

Paddler's Paradise – July 2017 President's Report

Welcome to September on the St. Mary's River,

In July we discussed our progress on Habitat Restoration and in August we talked about our stock enhancement efforts. For our September edition, will discuss our river in the context of being a "Paddler's Paradise", and this will conclude this year's SMRA article series for the newsletter.

First I would like to invite you to stop by our Interpretive Center, just as you enter Sherbrooke on the left hand side, and have a look at our new "interactive" river map on the front of our building. When we say interactive, we are referring to the "QR codes" on the map. If you have an app on your phone or tablet that reads QR Codes, then you now have a wealth of information that can be available from a linked website. The QR Codes on our map are linked to information on the river pools and to the river access points for canoeists or kayakers.

This map provides a view of the Main branch, West branch and the East branch of the St. Mary's. The map does not cover the estuary, the North branch or the upper head waters of the river's East and West branches. The river is just too long for that. Did you know if you add up the distance of all the branches and the main river it's the longest river in Nova Scotia? Cool eh!

To support this map, we are installing river side signs strategically located along the river's edge. The signs for Access sites 1, 3 and 4 are up and Access sites 2, 5 and 6 are still to come.

If you are paddling the East branch from Access site 1, you will soon see our river signs. The order in which you would come upon them are: Gunns Hole, Mckeens Pool, Paddlers Trail, Silvers Pool, Gold Mine, Clay Bank and the Graveyard Pool. Our goal is to have the signs in place by October 23, 2017 the date of our paddling event to show case the trail. If you would like to attend our first annual paddling event and want more information please call us at 522-2099.

Some of these riverside signs will be removed and reinstalled every season, as we would not want to lose them with the spring thaw. Remember this sign project so far encompasses the East Branch but our future plans include the West branch.

Paddlers please note:

- The East Branch Paddlers Trail has cell coverage and the West Branch does not.
- The West Branch is mapped out on Canoe and Kayak Nova Scotia's mapping system but the East Branch is not.
- And the West Branch Maps designed by Canoe and Kayak Nova Scotia are available at our Interpretive Center and are very helpful if you are going to paddle it.

Since we are talking about the West Branch, I should mention that it's very low this season and you currently can't paddle it. But if at any time in the future you want to paddle it, you should view our data logger live water level reading on our web page at <http://www.stmarysriverassociation.com/water-conditions.html>. You need 2 feet of water to paddle this Branch. Let me tell you it's no fun dragging your boat over rocks. The first week of August the logger was only showing 6 inches. SOOO low ouch! We are currently looking for a good location on the East Branch for another data logger and hopefully will be able to provide the same data as we have on the West Branch for you soon.

That's all for now from the SMRA, I hope everyone has a very fun and exciting summer. I look forward to updating you next season on our efforts for 2018. Bye for now....

Scott Beaver

<http://www.stmarysriverassociation.com>