

NEWSLETTER

Presidents Message

by *Carroll Randall*



2011 LRSA Fishing Derby - M.A.R.C.

I hope this newsletter finds everyone healthy and enthusiastic about the New Year. In 2011 the association was very busy with several projects.

- We started the year with our dinner in January
- Our AGM in April
- We met with DFO to discuss illegal salmon fishing on the LaHave
- We are working with BCAF and the Watershed Committee on the water quality project
- We attended ZMAC and RFAC meetings
- The Fish Friends program is doing well

- Our annual Fishing Derby for children still draws 200 participants
- We are still working on our map of the salmon pools on the river
- We selected an official fly for the river
- and we even get to fish a little

Please read through the newsletter so that you can get a feel for what we are up to.

Sincerely,

Carroll Randall



MEMBERSHIP & WEBSITE

Our present paid membership of 23 is down from last year. On the other hand we now have 42 sponsors as “Friends of the LaHave” in Switzerland that have shown a lot of concern for our work.

Membership is just \$10 annually. Please be sure your membership is up to date at our dinner or AGM.

We are also in the process of setting up our official website which will be located at <http://www.lrsa.ca> so if you have any great photos of the LaHave River, please email us at: lahaveriversalmon@gmail.com

SALMON POOL CLOSURES

Let's start this discussion with "We do not support DFO closing the salmon pools." However we do have a problem with fishermen making believe they are trout fishing when they are really salmon fishing.. Last year some people hooked and released over 30 fish. This is not right. These people are hunting salmon and are only fishing in the pool for salmon. They have salmon rods, salmon gear and are not trout fishing.

We met with DFO asking them to charge individuals who are illegally fishing but we determined that this is not feasible.

DFO monitored the pools to see how bad the salmon fishing was and determined that the only way to protect the few fish that come back was to close the most popular pools.

LRSA hosted a special meeting to discuss this situation prior to the closures. The membership felt that there is good bass and trout fishing in and around the salmon pools so they did not support any closures. We presented this decision to DFO at the ZMAC meeting.



Sincerely,

Carroll Randall

ADOPT A STREAM NEWS



Created by The Nova Scotia Salmon Association (NSSA), this program provides project funding and technical support to help community volunteer organization undertake projects to protect

repair and improve the aquatic and riparian habitats of local wetlands, lakes, streams, rivers and estuaries. The Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation (BCAF) are the coordinator of projects in this area, members of the LaHave River Salmon Association (LRSA) supply manpower and support whenever needed.

In June Andrew Breen set up some fencing at Dave Moore's farm on the Penny Rd. to keep the cattle out of a wetland and water hole. We put in approximately

100 fence posts and electric fence with gates. We also removed some old fencing.

In September, Andrew Breen, Amy Weston, Erica, Kevin Vienotte and I met at Kevin's farm to get an idea on what is needed for digger logs and other alterations in the Shingle Mill Brook which runs through his property. We had done some fencing along the brook in 2009.

- Bob Zinck (Director)

FISH FRIENDS

Each year we work with several schools along the LaHave to sponsor a fish tank in one of their classrooms. The schools that participate are Petite Riviere, Hebbville Academy, Centre scolaire de la Rive Sud, West Northfield, and NGRHigh. Eggs acquired by ASF are placed in the tanks in January and the children watch the eggs hatch and turn into little fish. In May each class takes their fish to the river and releases them.



SALMON FISHING ON THE LAHAVE RIVER 2011

In 2010 there was no hook and release season for the Atlantic salmon, however, the river was open for fishing other species such as trout and smallmouth bass. The LaHave River Salmon Association is of the opinion that DFO denied the hook and release season because the Native people claim there is mortality with the hook and release concept, and if this option was permitted, then the native people would take salmon for food and ceremonial purposes by netting them.

All anglers fishing the river knew it was possible to hook a salmon while fishing for trout, and if they did, they were required to release it as safely and quickly as possible. As the season passed, it was evident to DFO and as well to many fishermen that some anglers were deliberately fishing for salmon. Rumour had it that some anglers hooked and release as many as twenty odd salmon.

Many folks asked why DFO did not charge these people for fishing for salmon and the answer appeared to be that the courts would not uphold the charge, because the fisherman would claim they were trout fishing.

This year, 2011, in an effort to charge anglers who deliberately targeted salmon, DFO closed a number of the popular pools, (such as Bruhms Bridge, Fancy pool plus others) to all fishing. They indicated they would mark the center of the

pool and then measure and mark 200 meters above and below this point. Further they stated they would post a notice that this area was closed to all fishing and anyone caught fishing in these closed areas would be charged. This was a feeble effort by DFO. The measured areas on most pools were poorly marked, and the notice of closure was mostly posted on trees a distance from the pool.

The end result was exactly as expected. No charges were laid, and again this year the anglers who deliberately fished for salmon had a successful year. This is indeed a miserable way to manage a resource. What do you suppose 2012 will bring?

By Lowell DeMond

2012 AGM

The association hosts its annual AGM the first Sunday in April. This year the meeting will be on March 25th. At that meeting there will be reports from each committee, a presentation of our finances, highlights of any special events and an election of officers.

Two things that will be discussed that may be of interest to you will include a reduction in the trout bag limit between the tide and the foot of Wentzell's Lake and the closing of salmon pools on the LaHave by DFO. If you would like to help out or be on the board, we always have room for a few good people. Join our board and help us keep the LaHave a great river to enjoy.

Watershed Committee

This committee is made up of members from the Salmon Association, BCAF, NSSA, L/Q Federation of Agriculture, South Shore Naturalists, Town of Bridgewater, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans, NS Fisheries and Aquaculture, Dalhousie University, Abitibi Bowater, Michelin and several concerned citizens. The vision is "To improve and maintain the ecological integrity of the LaHave River of the Watershed.

Each month there are 30 water samples taken which are evaluated to ensure that the water quality in the river remains high. If and when there is a problem or a spike in any of the readings, then the committee has a process where the appropriate government department is notified.

Come to our AGM for a full review of the report and be involved with making some decisions on the direction of this committee.



MORGAN'S FALLS FISHWAY

DFO has started a process evaluating all of their programs and services as part of their budget review. There has been talk that the facility at Morgan's Falls may close which we have a major concern about. Apparently there will be stakeholder meetings shortly to discuss its future.

Our past president Lowell DeMond has created some history on why the facility is so important:

Morgan Falls is a 9 metre (29.5 foot) drop in the LaHave River at New Germany, Lunenburg County, NS.

In 1969, The Department of Fisheries and Oceans constructed a fish ladder at Morgan Falls which allowed the Atlantic Salmon to gain access to an additional 50% of the spawning area of the LaHave River. (Prior to 1969 most people believed the Atlantic salmon could not scale the falls, however, there were some who believed during a year when the salmon migration coincided with unusual high water, which allowed the water to more or less run straight, it would be possible for salmon to migrate above it. Again, this would have been a very unusual condition, and has certainly not happened since 1969)

Looking up stream at Morgan Falls the fish ladder was constructed on the left side of the river. It consists of a concrete ladder with baffles, a holding trap with elevator, and an assessment area. Every salmon which scales the ladder is weighed, measured for length, a scale sample is taken for age and DNA. *It* is examined externally for abnormal body conditions, and a picture of it is taken. Before it is released, a hole is

punched through its tail so it can quickly be identified if it drops back over the falls and returns to the ladder.

On the right side of Morgan Falls, there is a fully automated low head electric power plant which has been operating since 1996. This plant has a louvre system in the fore bay which allows for the safe downward passage of fish with a low mortality rate. Here, DFO has a building which provides a work area for attending technicians who count and analyze downward migrating juvenile fish. (smolt)

The significance of the Morgan Falls site for the survival of Atlantic salmon should not be overlooked or underestimated. For the purposes of monitoring the Atlantic salmon, DFO has established Zone areas in Eastern Canada. The Morgan Falls facility is the only place where the upward and downward migration of the Atlantic salmon are analyzed and counted for Zones 20, 21 and 22. This is a very large area. It starts at the Strait of Canso and proceeds along the south coast of Nova Scotia and includes the Bay of Fundy rivers to the border of New Brunswick. The loss of this facility would leave the status of this fish (for some 84 rivers which have been known to have supported Atlantic salmon populations) open to rumour and guessing. This is totally unacceptable.

Since its inception, this data has been used by DFO Scientists and Management for the following:

1. Fishery management- seasons and quotas.
2. Creating models
3. The data is submitted to ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea)

4. To examine health (disease and parasites) and other special problems of the stock.

Presently budget cuts are being examined by DFO. The estimated amount of these cuts over the next three years is \$57 million. This year, the LaHave River Salmon Association (LRSA) believed in contemplation of these budget cuts, there was a reduction of operation by DFO at the Morgan Falls Field Station. The downward migration facility was not used, and there was a reduction of staff and hours of monitoring at the fish ladder. Further, LRSA is concerned that this scaling back in effort is leading to the closure of the facility and will be ear-marked in the budget cuts. At the ZMAC 21 meeting held in Bridgewater, NS, on May 13, 2011, LRSA supported the unanimous position that the Morgan Falls Field Station must remain open.

The LaHave River Salmon Association has been represented at the ZMAC meetings called by DFO since its inception. At every one of these meetings when the science report was given, the slide presentations, overhead projector presentations and finally the power point presentations were always started by showing graphs of data collected from Morgan Falls. (attached is a sample) From this data based on the estimates of adult returns to Morgan Falls a prediction was made on whether or not conservation requirements could be met. Further angling seasons were regulated, consideration for a hook and release season or a closed season for salmon angling. In addition the health of each fish was examined, scale samples were taken, fish sex was determined, each fish was weighed and measured. Are we now saying, this data which was collected for the pasts 42 years is



**MORGAN'S FALLS FISHWAY
CONT'D**

no longer useful? Further, are we prepared to leave to conjecture whether or not there are any Atlantic salmon in the La Have river, and will there be any management of the LaHave without fish counts?

In summary, the Atlantic salmon in Zones 20, 21, 22 exhibit low spawning abundance, poor marine survival, and have suffered from threats of disease and parasites. As well, they have been negatively impacted by the genetic intrusion of commercially raised Atlantic salmon. Other dangers to survival are acid rain, an over population of seals, global warming and a by-catch by commercial fisheries. Presently, the Atlantic salmon is in danger of extinction.

The LaHave River Salmon Association fully believes the loss of the data collected annually at the Morgan Falls Field Station would contribute to this demise.

If you have any influence with politicians or senior bureaucrats, please let them know how important this facility is to our river. At least challenge them on why they think it is not needed any more.

ANNUAL DINNER

Last year we hosted our 14th annual dinner with 200 folks enjoying a great feast of smoked salmon appetizers sponsored by Scotia Fuels and a delicious poached salmon dinner.

January 28, 2012 will be the date for our 15th annual dinner. Tickets are on sale now with last year's attendees getting first crack at the tickets. There are always a few

available each year so if your're interested please call Carroll Randall at 543-3372.

The association also runs a raffle, silent auction and live auction at the dinner, so if you have something that you would like to donate, please give Carroll a call.

NEED YOUR HELP/MAP OF POOLS

The association under the guidance of George Taylor and artistic ability of Travis Taylor are creating a map of the LaHave. As part of that map, we will be highlighting the pools. Our plan is to have GPS coordinates where you park or leave the road and then a GPS coordinate at the river. We have most of the pools on the main part o the river but need help with the pools on the West Branch and the North Branch. If anyone would like to spend a few hours showing us where those pools can be found, we could finish that project.

FISHING DERBY

Our annual fishing derby was held on Sat. May 28th under sunny skies with lots of young fishers present. The fish were small with fewer caught this year but this didn't dampen the excitement.

- 1st Savannah Wagner
- 2nd Camryn Fancy
- 3rd Kamren Wagner

Age 7 – 11

- 1st Cameron Zinn
- 2nd Josh Manzer
- 3rd Ben Peveril

Age 12 – 16

- 1st Paul Manzer
- 2nd Tyler Maillet
- 3rd Rebecca Fancy
- Single Largest Fish

- Breanna Wilson (Age 6 and under)
- Austin Keddy (Age 7 - 11)
- Zach Wentzell (Age 12 - 16)

Concerns have been expressed about the condition of the pond at the MARC. The past few years have seen much organic matter deposited on the bottom such that dredging appears to be inevitable.

May 26, 2012 will be the date for our annual Children's Fishing Derby at the MARC in Dayspring. Canadian Tire is our corporate sponsor and supplies the prizes, Inland Fisheries supplies the fish (1 000) trout, the Municipal Recreation Department handles the registration and weigh-in and LRSA looks after the canteen and helping along the bank. This is a great project with around 200 children participating each year.





THE LAHAVE CLASSIC

The LaHave Classic was tied to depict the wonderful and majestic LaHave River with all the colors of the fly having a certain meaning. Therefore, the beautiful scenery of the LaHave River is shown by the Squirrel tail and it's orange hue resembling the leaves.

The bright glow of the saddle hackle shows the sun, by its vibrant yellow. The holographic tinsel shows the sparkling of the salmon's scales in the pools of Oak's run and The Eddy as the sun rises and sets.

The green body resembles the conservation that has kept the river shaping back, while the black herl depicts the darkness of the deep pools. Lastly, the red tag signals the hope of the fisherman regarding that the LaHave River may have the return of the Atlantic salmon as it once had decades ago.

Therefore this fly should be chosen as the official fly of the LaHave River all because the fly truly shows the characteristics of the LaHave River. While exquisitely depicting the scenery and establishing a picture in your mind of the what the LaHave River is like, whether you may of seen the LaHave river or not. The LaHave Classic derives the elegance and delightfulness of none other than the LaHave River.



Tied and created by:

Peter Opra (15 years old.)
Dartmouth N.S.

CONGRATS TO PETER FROM THE LRSA!

WINNING FLY RECIPE

Hook: Size 4 Partridge Of Redditch
Bartleet Supreme Salmon
Tag: Small Silver Tinsel, Red
Orange Silk Floss

Tail: 2 Red Dyed Golden
Pheasant Crests
Butt: Black Ostrich Herl
Body: Light Green Silk Floss
Rib: Medium Holo Silver Tinsel
Throat: Fibers from Yellow Saddle
Hackle

Wing: Orange dyed Squirrel Tail
Hair
Head: Black UTC 70 Denier
Thread coated with 2 coats of Pro
Lak



SWISS AFFILIATE

Kevin has been in contact with Pitt over the summer months and he has again been very helpful in sponsoring the LRSA. He and the "Friends of the LaHave" have gathered \$2900.00 to be used for river improvement work. We are very fortunate to have a sponsoring group in Europe.