

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

The President's Corner By Dan Bonville

It's hard to believe but this year's summer fishing season is on its way out. I hope that all of you had a nice summer and I know that I am looking forward to a full and colorful fall season.

The club trip in June with RJ Mere was a great success with Larry Orme, Mark Fohlin, Tommy McNeil, and me meeting at the Saco River Salmon Club hatchery, gearing up and traveling to the mouth of the Saco River to fish for stripers. RJ caught a nice striper but for the rest of us the nighttime fishing, without lights except from the stars was a new experience and the early morning sunrise was worth everything.

Sandy Bonville and I then put together the trip to Middle Dam on the Rapid River in July, which was attended by Danny Diuney and Tommy McNeil. Sandy and I camped overnight at Azischoos Campground. We met up with the guys early the next day then rode the 13.8 miles to the locked gate on the road to Middle Dam. We walked the mile and a half road and we fished the spillways right below the dam. All of us caught fish with the guys doing pretty well on brookies and landlocked salmon. All of us caught smallmouth bass. The bass are an undesirable species and I must stress that the State biologists and wardens would like us all to kill and dispose of all bass caught on the Rapid River.

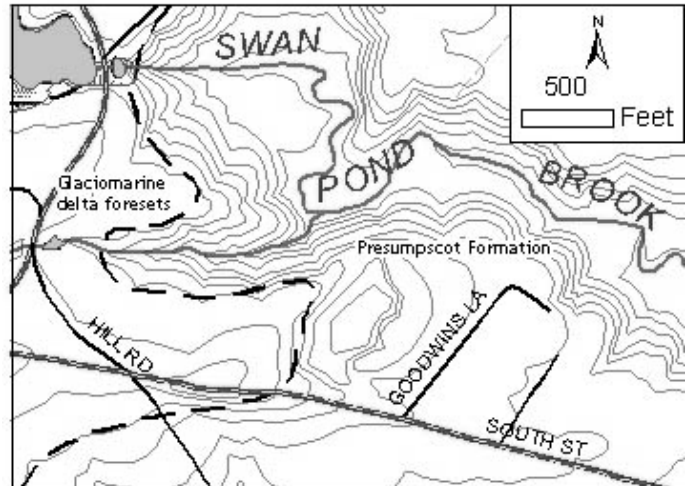
Meetings of the SRSC directors have been going on during the summer and work goes on several fronts concerning our hatchery, future plans for stocking, river studies including habitat and temperature monitoring, the re-licensing of dams, our next year's banquet, and our plans for upcoming meetings, programs, and future club trips.

Our first meeting for general membership will be September 21, starting at 6:00 PM at the Episcopal Trinity Church on Route One, Saco. I hope to see you all there. Enjoy the rest of the fishing season, tight lines to you all.

August Habitat Surveys Along Swan Pond Brook By Mark Woodruff

One of the things I enjoy volunteering for is the in-stream habitat surveys. For salmon restoration, it is an opportunity to see how much "living space" is available for the fry we stock. I also enjoy exploring streams with an eye toward geology – another one my interests.

Last month, Dan McCaw, a biologist with the Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission and I continued the survey of Swan Pond



Brook that had been started by Bob Monroe and Jack Parker. What follows is my educated guess of the geology we saw and its influence on the habitat we recorded. (Of course it helps to have access to a state Surficial Geology Map and a fisheries biologist.)

As we began walking the steep trail from the parking lot down to the brook, we were descending the margin of a glacial delta deposited more than 14,000 years ago during the last ice age. Sand and gravel was deposited as glacial streams reached the ocean that reached further inland than today. The delta which formed extended almost two miles to the west into Lyman and stretched over six miles from Dayton in the north to Kennebunk in the south. Some time after the ice sheet melted, Swan Pond Brook began eroding sand and gravel cutting down into the delta. After dropping sixty feet in elevation to the base of the delta, Dan and I saw the result of this where deposits of sand and gravel created areas of moderate quality fry habitat.

We hiked nearly one-third of a mile further to begin the in-stream survey. Swan Pond Brook was now descending more gradually as it meandered across the glacial-marine deposit famous for its blue-grey clay: the Presumpscot Formation. For the brook, it was a source of some sand and gravel, but added to the mix were greater quantities of finer sand and clay. Only when salmon are young sac-fry is this habitat suitable.

As parr, they require habitat with plenty of larger spaces between cobbles and boulders in which to rest or hide. Bob and Jack

had discovered this kind of habitat immediately below the dam at Goodwins Mills while Dan and I found a short section where erosion had revealed the underlying bedrock. We observed much less habitat than I expected.

Although Swan Pond Brook continued its meandering course, it occasionally sliced through end moraines. These are glacial features formed when the leading edge of the glacier stagnated: melting as fast as it was moving forward. Sediments dropped out of the ice forming low rolling hills. We found one section of nearly pure one to two inch moraine gravel that was a classic spawning bed for adult salmon. Unfortunately, it was no more than sixty feet long and crossed by an ATV trail.

After plying downstream for a mile and a half, we finished the survey at Wadlin Road in Biddeford. Sand had worked its way into my socks and we had not seen fry habitat since the bedrock outcrop. We had seen moderate quality fry habitat quickly diminish to excellent trout habitat thanks to the brook carrying smaller particles out the delta sands and the Presumpscot Formation. I expect that once our survey records are reviewed stocking locations lower in the Swan Pond Brook drainage will no longer be used. That's good to know so the fry we release go into the best available habitat.

Happenings at Pine Tree Hatchery
By Dick Neal

In early February, 45000 eggs were transferred from our hatchery over to the Pine Tree Hatchery in Sanford, where they were cared for and hatched out. Due to the cold water supply (48 degrees), growth was slow.

In early August, 200 feet of two inch black poly pipe was floated in a small pond behind one of the hatchery buildings. By pumping the supply water through the poly pipe, we were able to raise the water temperature approximately 12 degrees to a stable 60 degrees. A few days later, the salmon were transferred over to the new 15 foot tank. During the transfer, we measured and weighed the fish. With the fish counting out to 940 to the pound and a total weight of 5.5 pounds, we ended up with a little over 5000 salmon. In September, a decision will be made whether the fish will be stocked as parr or be carried over until next summer and stocked as smolts.



Moosehead Lake

(Detach here) -----

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Dues: Individual _____ \$20. Family _____ \$30.

Student _____ \$10. Senior _____ \$10. Life _____ \$300

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Submit your short article for "The Salmon Run."

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