

SMRA CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

On May 31, 2009, SMRA celebrated its 30th anniversary. In 1979 a group of concerned fisherman got together to address the decline of salmon stocks in the St. Mary's River. The Association wanted to be more than just an angling group, it wished to encompass objectives that would be dedicated to the preservation and wise use of the St. Mary's River as the community's most important resource from the point of view of all the uses of the river system.

Today, our mission remains the same to provide leadership and engage partners to enhance, protect and promote the St. Mary's River as a healthy ecosystem for Atlantic salmon and other native animals and plant species, as well as a rich community resource. Our vision is a health for the river, the Atlantic salmon and our community.

The 30-year growth of the SMRA from an angling club into a viable community based-management organization has presented unique opportunities and challenges for the Association. Interest in the river's unique ecosystems has lead to numerous research opportunities and access to a variety of public and private sector research funds. Sustainable projects and initiatives once deemed a dream are becoming a reality.

Helping celebrate 30 years in conservation, the SMRA partnered with the Nova Scotia Nature Trust.

St. Mary's "River Days" began at the SMRA Education & Interpretive Centre with a presentation by the Nova Scotia Nature Trust announcing the recent property acquisition of the Anderson land on the St. Mary's River. This was followed by guided walks. Participants choose between a turtle walk with Mark Pulsifer and a bird walk with Randy Lauff. Following these events, everyone enjoyed a community BBQ at the Centre.

In the afternoon the SMRA held their 30th annual general meeting. Guest speaker was Mr. Bob Rutherford, of the Nova Scotia Salmon Association Adopt a Stream Program. Bob spoke on the St. Mary's West Branch restoration plan.

30 years may seem like a long time but for the St. Mary's River it is but a snap shot in time. We should be proud of what we have accomplished and look forward with renewed energy to our future.



Allan MacDonald, Florence Duffy, Mark Pulsifer

Announcing our new web
location [www.
stmarysriverassociation.
com](http://www.stmarysriverassociation.com)

ATLANTIC SALMON ACTIVITIES

The St. Mary's River Association has grown a great deal in the last few years, but despite becoming involved in a myriad of activities, the Atlantic salmon of the river have remained a central focus of the Association. The year 2008 saw a very good angling season, with anglers reporting impressive catches, while the 2009 season was, by all accounts, disappointing. Atlantic salmon abundance is chronically depressed in the area of Nova Scotia known as the Southern Uplands, in which the St. Mary's River is nestled, though returns throughout much of Atlantic Canada were down in 2009. The St. Mary's River Association in 2009 undertook 13 projects (Figure 1) with focus on: (i) better understanding distribution and abundance of salmon in the river, and the factors affecting these, (ii) the importance of salmon to residents and anglers, and (iii) restoration and planning.

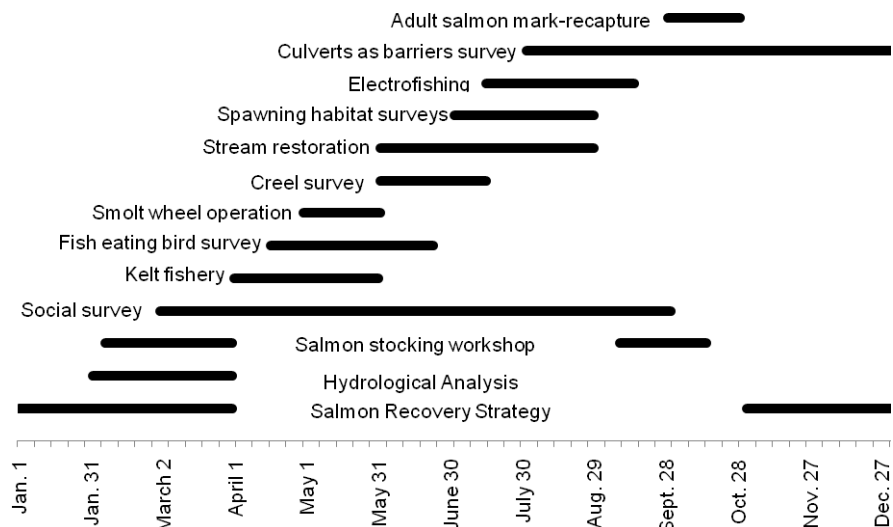
The primary objective of all of this work, completed and ongoing, is to understand as completely as we can the salmon population and ecology of the St. Mary's River, and the forces acting on these fish to limit abundance and distribution. From these results we will be able to choose those restoration actions which will provide the residents, anglers and Association the best returns for effort invested. Future work is expected to continue on several of

these projects and also to begin to assess likely effects of climate change on Atlantic salmon in this river (in partnership with Dalhousie University). Additionally, we anticipate beginning a telemetry study on the movements of adults in fall and winter 2010-2011 (in partnership with DFO and Nova Scotia Salmon Association).

Development and completion of these projects would not have been possible without the excellent work of SMRA employees (Danielle Murray, Megan Myers, Darryl Delorey, Jan Cameron, Colin Rudolph, Edmundo Gurza-Fausto, Jeremy Cameron, Sam Marshall, Emma Wattie, Stephen Cole), participation of partners (St. Francis Xavier University, Habitat Unlimited, Department of Fisheries and Oceans) and funding provided by governments (Canadian Forest Service, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Service Canada, Environment Canada, Eco-Action), industry (NewPage Port Hawkesbury, Maritimes and Northeast Pipeline, Shell Environmental Fund) and foundations or associations (EJLB Foundation, Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation, Nova Scotia Salmon Association, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Nova Forest Alliance). With continued support from these partners we look forward to continuing this work on the Atlantic salmon of the St. Mary's River.

Figure 1:

Timeline of salmon-related projects undertaken by the St. Mary's River Association in 2009



VOLUNTEER THANK YOU!

We are very fortunate to have people in and around our community who love to share their knowledge with others. The St. Mary's River Association would like to thank the many volunteers who have come forward to offer programs on wide variety of topics: Jocelyn Ellis- Wildflower Walk, Randy Lauff- Bird Walk and Owl Program, Mark Pulsifer-Wood Turtle walk, Dr. Kurt Mueller-Aquatic Insects, Dr. Hardy Eshbaugh-Bog Walk, Gabrielle Beaulieu -Piping Plovers. Norma Mitchell brought in snakes, much to the delight of people attending. Botanist, Sebastien Marquis hosted a traditional and medicinal plant walk at the Sherbrooke Village nature trail. Jamie Powell hosted an astronomy program.

For all of you who helped with various projects (smolt wheel, kelt experimental fishery, fall seining and electro fishing) on the river, thank you as well.

To our Naturalist Club president Jocelyn Ellis, a great big thank you for all your work this summer. Without your efforts, many of the programs would not have been possible.

The success of these programs is evident by the over 600 who attended. We hope to be able to bring to you more programs through the winter and next summer, so stayed tuned.

MEMBERSHIP & AMERICAN DONORS

SMRA memberships are due on April 1st every year. Funds collected are used to help defray costs associated with the operation of the Education & Interpretive Centre. Ever year over 2500 visitors drop in to learn about our watershed.

If you have not renewed your membership, please feel free to drop it in the mail. Regular membership starts at \$20.00. Your support is very much appreciated.

US donors can now make donations to the SMRA and receive a tax-deductible receipt. The American Fund for Charities is a US 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. It is an American nonprofit organization with a mission to bring positive social change to people around the world.

For more information, go to their web site at www.americanfund.info or e-mail us at stmarysriver@ns.sympatico.ca

MAGIC ON THE RIVER

Another successful and fun Magic on the River Day Camp was held on August 12th.

The day began with a museum tour by guide Lindy Feltmate. Several programs followed including fly tying with Colin Rudolph, nature story with Jocelyn Ellis and wildlife identification coloring book with Megan Myers. Presentations on live fresh water mussels with Sam Marshall and invertebrates with Emma Waitte rounded off this exciting day of learning.

The day campers enjoyed a hands on look at the different species in our watershed.

By all accounts, it was a very successful day and fun was had by all!



**St. Mary's River
Association
Education &
Interpretive
Centre**

8404 Highway #7
P.O. Box 179
Sherbrooke
Nova Scotia
B0J 3C0

Phone: 902-522-2099
Fax: 902-522-2241

Email:
stmarysriver@ns.sympatico.ca

Web site:
www1.stmarysriverassociation.
com

*Help Save the
Atlantic Salmon*



SMRA 2010 LOTTERY

WE ARE NOW SELLING TICKETS FOR
THE NEXT LOTTERY, WHICH BEGINS
IN THE NEW YEAR.

DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO
WIN, CALL NOW.

COST \$120.00 (various methods of
payment available)

THIS IS A GREAT FUNDRAISER
WITH THE MONEY RAISED USED
TO HELP DEFRAY THE COST OF
RUNNING THE SMRA EDUCATION
& INTERPRETIVE CENTRE
SO CALL NOW!

MONTHLY PRIZES:

- 1st \$150.00
- 2nd \$100.00
- 3rd \$50.00 4th-7th \$25.00

**PLUS AN EXTRA CHRISTMAS DRAW
OF..... \$1200.00!!!!!!**

Purchase your ticket
by December 31, 2009

To order your ticket

CONTACT ANY DIRECTOR

OR CONTACT:

Joanne Mailman 522-2866

Florence Duffy 522-2014

THANK YOU.....