

Paddler's Paradise



Summer's end is a time of year which I feel provides the best paddling opportunities. The 2016 summer brought extremely low water conditions to Nova Scotia's St. Mary's River, with some of the lowest levels I've ever seen.

This month I'll discuss paddling the magnificent St. Mary's, where our Association's initiatives will greatly improve the paddling experience on our pristine river! Our focus is on these five key points:

1. Providing a safe, enjoyable, user friendly paddling experience
2. Promoting and utilizing paddling trails that hold sufficient water during most of the summer
3. Adding online river level trends from our very own data loggers
4. Access signage as well as streamside signage with a touch of technology
5. Virtual map tour accessed from our website and our museum

Our association is proud to be a huge part of this new recreational opportunity for paddlers to enjoy and access the river. The SMRA is working in partnership with the St. Mary's Municipality to create a more user friendly paddling experience. We are doing this by adding strategic access sites for paddlers to enter and exit the river system. Signage will be added along these access points. We will focus on a one-day East Branch paddling excursion which maintains a good water level for most of the summer season. Our East Branch paddling trail is a little different than what traditionally is offered by Canoe/Kayak Nova Scotia paddler's mapping of the West Branch.

Our East Branch has cell coverage from the Denver Bridge down and we are taking advantage of that. We are adding QR coded signage to the river banks, road side and access sites. This QR coded signage, coupled with an app downloaded to your cellphone, will capture the unique image and bring the user to our website right from your smartphone. Once there, the data will give mapping and pool angling regulations along with seasonal data, history and photos. This is an exciting technology that we feel will bring added exposure to the area and promote the river and surrounding communities in a way that has never been done before.

Secondly we are adding two instrument data logging stations, with the West Branch logger reading live on our website now! These stations will provide live data streamed via Wi-Fi to our website. This data will provide members with river level, pH and rain fall amounts. Imagine knowing how much rain fell in the area you plan on paddling prior to your trip. Better yet, what if you could go to our website and view a live trend of the branch you are planning on paddling. Now you can! This info will make your planning a breeze and will be a major contributor to a safe and positive experience on the St. Mary's River.

I invite you to visit our webpage. Click on "Recreation" on the Home page's menu bar and then "Paddlers Paradise". Here is where it all begins. You can find our data loggers trending here and our new virtual mapping tour.

<http://www.stmarysriverassociation.com/paddling.html>

Thank you all once again for being part of our great adventure.

See you on the river banks,

Scott Beaver, President