

MEDWAY RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION

Queens County
Nova Scotia

LATEST NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

The association President keeps the membership up to date through the Medway River Blues publication, also [archived here](#) on this web site. Between times, though, things can happen quickly. This page is a good place to keep up with the very latest developments, be they with the Medway River Salmon Association activities or with other events that affect our interests. Here then is the latest.

Posted December 24, 2013

Lewis Hinks of the Atlantic Salmon Federation was interviewed on CBC Radio's Information Morning show on December 23, 2013, about rallying efforts to save the Mersey Biodiversity Facility. [Hear the interview by clicking here](#). It is also accessible from our [In The News](#) page.

Posted December 17, 2013

An article "Mersey Biodiversity Facility on its last legs" appeared in today's Queens County Advance and is now posted on our [In The News](#) page. Read it [here](#).

Posted December 16, 2013

The following has just been received by the MRSA and is posted here for the information of members.

*A news clip is scheduled to air on CBC television at supper time on Monday Dec.16th.
Please share.*

The Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans decided in 2012, due to a Budget cut, that they would close the world class Mersey Bio-diversity Facility (salmon hatchery) on the Mersey River. Five employees have been retired, laid off, or transferred. Salmon and whitefish programs at the facility have been terminated.

Queens Co. Fish and Game Assoc. has accessed over \$ 1.5 million to support Mersey facility upgrades over the last 35 years, and DFO has also spent in excess of another \$ 1.5 million in recent years. Some of the millions of dollars in infrastructure and upgrades have already been removed, and it is evident that DFO will soon be in the process of de-commissioning and/or destruction of the entire complex, to be able to release the property back to N. S. Power. It is fully expected that after de-commissioning, the facility will not be able to be returned to operating condition in the future.

Without Mersey, endangered salmon and whitefish recovery will likely be impossible in Nova Scotia in the future. The anticipated re-opening of salmon angling seasons on many rivers in the future is not expected to occur.

The only remaining DFO facility in Nova Scotia is at Coldbrook, and it worked well in partnership with Mersey. Its small capacity and cold well water will require major taxpayer financial support to conduct the upgrades necessary to meet even a portion of desired fish population support. Construction of a new facility in the future, similar to Mersey, is estimated to be in the range of \$ 14 million.

In April 2013 a number of watershed and conservation minded organizations, including our Association, formed a limited society - the Mersey Bio-diversity Facility Supporters Society, and Mike Fralic became Chairman. The purpose of the Society was to obtain approval from DFO to be able to operate Mersey. Plans included collecting fish from rivers, rearing them, and returning them to the watershed to support population and range expansion. The Society did not receive the expected level of DFO support, or the required approval from DFO Management staff. Support from other sectors and the public was significant. It should be noted that DFO operates 26 hatcheries in British Columbia, and none have been closed within the last 20 years.

Local rumors were recently indicating that the future of the " World Class " Mersey Facility was coming to a close in DFO`s eyes. DFO management was not being timely and supportive in responding to inquiries by the Society. It quickly became an appropriate time to update the public on the status of the Mersey situation. The Liverpool Advance will include a news article this week, and CBC News did an on site interview at the Mersey Facility with Mike Fralic and myself. Surprisingly, a contractor was found at the site already removing one of the buildings.

Many comments were provided to the reporters, but it will be up to the reporter to determine which comments get used.

Hopefully you will be able to view this news item on CBC television, and have the opportunity to read the Liverpool Advance article. Thank you.

David Dagley
Secretary
Queens County Fish and Game Association

Posted December 1, 2013

The minutes of the November 13, 2013, general meeting are now posted on the [Membership page](#).

Posted November 28, 2013

The Canadian Wildlife Federation have just issued a very readable and comprehensive document about aquaculture. It is posted on our [Aquaculture page](#) and [can be read by clicking here](#).

Posted November 19, 2013

Details of the Association's latest project, the [Medway River Tributaries Watershed Study, 2013](#), are now posted in our [Projects page](#).

Posted November 18, 2013

The following note from Larry Shortt of the Nova Scotia Salmon Association was brought to our attention by Darrell Tingley. It is posted here for members' information.

Hi Folks,
I just signed the petition "NS Salmon Regulations: Bring back Fly Fishing Only for Atlantic Salmon in Nova Scotia" on Change.org. It's important. Will you sign it too? Here's the link:
[Bring back salmon fishing.](#)
Thanks!
Larry

Most of us are familiar with Silver Donald Cameron's movie about open net salmon aquaculture, "Salmon Wars". His latest movie "Green Rights" about the rights of a planet and its people to clean water, clean air and a clean environment, will soon be distributed for public viewing. Read about it and see an introductory video about it at <http://www.greenrights.com/>

Posted November 9, 2013

In preparation for the general meeting scheduled for November 13 at Charleston firehall, [a report from Association President Horace MacPherson](#) provides a broad overview of recent activity and is posted in our [Archives](#) section.

With thanks to the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the following article is brought to your attention describing the activities of Joan Wulff:

ASF RIVERNOTES BLOG - Joan Wulff and the Community of Salmon People
~~~~~  
Three vignettes, including an intro to short videos on Joan Wulff, and a wonderful description of the final day of salmon season in Nova Scotia.  
<http://atlanticsalmonfederation.org/rivernotes/>

**Posted November 8, 2013**

The agenda for the November 13 general meeting is now [posted here](#).

As you know Darrell has been in communication with Julie Towers, DNR, regarding the Community Forest project. Below is a follow up from Ms. Towers. Included in the email from Ms. Towers is a web site that will direct you to the draft conceptual plan for Western Crown land. Have a look.

Jo-Ann

Hello. The draft conceptual plan for Western Crown land is available on the department web site at <http://novascotia.ca/natr/land/western-land/>  
The plan outlines broad areas for resource use, multiple values or other concepts. The final plan will be released later this year. By its nature, a concept plan outlines broad areas. There will still be detailed assessments of activities at a local level.  
Your association's interest in the Twin Bridges area is not affected by the concept plan. We can now proceed with detailed assessment of your proposal. I will forward all the documents that you have provided to regional management for their review.  
We recognize that all the planning for the western Crown lands has been a very gradual process. As with the community forest, in which I know you have expressed interest, we are starting to implement activities on the ground. Thanks to you and your group for your patience as we work to long term management of the acquired lands.

Julie Towers  
Executive Director, Renewable Resources Branch  
Department of Natural Resources

**Posted October 5, 2013**

The following email has just been received from Larry Short, forwarding another with an update about the

## Mersey Biodiversity Facility.

### To: NSSA Board; NSSA Members; NSSA Affiliates; Flies & Lies List

Hi Folks,

The Mersey Biodiversity Facility (previously called a Hatchery) has been phased out by DFO and the land it sits on is owned by NSP. This is a great loss as it eliminates another place where our disappearing salmon can be raised or retained there for brood stocking.

The Mersey Biodiversity Facility Supporters Society (MBFSS) is attempting to take over the Facility which is a huge undertaking. One of the biggest objectives would be the funding required to run it.

The following e-mail is from Mike Fralic who is Chair of the Mersey Biodiversity Facility Supporters Society. Should you have any questions or would like to offer your support please contact Mike.

Cheers,

Larry Shortt

#### **UPDATE: Mersey Biodiversity Facility**

*Gail Shea Federal Fisheries minister office is supporting us in applying for licenses and introduction and transfer permits. (Although Faith Scattolon Maritime Director General for DFO was against it.)*

*With the hard work of David Dagley and other individuals applications have been filed for the Medway River and Sackville River. An application is in process for Atlantic whitefish licenses and permits as well. There is also a request for 3 years of funding under the SARA endangered species program for Atlantic Whitefish.*

*The LaHave River & St Mary's River applications for licenses and permits are to follow because they are indexed rivers which will require a more detailed application approach. This is a start and someday should mean a recreational salmon and food fishery in some southern upland rivers.*

*GOOD NEWS - with the strong support from Minister Gail Shea's office we feel we will be successful in obtaining our licenses and permits - but it will take time - maybe a few months as long as we get the Mersey Biodiversity Facility.*

*The NEXT BIG HURDLE: CONVINCING - Nova Scotia Power Corp to allow MBFSS to run the facility - Time frame 2nd week in October, 2013, if not sooner.*

*Nova Scotia Power has to be convinced that our business plan has the financial support to run the facility and programs that we envision. We know the costs associated with delivering programs /projects at the Mersey Biodiversity Facility for our business plan. We are now confident that we will be allowed (by DFO) to perform the projects that we are requesting because of the strong support from Minister Gail Shea's office.*

*We are now so close but we do not have the required confirmed funding sources. The Whitefish funding application will take a few months. We have submitted Corporate sponsorships -which are being considered as well but may take a few more weeks to be approved. (One is waiting for the Funding committee to meet because of the substantial size of the request.) Again maybe too late.*

*So it all comes down to this - Do we have the CONFIRMED FUNDING SOURCES TO ACTUAL RUN AND SUPPORT THE SALMON & WHITEFISH PROGRAMS AT THE FACILITY.*

*This is now where every one of you comes in to the picture. I feel strongly that given enough time we could and will find a variety of different funding sources that we will need to run the facility. But we do not have the luxury of time - we have been bucking against both NSPC and DFO to get to this point and that has taken up most of the time that was allotted to us. Minister Gail Shea's office had obtained an extra two months but half of that time is now gone.*

*There is a tax strategy where a donor will be able to get a charity tax receipt. This is especially important to higher amounts because the tax savings could be as high as 50%. This will all have to be structured correctly.*

*Therefore, in closing we need letters of confirmed financial support, which state amounts and the duration of this support. (Of course these letters have the condition that MBFSS obtain all the appropriate approvals from DFO.)*

*Fellow Members please feel free to pass this e-mail as well as my phone to anyone you feel will be interested in financially supporting our cause. I look forward to hearing from enough of you - to jump this hurdle as well.*

Regards

Michael Fralic

Chair, MBFSS

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**Posted September 4, 2013**

**Over the past several months Mike and Bev have been working hard to keep the Mersey Biodiversity Facility Open ,please find below an update from Mike on their efforts.**

Hi everyone

Great news – we now have a contact with Gail Shea – Federal Minister of Fisheries office. It seems that at this level –they are interested in helping us save the Mersey Biodiversity Facility.

There has been a slow down in the tendering process to decommission the facility. There is still work to do but this is encouraging. The first step is to apply for two types of licences.

- 1) "Collections License " because of the endangered species listing ; and
- 2) "License to introduce & Transfer species"

Because we have been asked by Shea's office to submit these license requests we have picked 4 rivers that would give the southern uplands some coverage. The applications would entail the collection of brood stock and the releasing of sea ready smolts on these rivers. The 4 rivers are Medway River, Lahave river, Sackville river, and St Mary's River. We have also asked Bluenose coastal Action foundation to assist us in submitting an application for whitefish enhancement or protection. These rivers were chosen because they have been stocked in past years and because they cover a cross section of the southern uplands and give us a reasonable opportunity to be successful.

Each river watershed association must provide a letter to the Mersey Biodiversity Facility Supporters Society supporting enhancement activities on their river system. This must be received as soon as possible as part of the application process. I have received this letter from The Medway River Assoc, I have been called by the Sackville River Association – they are preparing their letter. I expect a letter from the Lahave River assoc – soon as well.

DFO HFX is not committed to our endeavours, therefore we have to keep supplying our contact in Gail Shea's office with information so that he can keep the process moving. We initially thought that we could have genetic testing assistance from DFO – they are now telling our contact they do not have the capacity. Therefore we are contacting universities to assist us . ( Any thoughts ?????)

Now we are down to the big one . Financial support –

I was asked how much funding do we have. My answer was none yet because we did not have any approved projects. Given the 5 projects that are now proposed – we need funding sources. Given the time of year and the remaining assets at the facility and the time to get approvals it is unlikely that any projects could be started in 2013. However, funding maybe needed to safeguard the facility. As well we must get ready for operations to commence in the spring of 2014. It is my understanding that it would be to our advantage to show funding source commitment letters which state that this amount of funding is available for x number of years if this/these enhancement activities are undertaken. It is time for our fundraisers to step forward.

These letters of understanding will put us in a stronger position – so that Gail Shea's office can assure DFO –HFX that they will not have to fund it.

It is still important that DFO –Hfx is aware of all of our support groups.

I would now like to thank Angeline Gillis from the Mi'kmaw Conservation Group for their letter of support that was sent to Faith Scattolon office and for asking the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative (KMKNO) to assist us and to send a letter to Faith Scattolon office as well. (This letter will be sent in early September, 2013 -representing the Nova Scotia 13 First Nation Bands)

I would also like to thank Bev Davison for the amount of time he is spending on the applications for licenses process. Everything hinges on these licenses so we have to get the approvals as soon as possible –even though we will not start the projects until the spring of 2014.

NSPC says they will be supportive of us running the facility if we receive the appropriate licenses.

The Nova Scotia Department Of Fisheries is supportive but have no funds. They have stated that they would share resources with us and assist in brood stock collection and transportation.

It maybe necessary to have a meeting in October,2013 to discuss all the issues at that time.

Regards

Michael Fralic,Chair, MBFSS

Posted July 17, 2013

MRSA today released its aquaculture policy by way of a memorandum. [Click here to view it](#) on our Aquaculture Page.

Posted July 10, 2013

Nova Scotia's first land-raised salmon could be on the market by next summer. Sustainable Blue, a small salmon farm in Hants County, has moved in a batch of young salmon and said it's well on the way to raising them for commercial sale.

Read the full story at: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/story/2013/07/09/ns-land-salmon-farmed.html> (The link may expired soon when CBC remove the content from their site.)

## FOR EARLIER POSTINGS OF PRESIDENT'S NEWS:

[VISIT THE ARCHIVES PAGE WHERE THEY ARE LISTED QUARTERLY](#)

[RETURN TO HOME PAGE](#)