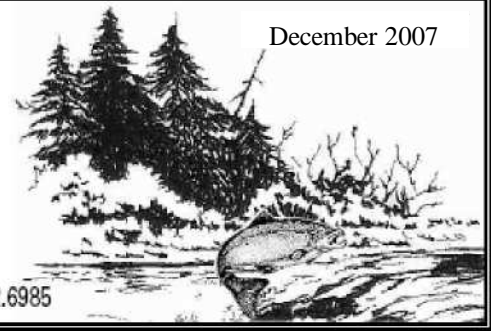


December 2007

The Salmon Run

Visit our website at www.sacosalmon.org

A Publication of the Saco River Salmon Club, P.O. Box 115, Saco, Maine 04072, 207.282.6985



From the President's Corner

We are looking forward to receiving 750,000 fertilized Atlantic salmon eggs for the 2008 season. That's good news and a relief for those who were wondering what our status was with regards to the availability of eggs from Craig Brook Hatchery. Soon, Garry Kas-ten and others will be looking for volunteers to help prepare our hatchery for the delivery and also to establish a volunteer list for cleaning, water quality testing, and egg picking during the months of January through March. After hatch out in April and through May volunteers continue their work keeping the fry healthy and prepare for stocking in mid-May. Think about how much time you can donate to the hatchery during the rearing season so that when Garry contacts you he will have an easier time of filling the schedule out.

While on the topic of eggs, Bill Archambault, Program Supervisor, Northeast Region Fisheries, from the Hadley, Massachusetts office has agreed to be our guest speaker for our November/December meeting held on December 12. Bill will discuss issues concerning our eggs, what the future may hold for us in regards to our program with USFWS, and why the line for Penobscot Atlantic salmon was drawn just one watershed north of the Saco River. December 12 promises to be an interesting and enlightening meeting.

The Florida Power and Light fish passage agreement is celebrated by our club and other organizations. For the complete story, see Mark's article in this issue.

After feasting on Lynn Jackson's (On the Corner Cafe) wonderfully prepared meal at our October meeting club members enjoyed our guest speakers Dan Bonville and RJ Mere, registered Master Maine guides from High Adventure Outfitters and Guide Service. They shared their stories of adventure – some high, some low, and some funny ones too.

Membership dues are coming up as the New Year approaches. Please get your membership updated and also include any changes in email addresses, phone numbers, and volunteer activities that will help with our work at the hatchery.

Please join us December 12 starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Episcopal Church, Route 1 in Saco. We hope to see you, your family, and your friends there.

Membership Committee News

By Garry Kasten

Any new memberships and donations submitted for the rest of this year will be counted as a full membership for 2008. If you need a tax write-off on your income taxes for 2007 now would be the time to submit your membership application and donations for the hatchery.

I am updating our volunteer list. If you are not on the volunteer list and wish to be notified when we need jobs done at the hatchery, contact Garry Kasten at SRSC115@verizon.net

Saco River Fish Passage Agreement Celebrated

By Mark Woodruff

The Saco River got an important boost November 14 as natural agencies, FPL Energy, and conservation groups gathered to recognize the objectives set out in the 2007 Saco River Fish Passage Agreement. Also in attendance at the Saco City Hall were representatives of federal, state, and local governments. After the ceremony, attendees were able to tour the Cataract Fishway and the Saco River Salmon Club Hatchery.

FPL Energy, owner of the six hydroelectric facilities on the Saco River, along with state and federal natural resource agencies, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, and the Saco River Salmon Club negotiated for three years to find the means to improve the river's fish populations. The terms of the agreement address issues related to American eel, American shad, Atlantic salmon, river herring, and smallmouth bass.



Measures that relate to Atlantic salmon restoration include:

- Operational dates for upstream passage at Bar Mills in 2016, West Buxton in 2019, Bonny Eagle in 2022, and Hiram in 2025.
- A three-year study of downstream passage routes used by Atlantic salmon kelts.
- FPL will pay \$50,000 per year until 2022 to offset costs associated with smolt stocking.
- Improvements to fry rearing and stocking with a one-time of \$25,000 grant from FPL to the Saco River Salmon Club. This grant was received during the ceremony.
- Funding from FPL for as much as \$100,000 over ten years toward the development of a geographic database to track annual habitat surveys, fish population studies, and fish access to habitat.
- FPL will donate a total of \$25,000 for

use in public education to increase public awareness of the cooperative fisheries management and restoration effort.

The complete agreement compels FPL, government fishery agencies, the Saco River Salmon Club, and the Atlantic Salmon Federation to work together to restore and manage the Saco River's fish populations. In my closing remarks at the ceremony, I recognized the individuals who made the agreement possible and the collaboration that is necessary to benefit the Saco River.

Volunteers Requested for Nominating Com- mittee

By Garry Kasten

John Blunt is looking for volunteers to work on the Nominating Committee. These are the requirements of the job as copied from the SRSC By-Laws:

At least 30 days before the annual election, the Board of Directors shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three to five members, not currently holding office, to nominate candidates for office in the upcoming election.

The Committee shall notify the Secretary, in writing, at least fifteen days before the election, of the candidates that it pro-

poses. The Secretary shall notify all members at least five (5) days before the Annual Election. At the annual election, members may nominate other members, if they so choose. (This meeting will be held before the annual banquet.)

If this is something you are interested in, please let me know this week so we can initiate the committee at the next BOD meeting.

Hatchery News

By Garry Kasten

Dick Neal has continued working on the emergency generator. It is running again but it still does not operate properly. Ron Lewis started working on the ramp to move the emergency generator outside. Ron installed a stable platform outside the back door to facilitate moving the generator outdoors.

Other things accomplished include installing insulating panels in the upstairs windows, mowing the back lawn for the last time this year, inventorying the chemicals, reorganized and inventoried the attic contents, moved archived files from under the troughs in the nursery to the attic and replaced a bunch of burned out fluorescent light bulbs. The cabinet under the sink in the lab has been cleaned out except for the Hydrochloric acid, which should be relocated. The sink drain has been eaten away by the acid fumes and needs to be replaced

and all the cardboard boxes under the sink had disintegrated. The instant hot water heater in the lab is out of order due to acid corrosion problems. Finally, the CD drive in the lab computer has been replaced. There are a couple of USB ports on the back of the computer which we might be able to utilize to transfer files with a memory stick or other USB device.

Skip Paolini and Rey Dussault continued to work on the trough drainage problems. Harold Porter picked up the fluorescent light bulbs so that we could improve the hatchery lighting and picked up corks so that all the coolers are ready for stocking fish. Art LeBlanc began double checking the screens in nursery section 1.

500 new brochures have been printed. About 200 have been left at LL Bean. Support from volunteers has reduced the TO DO list to 22 items.

Short Leaders - A look into the SRSC Business Meetings

By Jim Black, Club Secretary

It recently came to my attention that our membership would benefit from learning more about the discussions and decisions the directors make at their regular meeting. You may be surprised to learn that aside from the usual bantering, the likes of which always seem to center on why Nick's catches all the fish and what it might

take to drag Dan Bonville into the 21ce (he still does not have email), we do manage to address some of the more important hurdles we confront as we pursue our mission of restoring Salmon into the Saco River.

So I thought it would be worthwhile to jot down a few notes and provide each of you with a 'readers digest' version of the minutes from these meetings. If you have any questions or would like to have more details on any of the subjects mentioned feel free to drop me a line. If I can't answer the question I'll put you in touch with the director that has more information.

Follow the money: The Treasures report is always the first matter of business. The big news here is that we are going to be receiving \$25K from the River Passage agreement. While we have not yet decided how to use this money it could not have come at a better time. Up to this time we were running in the red. Fund raising it seems, is not one of our strong points....yet!

After the Treasures report the bulk of the meeting is spent discussing the activities of each committee. I will only take a minute to highlight the activities that are ongoing with a few of the committees.

Hatchery: This year will be another busy one for the hatchery as we are scheduled to receive 750,000 eggs. In addition to the funding we received from the settlement agreement FPL has also allocated monies to rear smolts. Exactly who will do this, where, and when remains an open issue however your directors are giving some thought as to how the SRSC hatchery can participate in this aspect of the restoration. The other major item on the hatchery docket this past month was the state of our back up power generator.

As many of you know we have been limping along on three legs here for far too long. At this point the generator is in such a state of disrepair that any extended loss of power could jeopardize an entire years worth of fry. We all agree that we have been playing this game of Russian roulette too long. After a very generous contribution by Ron Lewis and his wife we decided to allocate the balance of the funds that will be needed to purchase and install a new, state of the art generator....Folks this is one proble that will NOT be keeping our hatchery volunteers awake at night...Thanks again to Ron and his wife for making this a reality!

Dam Re-licensing: By the time you read this article the celebration for the fish passage agreement will be old news. However after all the fanfare subsides our work must once again get started! As one of the



key stewards of the fishery it is imperative that all members of the SRSC remain vigilant and insure that all the signatories comply with the terms of this agreement. A debt of gratitude and congratulations goes out to Mark Woodruff and the other volunteers that have worked tirelessly to get this agreement passed.

Programs: Bill Archambault, Fisheries Biologist and coordinator of Atlantic Salmon for the N. East will be our featured speaker at the Social on December 12.

Folks, any change in the status of the salmon in the Penobscot watershed, the source of our eggs, will the ay have a dramatic impact on how we rear fry in the future. You don't want to miss this session on the 12th!

Nominating Committee: Ron Lewis was nominated to be a director and will be posted with the slate brought forward for 2008. The directors are on the lookout for volunteers willing to serve on this committee. All it takes is attendance at few meetings from January through March. If you are willing to serve just call and leave a message at the hatchery. Your efforts will help define the future leaders of the club!

Education: For those of you that are not aware the club supports a very special program that brings salmon into the class room of several local schools. The program is called Fish Friends and it seems wherever we go we find children and parents singing the praises of this program. What do we do? We provide education and eggs to local classrooms that in turn rear their fish in special aquariums and release their fry in the spring. The children learn about the life cycle of the salmon, about the chemistry of water, the ecology of the river and they have the life changing experience of releasing their fish into the river! We are happy to see that Nick Sibilias will continue to help us distribute the eggs to the schools. Folks this is one of the most rewarding experiences we can offer to a member so if you have some time and want to help Nick with this process call the hatchery and leave your number. He will be in touch. Also under the education committee; during the month of November we provided hatchery tours to 20 studnts from UNE's Biology class and to a separate

University of New England Tours Our Hatchery

By Garry Kasten

Garry, Nick and Art hosted a tour of the hatchery to 3 groups from UNE. Melissa Grove and Megan Rochelo are responsible for coordinating students to meet a minimum of 15 volunteer hours during their UNE tenure. Jeff Nevers and Judy Bellante work in Recruiting and Career Services and were instrumental in arranging Professor Jeri Fox's Biology group of 19 students to tour the SRSC facilities. We hoped to stimulate interest in volunteer hatchery jobs and new memberships. We also suggested to Professor Fox that there was money available from FPL to raise Smolts. I will have Dave Bean contact her with further information and arrange a meeting to outline the requirements for such a project.

Report From the Maine Council of the Atlantic Salmon Federation

By Ron Lewis

On Sunday, November 4, 2007 Saco River Hatchery members Garry Kasten and Ron Lewis attended the Maine Council of the Atlantic Salmon Federation's Autumn Quarterly meeting. The meeting was held at the Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery. Garry and I attended as affiliate representatives. The Maine Council is made up of affiliates

from around the state and includes a variety of salmon clubs and river conservation groups and they are involved with a wide variety of watershed issues.

Garry and I started our day with a leg stretching walk around the Craig Brook Hatchery grounds. We were immediately struck by the scale of the operation. During our walk we saw many new buildings, a number of ponds of various sizes, and, from the outside, what appeared to be an interesting Salmon Museum. The main hatchery building seemed to go on forever.

The main building was opened up and we entered the conference room and received a very warm welcome from the other affiliates and the officers. They genuinely seemed happy to see us and mentioned several times that they were happy to see someone from the southern part of the state. The council is looking for our involvement and support and they would like to provide the same.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 and more introductions were made. Much business was discussed and I was learning along the way. Many issues were stream specific but they were often similar to issues we face on the Saco. Fishway projects, dam removal, and water quality issues were discussed. The guest speaker was state biologist Richard Dill. Richard has been involved in studying non-native/invasive Northern pike populations in Pushaw Lake which is part of the Penobscot watershed. He reported that the pike are present and that a variety of control measures are in place. He stressed the need to educate the public on the importance of controlling illegal stocking. He went on to

speak about how aggressive and voracious pike are and how an increase in pike will definitely be bad news for the fragile Penobscot salmon population.

One issue discussed was the open spring salmon fishing seasons on the Penobscot River. This issue is very controversial and opinions were expressed on both sides. On the one hand we want to protect the fish and receive funds for restoration as an endangered species possibly, but on the other hand there is a tradition of salmon fishing on the Penobscot and the economic influx experienced by those in the industry should not be minimized. Many members of river conservation groups and their funds come through the fishing ranks. It's tough to know what is best. Our club has the opportunity to vote on this issue and some discussion should take place as to what our position is on this issue. SRSC has one vote on the Council.

Garry gave a very impressive report to the council and they seemed truly impressed by efforts and the dedication shown by the SRSC volunteers. The report highlighted the survivability success of our rearing operation, the progress made by the stream survey crews, and the tremendous number of hours logged by volunteers. SRSC literature was also distributed to the Council and the fish passage agreement on the Saco was also mentioned.

Some interesting side stories included meeting Lou Horvath who is a SRSC member from Holden Maine. He's a member of another affiliate as well and he hopes to visit us soon. Garry and I also participated in the discussion to eliminate the credit card machine that the council was using. We found this rather amusing and had a sense of deja vu because it seemed we had heard much of

this discussion before at our own SRSC business meetings. The Council voted to cancel the credit card machine because of the fees and take IOU's instead.

Our day ended with a tour of the Craig Brook Hatchery given by Peter Steenstra who is the outreach coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I was impressed by the tour and the vastness of the hatchery operation. The genetic strains of salmon from the various Maine rivers are never mixed. They have separate hatchery operations for each Maine river. The hatchery was re-built in 1998 to the tune of \$14 million so space is not a problem. It was also interesting to observe the sanitation measures used by the hatchery. We had to bathe our feet in disinfectant and wash our hands with rubbing alcohol when exiting and entering different parts of the hatchery.

We had a great day and I think much good will was generated between the SRSC and the Maine Council of the Atlantic Salmon Federation.

Public Hearing Dates for Plum Creek Project

By Caitlin Cleaver, North Woods Project Assistant

The Land Use Regulation Commission will hold several public hearings on Plum Creek's development proposal throughout the State this month.

All of the hearings, listed below, are scheduled for 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2-6 p.m., but doors open at 9 a.m., so please plan to arrive early

to sign up to speak. LURC will ask you to take a number and state your position on the plan when you arrive.

Hearing dates and locations are:

Sunday, December 16th at Greenville High School (130 Pritham Ave, Greenville).

Saturday, December 15th at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland

<http://supporters.nrcm.org/site/R?i=C7W-pJenUna2c2VZSA2meg>

Visit <http://supporters.nrcm.org/site/R?i=nQ4rU3fw71AechPi4XNhrQ> for the up-to-the-minute fact sheets and other information.

Please contact Caitlin Cleaver, North Woods Project Assistant with any questions at caitlin@nrcm.org or call Natural Resources Council of Maine at (800) 287-2345

Natural Resources Council of Maine,
3 Wade Street, Augusta, Maine 04330
Phone: 800-287-2345 Fax: 207-622-4343
Email: nrcm@nrcm.org

Margaree Moments - Memories and Observations

by Ron Lewis

Sometimes you have to take advantage of an opportunity and in October I had the opportunity to travel to Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, for the second time in four months. The part that I couldn't pass up was the chance to salmon fish the famous Margaree River and moose hunt in the Cape Breton Highlands on the same trip.

My father, a Nova Scotia resident, had won the moose draw and I was going as his assistant. The salmon fishing was a bonus. This was also an opportunity to return to an area I had visited for the first time in June. I was hoping to reconnect with friend

and local Margaree River guide, Albert Jenkins. Albert is a retired Newfoundland coal miner who lived to talk about several industrial mining accidents. He spent 35 years in a 42-inch tall workspace. Needless to say, he loves the wide-open spaces of the beautiful Margaree valley.

At the beginning of my October trip, I had a few days to kill before the moose hunting party arrived. I was invited to stay with Albert and his long-time significant other, June. Their home is right along the Margaree River in Margaree Center. The Swallow Bank pool is about casting distance from their back door. Albert and June welcomed me into their home like a long, lost son. Their hospitality was wonderful and I really enjoyed June's wonderful home cooked meals.

The story about how Albert and I became friends starts when I made my first trip to the area and hired him as a fishing guide for my son and me. It was immediately evident that Albert and I both share a mutual respect for rivers and the beautiful fish they hold. After a lifetime of hooking and landing salmon, Albert's voice and hands were shaking as much as mine were when I landed and released my first Margaree Salmon in June. Albert's skill and experience were evident on that occasion and his love of salmon just about busts through his shirt. He is very willing to share "his" river and his knowledge. He is a very open and giving man, and I will always thank him for it. He has shared his world with me and asked for nothing in return except respect for the river. He didn't think twice about going over his waders to help me land and release that valuable salmon sooner so that she would save her strength—a powerful memory that I will always carry with me.

The fall run fishing this year was slow for the Margaree. There was a general consensus among anglers that I met that there just weren't many fish in the river. I did witness one large fish, maybe 18 to 20 pounds, get hooked and lost, and I heard many rumors. Some rumors were more reliable than others. The water level was high prior to my arrival, but it dropped rapidly during my 11-day stay. I heard many comments about how the watershed doesn't hold water as well as it used to. Many wondered if it has something to do with the extensive logging in the highlands. Logging in the area is

not new, however, and the forests are replanted and re-harvested in a 15-year cycle. In years past, I had fished the Medway, but salmon fishing is dead on that famous river for now. I hope the recent lack of fish in the Margaree is not a sign of difficult times to come for Margaree salmon. A lot of very dedicated fishery's experts and local volunteers are trying to see that this does not happen to the Margaree. The Margaree Salmon Association runs a very nice hatchery on the river.

The Margaree is known as a "big fish" river. Adult salmon outnumber grilse by a ratio of 2:1. I find it interesting that rivers and their salmon are all different. The anglers are all different, too. I met people from all over the world while sitting on a bench. People I spoke to had traveled to the area from Austria, Germany, Scotland and Argentina. Needless to say, there were quite a few people fishing. It was not unusual to speak to a Virginian and a person from Montana and Newfoundland in the same conversation. Many anglers I met have been coming to the area for decades and for more than one generation.

Many folks had different views about how best to protect the river. There were even different views about the salmon lifecycle. I heard one theory that grilse never grow to be an adult salmon. A big fish river is, therefore, protected by keeping grilse that are caught because grilse just make more grilse. I don't know what to make of the various theories, but I enjoyed the conversations and the mix of cultures that I experienced on this trip. My knowledge about salmon and rivers continues to grow and that is the most exciting part of traveling.

By the way, I didn't hook any fish over the five days or so of fishing half days here and there. We got shut out on the moose hunt as well, but we still had a great time; the beauty of the highlands is something I'll never forget. Very rarely does one get to experience that type of solitude and I can't wait to return. Like so many of the others I met, I'll be making return trips to the Margaree for a very long time—I hope.



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The Saco River Salmon Club

Membership Form

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone: ()

Email address:

Dues are annual - January through December

Single \$20 Family \$30 Student \$10 Senior \$10
Life \$300

Donation to hatchery \$

I would like to volunteer in the following areas:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hatchery Operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydropower Issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stocking | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Incubators | <input type="checkbox"/> Events and Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | |

Mail with payment to: **Saco River Salmon Club**
P.O. Box 115
Saco, ME 04072

Submit your short article for "The Salmon Run." General interest stories, recipes for fly tying or foods are welcomed. Send to RJ Mere, 9 York St., Kennebunk, ME, 04043 or email to rjmere@gwi.net