

The Salmon Run



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

From the President's Corner By Jack Parker

My thoughts constantly shift to Atlantic salmon eggs. Almost magically each February, hundreds of thousands are chauffeured from US Fish and Wildlife's Ellsworth hatchery to our Biddeford hatchery in Dave Bean's pickup. Dave, a former USFW biologist and current SRSC director, carefully coaches our group of eager volunteers in disinfecting the eggs and storing them, 5,000 per drawer, in their new incubator homes. They are not unduly crowded in our 1.6 million capacity incubator system. For the next few weeks their survival depends on hatchery volunteers rigidly maintaining water quality and meticulously cleaning their quarters.

Within days, some eggs split and tiny fry emerge with lunch bags attached. These are alevin or more commonly called sac-fry. Hatching increases through March whipping a profusion of egg whites into a gigantic fish meringue. During April, their sacs shrinking, the fry are moved from the incubators into feeding troughs. For the next month they learn to feed and develop into stream ready fish. In nature by this time more than 90 percent would have perished. In our hatchery a vast majority survives.

In May, appropriately near Mother's Day, volunteer crews transport the feeding fry to Saco River tributaries, beginning their long odyssey to the ocean. Four years later some magnificent veterans appear at Florida Power and Light's fish elevators along with alewives and shad, awaiting passage to spawn in the cool Saco headwaters.

SRSC members are justifiably proud of our role in this production, but without USFW eggs and FPL fish passages, native Atlantic salmon would be history in this country. We strongly support USFW Atlantic salmon hatcheries, and continuing fish passage and water quality improvements throughout the watershed. Thanks to our volunteers, partners and friends for supporting this noble joint venture.

We are Anticipating February 13 for Egg Arrival by John Cadwallader

The first batch of approximately 400,000 eggs will arrive at the hatchery at 3:00 PM on Thursday, February 13. We need help to get them disinfected and transferred into the incubator trays. Wear old warm clothes and rubber boots. The second batch of eggs is scheduled to arrive two weeks later. We'll let you know at our February 18 meeting of exact date.

Our Next Meeting is Tuesday, February 18.
Doors open at 6PM and a guest speaker will start the show at 7PM. Be sure to attend!

Membership Report by John Cadwallader

All of you got your January newsletter by snail mail along with a 2003 Renewal Notice. As of 1/23/03 (the date of the most recent renewal I've processed) we have 68 paid members for 2003, which is a tad higher than the count for the same date last year (65). Comparing the two lists, it's remarkable what creatures of habit we are: Dave Conway was # 61 last year. He's # 58 this year. I haven't heard from #'s 58, 59 and 60 from last year, so it looks like a clean inside pass for Dave.

Our members also continue to be highly supportive of our hatchery. Those 2003 renewals have brought in \$815 in dues and a remarkable \$2,940 in hatchery donations. Over 80 percent of the renewals include a donation of some sort. As you can tell, some are sizable. Thanks to all 68 of you for your ongoing support.

There should be another renewal form tucked inside this newsletter (assuming you get the paper type). You may get one even if you're paid for 2003. Remember: if the code in the upper right hand corner of your mailing label contains a P3 (or PL), you're paid for 2003 (or life). We even have a few P4's. If you're paid, just ignore the renewal form, or, better yet, give it to a buddy. If you're not paid, please let me hear from you soon.

For those of you receiving this newsletter by email, there should also be a renewal form attached. Speaking of email, I've been asked what all the E's at the end of the mailing label code stand for. The explanation is simple (I think); E-E The 1st E means I have an email address for you. The 2nd E means you get your newsletter by email. E-M Same, except the M means you prefer to get your newsletter by regular mail. E-? means you gave me an email address once, but it doesn't work anymore.

If you fall into the latter category, or if you've never given me your email address, send your current email address to jyc@gwi.net We send newsletters via email to over 100 recipients each month, which saves the club about \$1,000 per year in postage and printing, saves the Directors a lot of folding and stamping time each month, and saves the state a good 10 acres of trees each year. We encourage you to receive your newsletter by email, if possible.

If you would like to receive your newsletter by email, send me a message at: jyc@gwi.net If you receive your newsletter by regular mail, but think you should be receiving it by email, maybe I don't have your correct email address. Look for E-E, E-M

Representative Chris O'Neil Proposes Jet Ski Ban on Saco *by RJ Mere*

Chris O'Neil has proposed a bill that would ban personal water craft, commonly known by the trade name jet skis, on the Saco River between Skelton Dam in Dayton and Saco Island. It is expected that the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will review the bill in mid-February.

Habitat degradation, erosion of river banks, safety issues with canoeist, and disturbance of Atlantic salmon spawning areas are unarguable points. So too is the fact that Maine has a law which prohibits any motor water craft speed beyond headway speed within 200 feet of shore or island. What this means is that a boat, or in this case a jet ski, must reduce speed so that there is no wake from the craft when the craft is within 200 feet of shore. The Saco River is less than 400 feet between banks in most places and yet the jet ski operator rips through these areas in flagrant violation of the law.

Chris's bill is straight forward and logical. If you agree, support it by calling IFW and state your opinion. The bill is LD 4, An Act to Protect the Waters of the Saco River. Correspondence should go to:

**The Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Room 206 100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333**

Your email testimony is distributed to members of the committee if you prefer and should go to the committee clerk: darlene.simoneau@legislature.maine.gov You can find the individual email addresses of the committee at www.state.me.us/legis

County Administrator Named New Commissioner of DIFW *By Misty Edgecomb, Of the NEWS Staff Submitted by John R.J. Burrows, Maine Coordinator, Atlantic Salmon Federation*

Governor John Baldacci has chosen the veteran administrator for Aroostook County to serve as his commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Described as a skillful communicator and personnel manager, Roland "Danny" Martin of Caribou is seen as an answer to recent criticisms of DIFW's management by sportsmen who have been pushing for outside studies of department shortcomings.

"Danny Martin is a consensus builder," said Baldacci in a statement released Monday. "With Danny's leadership, it is my expectation that improved customer service, understandable regulations and

more community involvement from both fisheries and wildlife managers will be achieved in these tough financial times."

The new commissioner's 16 years of experience managing a \$5 million county budget will also be crucial for the small department, which has struggled financially, even in good economic times, partly because of its reliance on game licensing fees.

"It's what I've been doing most of my adult life," Martin said when asked about his financial experience.

Paul Jacques, a former House speaker and a one-time lobbyist for the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, will be announced as Baldacci's selection for deputy commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife later this week, a spokesman for the governor said Monday. The men share a personal interest in outdoor recreation, and both own camps on St. John Valley lakes. Martin owns a sporting camp.

Martin and Jacques, who lives in Waterville, also share experience governing at both the state and county level. Both have served in the Legislature and both have been on the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee.

Martin served in both the Maine House and Senate during the 1970s and '80s, as a Democrat representing the St. John Valley. Then he was hired as town manager in both Frenchville and Madawaska, before moving on to county government in 1987.

Jacques was involved with fish and wildlife issues throughout his 18-year tenure as a Democrat representing Waterville. After being ousted by term limits in 1996, Jacques served one session in Augusta as a lobbyist for the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine. Most recently, he has been a Kennebec County commissioner.

Last year, Jacques served on SAM's Pickering Commission, which produced recommendations on how to improve Maine's hunting rules. Most of the commission's suggestions will be considered by the Legislature this term.

Jacques has been interested in the DIFW top job for some time, and was considered for the commissioner's spot by both King and Baldacci. However, the legislator's reputation for being aggressively outspoken may have hurt his chances, Augusta insiders have said.

George Smith, SAM's executive director, called the nominees "a strong team."

"We've said for years that the department needs strong leadership," Smith said. "We're getting the mix of a well-known advocate for sportsmen [Jacques] and a well-respected administrator [Martin]."

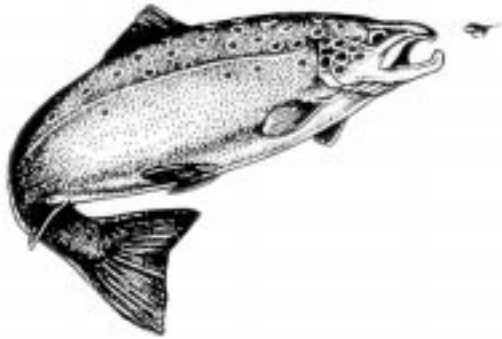
Neither nominee has studied the natural sciences, however, unlike outgoing commissioner and wildlife biologist Lee Perry. Martin isn't concerned about his lack of a scientific background, and he said he will rely on the "institutional knowledge" of state biologists.

"I don't profess to be an expert in biology, but I am an outdoor

enthusiast," Martin said. "The key to good leadership is to surround yourself with good folks for technical expertise - it's just trying to put the right people in the right places," he said.

Hats Galore
by John Cadwallader

We've been out of club hats for some time, but Tom DeBruin was finally able to order a fresh supply. Thanks, Tom. It seems that our previous source no longer stocked the style we wanted, so Tom had to track down the manufacturer. All's well that ends well. We now have a good supply of both short and long bill: approximately 3 and 3 3/4 inches, respectively. These are literally the same hats as before: olive/tan, handsomely embroidered in black and silver with the club name and a leaping salmon, and with a leather/brass adjustable headband. One size fits all. My wife throws mine in the washing machine at least once a season with no apparent ill effect. Of course, I tell her the bugs would bother me less, and the fish more, if she didn't do that. The price is also the same as before: \$14 for the short bill and \$16 for the long. Add \$1.50 per hat for shipping. Use the enclosed renewal form to order yours now.



Saco River Salmon Club
Membership Form

Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone: ()
E-mail address

Dues are annual - January through December

Single \$15 Family \$25 Student \$5 Senior \$5 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"/> Stocking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydropower Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership |

Submit your short article for "The Salmon Run."

General interest stories, recipes for fly tying or foods, comments and suggestions are welcomed. The editors reserve the right to edit all materials. Send to RJ Mere, 9 York St., Kennebunk, ME, 04043 or email to rjmere@gwi.net

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