenant Governor General’s Award for Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation! It was a beautiful day in Fredericton where we were able to meet old friends and new and celebrate the achievements of Mark Hambrook who was recognized for his decades of dedication to our rivers!
8. On October 12th, our field and office staff travelled to the Pollett River to join Amlamgog (Fort Folly) First Nation, Fort Folly Habitat Recovery, and the Fundy Salmon Recovery release Inner Bay of Fundy salmon! This was an excellent opportunity to witness the partnerships between local residents, salmon conservation groups, watershed groups, Parks Canada, and industry supporters join forces to help release salmon back into the Petitcodiac watershed! This will be a day that our staff remember for the rest of their lives.
9. We are getting ready to start “wilding out” at the Hammond River Valley Elementary School! With financial support from the New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund, we will be assisting HRVES with the development of their nature trail! We had our initial meeting with HRVES staff, where they lead us through the nature trail and shared their visions for creating an outdoor classroom area. We are super excited at having the opportunity to help this school bring their vision to life- stay tuned for more awesome updates on this exciting project throughout 2025!

10. We have collected our last round of glyphosate presence/absence sampling, and we are still waiting on laboratory analysis of our replicate results. This undertaking has received a substantial amount of attention, and we are aiming to expand upon this pilot research project into 2025. There has been a large learning curve in regard to this sampling, as both approved and emerging methods of glyphosate analysis still suffer from some drawbacks in the sample preparation procedures and analytical processes. Although glyphosate is one of the most widely used agrochemicals, it is also one of the most difficult to measure- herein presents something that the scientific community refers to as the “glyphosate paradox”. For 2025, our goal is to continue our research and expand upon different sampling and analytical techniques to further our understanding of its presence or absence in watercourses and to assess any potential environmental impact.

11. Our Kids Fishing Club is now a wrap for the current season. In September, we headed to McCrea’s Farm where we had a lovely time catching some beautiful trout! In October, we visited Camp Glenburn where the kids caught smallmouth bass, sunfish, and a couple monster chain pickerel! The Kids Fishing Club then joined us in November to help do a morning redd count survey in advance of our main event- in total, we found 40 salmon redds and got to see 2 grilse! While we were out and about, all participants were given garbage bags, and we were able to collect garbage and debris off of the river’s edge!

12. Hammond River Nature Camp was a huge success again this year! With 9 full weeks of sold-out camps, we were able to have over 360 campers through our doors! What an amazing opportunity to educate local youth about wildlife and the environment! Each camper received a total of 10 hours of Environmental Education each week for a total of 90 hours taught through the summer. Similarly, core activities like kayaking, paddle boarding and swimming continue to educate campers on eco-friendly recreation. The positive comments from parents and campers alike on our new Camp Director, Sarah, were too numerous to count! Thanks, Sarah, for hitting it out of the park at camp this summer!