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VOLUME 12, NO. 3
SUMMER 2003

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NOVA OUTDOORS

SUMMER 2003

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**STATEMENT
OF PURPOSE**

The Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters is interested in all aspects of the out-of-doors and is dedicated to the fostering of sound management and wise use of the renewable resources of the Province. We want to ensure that their economic, recreational and aesthetic values may continue for the benefit of this and all future generations.

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45500L

Executive Director's Voice



By Tony Rodgers

Somewhere in Canada, spring is in the air. It surely had not come to Nova Scotia on time. I for one can't remember a cooler start to spring than what it has been this year. To illustrate my point, I saw a returning song bird standing on a granite rock chipping away at the stone and stepping on the sparks just to keep his feet warm.

But, as we all know, heat does not always come just from the sun, and with a strong hint from the Premier it appears a provincial election is not far away. We may get to experience a warmer than usual summer after all.

The average hunter and angler in this province doesn't get the chance to meet with, nor do they bother to seek the opportunity to access our politicians after they are elected. In certain cases politicians don't seem to be as readily available to the voter between elections as they will be soon. Those candidates will be standing at your front doors cap in hand looking for support on election day, so make the best of it.

Make a list of candidates running in your area. Then, make a second list, a list of questions you want answered on hunting, angling and maybe taxes. Include on your list questions about the position these potential MLAs and their parties have on your outdoor wilderness

activities.

Once that is done, you can do one of two things. One, you can wait for the candidate or their representative, to show up at your door and take the chance of missing them while you're out. When you come home you find a brochure in your mail box with a note, sorry I missed you. Or you can call the election headquarters of those candidates and ask the candidate to call you back. When he or she does, and they will, because they know each vote counts, ask them the wildlife questions you listed and record the answers on paper.

Start off with easy questions. Do you support sustainable hunting in Nova Scotia? What is your party's position on giving financial support to ensure healthy fish populations will remain in the province? Are you (candidate) a hunter or angler? If you are not, why not? Do you support the view of animal rights groups that hunting should be banned? Does you or your party have a position of animal rights or animal welfare besides the fact that all animals should be treated humanely? Do you take donations from animal right group?

After collecting this valuable data you can make an informed decision on who you want to represent you in the Nova Scotia legislature. Remember, however, even if the person you vote for does not win, your vote was important,

because it is still a measure in the percentage of people who support a particular point of view. Also, by having a written record of the conversation with the candidate, you can challenge any deviation in the position of the party or the candidates after the election.

Share your information with your hunting and angling friends and your Federation. We are certainly not going to try to influence how you vote but we are interested in anything that is said about the subject during an election.

With the advantage of having e-mail interaction these days and the availability of websites, I believe political parties will rely even more heavily on the web to get their message out than they ever have in the past. Which gives you yet another avenue to ask your questions. The best part of this is that you can also share the answers you receive with your hunting and angling companions who are also on line with a simple forward. Again save your replies in a separate file for future investigation.

This era of Internet use is being described as the information age. Let's get the information we need to vote for those who support our hunting and angling rights.

Education, health, and provincial finances are all important subjects too and we should all be interested in them, but believe me the leaders of the parties will be taken to task on answering those questions by the media. So let us concentrate on the grass roots issues of our environment and our ability to conserve those resources and to access them for ourselves and future generations of anglers and hunters, our kids and grand kids. The media will pay absolutely no attention to hunting and fishing questions during the election. But if the people running for the jobs think it's an important enough issue, it will be to them.

Politicians of all stripes are getting

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pressure to change the uses of our natural resources, we must have our voices heard. Conservation should be the guiding principle not preservation. The only way to remind those who seek re-election and inform those who seek a term in office is to tell them straight up at the door or on the net.

I've said this before, that I love elections. As a person who loves sports I appreciate Nova Scotia style of non contact but no holds barred Nova Scotia politics. I know there is a contrast in terms but just watch the action.

I will weigh the accomplishments of the various political parties myself before making a decision to where my X will be placed.

It will be interesting to see the platform books of the various Parties to see if there is a mention of any improvement for anglers and hunters in them. I remember who supported us in the past. I know what parties favor such programs as gun registration, I've kept my notes.

If you remember in the past election Premier Hamm made three promises to us as a hunting and angling community and he kept all three. Yes, kept.

One, he recognized our heritage hunting and angling and ensured the continuation of those activities by making changes to the Wildlife Act in order to give that protection power in law. Second, he had promised to join with the other Canadian provinces who had taken

the Federal government to court over the firearms act, and third his government introduced and passed legislation that changed the Forestry and Wildlife Guideline to regulations. This legislation will help protect watercourse and wildlife forestry corridors during forestry operations. All very positive efforts.

Of course, the question is what have you done for me lately? I feel comfortable that this ball will continue to roll in our direction and I look forward to the platform documents of all parties.

Election time is our time. We speak of democracy or the lack of it, but in truth the people who don't get out and vote get the government they deserve and the rest of us should be ticked off that they don't want to make it work. Get out and vote.

In the meantime I'm going to get into some extreme sports in Nova Scotia. That of course would be having an Alberta steak bar-be-que near a mosquito swamp. Excuse my sad sense of humor but neither West Nile virus (and I will take precautions against getting bitten) or mad cow disease are going to keep me from enjoying my summer time recre-

ation of outdoor food with my family and trying to catch a fish or two.

After all, we all know that summer does not last forever in Nova Scotia, but it promises to be hot and steamy so enjoy it while it lasts. Support your local wildlife club and renew your membership to the Federation. Be safe in the outdoors.

Tony Rodgers
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ATVs And Water — A Perspective

Off-road travel. I've been there. The T-shirt said "Do it in the dirt". A friend wore one to a funeral. Poor taste. In the



Bob Bancroft

60s, before ATVs became popular, I drove trail bikes down rivers, across streams, and sold bikes as a student. Later, as a dealer, I had a K a w a s a k i , Honda and seven seasonal employees on the payroll when the university granted me a second degree. Then it was time to change gears. As a fisheries and wildlife biologist, I went on to learn a bit about trout and salmon habitat.

Some folks spend lots of time in woods and streams, but don't see much. As part of a forestry-wildlife program, I used to visit pulp cutters on their lunch break to discuss fish, wildlife and forestry. The cutters figured we were aliens from space until we turned on an electro fisher and shocked the brook. Small trout began boiling out from under things in the stream. Guys who had been cutting trees by these brooks for years thought these "trickles" had no fish. They began to listen and ask questions.

My best friend in our village owns five ATVs. Like trail bikes, there is nothing inherently wrong with these machines. The driver is the key. Current magazine advertising inducing folks to buy ATVs and 4WDs is straightforward. Manufacturers and distributors think it's fair game to rip up, down and across our streams. Poor taste again. They should learn about fish habitat. And be careful about "doing it in the dirt".

Trout are picky about where they live. Adults need cool water, and often take refuge in springs, stillwaters and lakes over the summer. As breeding season approaches every fall, trout move up rivers into small streams and brooks after rains swell into the channels. Spawning usually occurs during October and November in two types of stream habitats. The first egg-deposition site, or redd as it is called, is found where water moves up and out of pools, pushing into the bottom. The other spawning site occurs in shallow, fast-water riffle areas, where water that pushed into the gravel at the tail of the pool comes back out into the stream. In both cases, water passing through the bottom gravels keeps moulds and bacteria from attacking and killing the eggs. Somehow trout have the ability to sense these sites with water moving through the gravels. Females clean out existing fine material from the chosen spot with their tails, and lay eggs that fall into spaces between the stones. Once laid, eggs have to survive the winter in order to hatch the following spring. Atlantic salmon have a similar life cycle.

Egg survival rates are often low. Ice can freeze into the gravel bottom, and during break-ups it frequently scours that bottom, grinding eggs up in the process. Bank erosion can deposit a layer of fine silt over parts of the bottom, blocking the penetration of moving water, creating a sealed-off wasteland underneath that causes eggs to die. Human activities along waterways have made erosion and silt a serious problem in many streams. Driving in the stream is one way of destroying fish and their habitat. Driving in and out of streams rips and tears up the banks, creating more erosion. Most aquatic insects and small fish in a stream also find

shelter in spaces between rocks and gravels. The grinding action of rocks and gravels created by vehicles passing over them results in "groundfish". Unfortunately, both types of spawning sites are shallow and attractive for ATV travel.

A certain amount of erosion is natural, but ATVs and 4WDs can drastically increase the amount of silt flushing into many streams and rivers. The use of highway ditches for travel contributes to this loading. Locked-in, four wheel drive ATVs scuff and rip up more soil in turning.

In spring some trout and salmon eggs hatch. The fry stay in the gravel for a while, feeding off a built-in lunch pail called a yolk sac. Until they come up and out of the bottom, there is no evidence that these fish exist. As a driver, you would see nothing but gravel.

Eventually young fish swim up and venture forth into an acid rain world that holds a few challenges. Being a cold water species, tiny and vulnerable, many young trout spent their first summer in headwater brooks that are too small for larger, cannibalistic cousins. These are the tiny tributaries of larger, warmer streams. Trout-of-the-year stay in relatively quiet water, hiding frequently under rocks and banks to avoid being eaten by birds or noticed by mink. Young salmon often locate in the faster, shallow water of slightly larger streams. They use the current for visual protection from predators, but get out of the fast flow by riding the "draft" or quiet water space behind a rock.

Remember good snowmobiling? As the winter's accumulation of snow melted, it fed our brooks, streams and rivers into the summer. Climate change or not, we seem to be entering an era with

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N.S. Transfers Firearms Registration Prosecutions

The province says it will be up to the federal government to prosecute Nova Scotians who do not register their rifles or shotguns.

Justice Minister Jamie Muir will issue a directive to the Public Prosecution Service which means Criminal Code and Firearms Act charges relating to the registration of long guns will be referred to federal prosecutors.

"People who use weapons dangerously, or to commit a crime, will still face the full extent of the law," said Mr. Muir.

"But it makes no sense to clog up the courts with procedural matters around long gun registrations. The whole process has been flawed from the start, and law-abiding Nova Scotians who use their guns for hunting or range practice shouldn't have to pay the price."

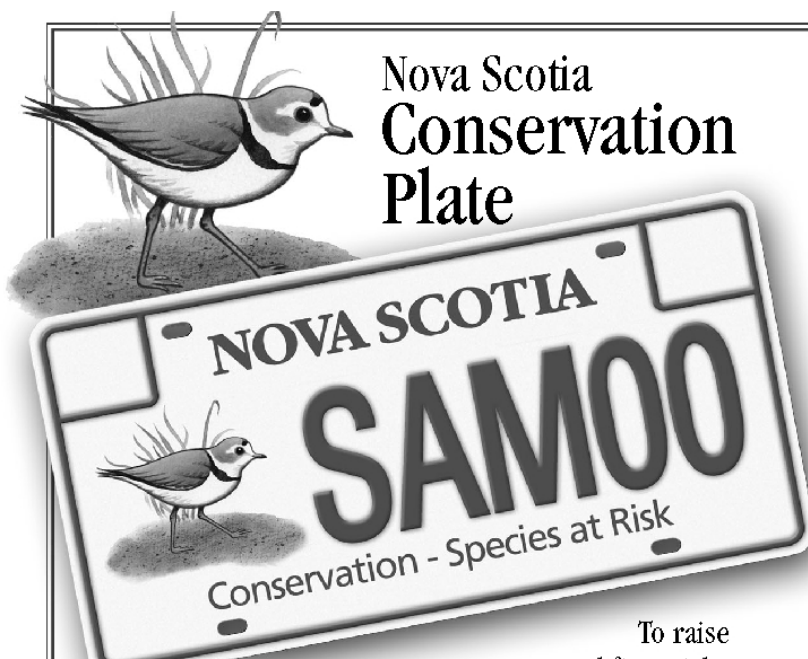
The federal Firearms Act and the Criminal Code state that anyone possessing a firearm as defined in Section 2 of the Code, must hold a valid firearms registration certificate.

Mr. Muir said it is generally not in the public interest to enforce the regis-

tration provisions for long guns that are not restricted or prohibited. Exceptions could be made if offenders have a history of firearm-related offences, or if they blatantly disregard police warnings.

"We believe the public is served best when our prosecution service focuses on serious criminal matters," he added.

Mr. Muir said if police do lay charges, the province will refer those cases to federal prosecutors, who will have to decide whether to proceed through the courts. ☛



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Find out more about Species at Risk by calling the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division, (902) 679-6091 or visit www.gov.ns.ca/

The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources extends congratulations to the Halifax Fish and Wildlife Association on its 150th anniversary and salutes its members for their enduring cooperation and dedication to wildlife management.

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Ambitious Partnership To Protect Almost 4,000 Acres Of Nova Scotia Wilderness

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Bowater Mersey Paper Company Limited and the Province of Nova Scotia recently announced a conservation partnership with the potential to add more than 1,500 hectares (3,800 acres) to the existing network of protected areas in Nova Scotia. Four in-holdings, under Bowater ownership and within provincial Wilderness Areas, are the focus of the partnership, and are valued at \$2.9 million. The sites will be protected through a combination of a purchase by NCC of 351 hectares (868 acres), and the generous donation by Bowater of a conservation easement on the remaining 1188 hectares (2936 acres). The combined cost of protecting the four properties will total \$1.4 million.

The collaboration represents NCC's most ambitious project to date in the province. It will also include the largest conservation easement in Nova Scotia, and will secure the largest in-holding within a provincial Wilderness Area. The region surrounding the in-holdings is considered ecologically significant due to the old forests, presence of endangered species such as the Blandings Turtle and Pink Coreopsis, and for the crucial watersheds, rivers and wetlands they contain.

"A project of this magnitude and importance does not come along often" said Dr. Bill Freedman, NCC Atlantic Region Chair and Chair of the Biology Department at Dalhousie University. "The ecological values of the properties are outstanding and their protection by NCC, in partnership with Bowater and the Province, will help ensure the integrity of the province's wilderness areas."

NCC is now engaged in a drive to raise the \$1.4 million required to pay for the project by the end of the year. "We are seeking individuals, foundations and corporations as far away as the United States to invest in this vital project," said Linda Stephenson, NCC's Atlantic Regional Director. "There are plenty of opportunities for local donors to make a significant investment in conservation and we welcome new partners at any time."

"Partnerships like this one with the Nature Conservancy and Bowater provide government with the opportunity to leverage private sector money to expand conservation," said Environment and Labour Minister Ron Russell. "And best

of all, it will add almost 4,000 acres to the province's Protected Areas."

Once completed, this project will bring the amount of land Bowater has designated for conservation under the company's Unique Areas Program to over 83,000 acres. "Bowater has been designating lands with special values for protection since the 1970s," said Jon Porter, General Manager of Bowater Nova Scotia woodlands operations. "Today's announcement is another step in an on-going process and underscores Bowater's belief in achieving balance between conservation and economic values on our private lands. We believe this is also the start of what will be a very successful long-term partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada."

The Province of Nova Scotia will play a major role in the project by ultimately accepting title to the two sites targeted for purchase. In concert with NCC, the province will ensure the on-going stewardship of the land.

"The addition of more than 3800 acres of land to the Province's Wilderness Areas by the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Bowater Mersey is a significant accomplishment that will benefit all Nova Scotians," said Natural Resources Minister Tim Olive. "Land conservation is a government priority and we are pleased to see such positive results from our conservation agreement with the Nature Conservancy."

The four sites contain prime examples of the eco-systems represented by the surrounding Provincial Wilderness Areas:

Smith Lake (Sheep farm), a 182-hectare (450-acre) property, is found within the Tobeatic Wilderness Area in Shelburne County and is noted for rare plants such as the Brook-Side Alder, threatened species like the Long's Bulrush and Nova Scotia's only native moose population.

Northeast Bay is a 240-hectare (594-acre) site located in Queen's County within the Lake Rossignol Wilderness

Area. It contains old-growth hemlock forests over 135 years old and includes pristine Lake Rossignol shoreline.

The 169-hectare (418-acre) Frozen Ocean site is in the Tobeatic Wilderness Area and is located to the north of majestic Kejimikujik National Park in Annapolis County. It is part of the Mersey River watershed which drains into the Park.

The Tidney River property in Queen's County is the largest in-holding at 948 hectares (2,342 acres). It is found within the Tidney River Wilderness Area. It contains mixed woodlands and wetlands which are home to a wide variety of waterfowl and rare Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is a non-profit, non-advocacy organization that takes a quiet, business-like approach to land conservation and the preservation of biological diversity. Its plan of action involves partnership-building and entering into creative conservation solutions with any individual, corporation, community group, conservation organization or government body that shares its passion. Since 1962, NCC and its supporters have protected more than 688,000 hectares (1.7 million acres) of ecologically significant land nationwide. In Nova Scotia, more than 4,000 hectares (9,900 acres) have been protected since the first NCC project in the province in 1972.

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Random Casts

Fishing The Mouse Hatch

By Don MacLean

The evening shadows were lengthening across the pool as I cast to the far bank. Slowly I swam the fly back to me until I was rewarded with a strong pull. The brown trout had fallen for a small mouse imitation. While mice may not have the beauty or history of mayflies, they are deadly for big brook and brown trout as well as smallmouth bass.

Most anglers don't think of land based animals, such as mice, as being a common food of fish, but this is not the case. Big fish get that way by living a long time and taking advantage of whatever food is available. One mouse equals a lot of insects so trout and bass eat them readily when they get the chance. Most of us, unfortunately, are all too familiar with house mice and rats. They are a nuisance in our sheds, compost bins and, occasionally our houses. House mice and rats are not native to Nova Scotia, they arrived on the same ships that carried the first settlers. Once here they found the environment to their liking and thrived.

While you won't likely find either of these species on our streams there is no shortage of native mice, shrews and moles for trout to feed on. Nova Scotia has six species of mice, six species of shrews and one mole. They include the star-nose mole, the masked or common shrew, arctic, smoky, pigmy, short-tailed and northern water shrew. Native mice include the deer mouse, wood-bog lemming, red-backed mouse, meadow mouse, meadow jumping mouse and the woodland jumping mouse.

With this wide variety in nature it

is not surprising that a large number end up as part of the diet of fish. Mice, shrews and moles usually travel at night and often fall into lakes and streams or try to swim across them. Their struggles on the water surface soon attract trout. Heavy rains will also drown mice, shrews and moles in their burrows and wash them into streams and lakes.

Flytyers have the advantage of being able to tie up effective imitations of these animals. However bait and spin anglers can purchase very realistic mouse imitations that are designed to be fished with spinning gear. Tying deer hair mice is a simple, if messy operation. I have seen some very realistic imitations which included ears, eyes and whiskers but like most flies they are tied to catch the angler, not the fish. A simple pattern with a tail and a mouse-like shape will do the trick.

Deer Hair Mouse

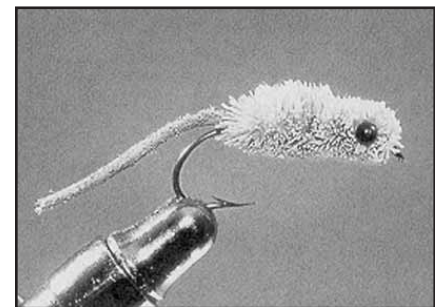
Hook: Mustad 9672 Size 2-8

Tail: Short piece of leather lace

Body: Deer hair spun on and trimmed

Eyes: Plastic barbells tied in (optional)

Tight Lines



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Donald A. MacLean is the Assistant Director Inland Fisheries Division for Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Pictou, NS.



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Nova Scotia Electrofishing Project: Interim Report 2002

By John MacMillan and Tara Crandlemere, Inland Fisheries Division, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

The Inland Fisheries Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is responsible for managing the freshwater recreational fishery for brook (speckled) trout, brown trout, small-mouth bass, chain pickerel, white perch and yellow perch; while the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans is responsible for managing the sportfishery for Atlantic salmon, shad, gaspereau, smelt, and marine species. In order to effectively manage a fishery it is important to understand the factors that may limit the success of sport fish species and promote activities that restore, enhance, and protect sportfish populations. The Nova Scotia freshwater recreational fishery is affected by a number of factors that include acid precipitation, over fishing, introduced species, nutrient loading, and warm water conditions. The importance of one factor compared to another can differ from region to region and from river to river.

Fish are cool blooded animals and need to remain in a thermal environment that is not too cool or too warm in order to survive. Brook trout, brown trout, and Atlantic salmon are members of the salmonid family, and require cool water habitat. Brook trout are one of the most sensitive salmonids to warm water, and avoid temperatures greater than 20°C, whereas brown trout and Atlantic salmon are slightly more tolerant of warmer waters. Warm waters can result from impounding streams and the absence or removal of shade trees along streams. Climate change and poor land use practices have increased water temperatures, and decreased water levels. The results of the Nova Scotia Water Temperature Monitoring Project demonstrated that many river systems in Nova Scotia warm to levels that are considered to be unsuitably warm for salmonids for long periods of time in summer. The Water Temperature Monitoring project was sponsored in a large way by the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Other surveys have indicated that suitable cool water habitat in lakes has declined because

of nutrient loading. It was suspected that declining cool water habitats could be an important factor limiting the distribution and number of salmonids in some Nova Scotia river systems.

This project investigates the impact of water temperature on distribution and health of salmonid populations in Nova Scotia river systems. Trout and salmon populations were evaluated during the warm summer months in streams that were initially surveyed by temperature monitors during the Nova Scotia Water Temperature Monitoring Project. Electrofishing was the method of sampling for population abundance, and a habitat survey was undertaken to examine the surrounding environment. Habitat parameters assessed include stream bottom type (silt, gravel, etc.), cover (aquatic vegetation, overhanging, canopy, etc.) water depth, stream width, and water characteristic (run, riffle, etc). Electrofishing sites were selected over a wide range of summer average temperatures and they were grouped into three thermal categories: Cool, Intermediate, and Warm. Cool water sites had average summer temperatures less than 16.5°C and were considered to have favourable temperatures for trout during the entire summer. Intermediate sites had average summer water temperatures between 16.5-19°C and had a few periods considered thermally stressful for brook trout. Warm water sites had temperatures warmer than 19°C and were considered to be thermally stressful for trout for long periods of time in summer. Many of the same volunteer organizations that contributed to the water temperature monitoring project, assisted in the collection of fish population data in 44 streams on 10 river systems during the month of August 2002, the first year of a two year study (Table 1).

The number of juvenile Atlantic salmon present in electrofishing sites did not seem to be strongly related to summer water temperature. The aver-

age population density estimate of juvenile salmon present was 5 fish per 100m² in the intermediate water category and was 2 fish per 100m² in the cool and warm water categories. The greater average number of salmon found in sites with intermediate temperatures could be related to their ability to tolerate intermediate thermal conditions and habitat preferences. Another possible reason to explain the absence or low abundance of Atlantic salmon could relate to the critically low population levels in areas such as in rivers of the Bay of Fundy and in some other rivers in mainland Nova Scotia. In many cases, low abundance of juvenile Atlantic salmon may have to do more with limited reproduction from low numbers of returning adults from the sea rather than reflect habitat conditions in freshwater.

The presence of brook trout seemed to be strongly related to summer water temperature. The average population density estimate of brook trout was 77 fish per 100m² in cool water sites, 17 fish per 100m² in intermediate sites, and 2 fish per 100m² in warm water sites (see Figure). The results of the survey clearly indicated that the number of trout caught in cool water electrofishing sites was much greater than the number caught in intermediate or warm water sites. In fact, when compared to other habitat parameters such as cover, water depth, and stream bottom type, cool water temperature appeared to be the most important factor regulating the number of trout present. During periods of increased water temperature, cool water fish such as brook trout will often respond by swimming to areas of cooler water. Migration to cooler



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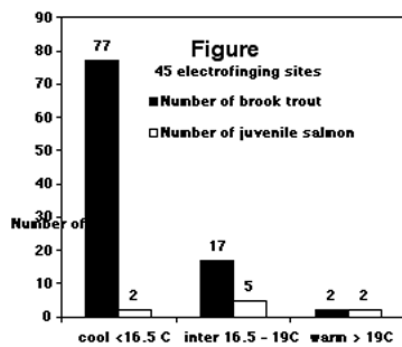
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water can sometimes result in overcrowded conditions in areas where temperatures are suitable.




Restriction of habitat and overcrowding of fish in cool water sites can lead to problems related to survival. Overcrowded populations are more susceptible to predation, over fishing, parasites, disease transmission, and competition. Predators such as American eel, mergansers, great blue herons, cormorants, mink, are opportunistic and are attracted to areas where prey is abundant and easily caught. These areas could be the overcrowded trout populations in cool water refugia. Anglers are also opportunists and like predators of trout, anglers have the potential to remove high numbers of trout under certain conditions. Fish health can be influenced as parasites and diseases could be transmitted more efficiently through a crowded population compared to through a dispersed population leading to elevated infections and reduced survival in thermally stressed populations.

The importance of competition for food in fresh water fish populations has been documented for a long time. Competition can result in two ways from within a salmonid population and from other fish species. Trout could be forced

to compete for limited food resources and habitat in the cool water refugia during the time period when habitat is restricted. Trout competing against other trout can result in poor condition and slow growth of individual fish, therefore resulting in a reduced rate of survival while in the cool water refugia or during the following winter.

The second way that competition can play a role is through the presence of other fish species that are better adapted or more tolerant of different environmental conditions. Competition is different from predation because fish competitors do not have to prey on each other to have an impact on each others populations. In Nova Scotia, common fish competitors of brook trout include other salmonids, white perch, yellow perch, smallmouth bass, chain pickerel, white sucker, chub, American eel, and brown bullhead. The results of the Nova Scotia electrofishing survey indicated that the highest percentage (100%) of sites with competitors was found in the warm water category and the lowest percentage (50%) of sites with competitors was found in the cool water category. Trout, and salmonids in general, are considered to be poor competitors to many other fish species. Trout populations in the presence of many fish competitors will tend to be less healthy compared to trout populations in a habitat with few fish competitors. Most of the fish considered to be important competitors of trout prefer warmer conditions than trout, and, as a result, warmer waters could increase habitat for competitors and competitor populations. In these situations competitor pressures on trout populations could be significant as many competitors may feed on similar prey items as trout or may feed on trout directly.

Thermal restriction of cool water habitat can lead to numerous and sometimes complex effects on trout populations. The results of this electrofishing survey clearly indicated that cool water habitat is very important to brook trout in Nova Scotia stream systems. The results of the Water Temperature Monitoring Project had indicated that the freshwater conditions in Nova Scotia rivers are sensitive to environmental changes; for example, a 2°C increase in summer average water temperature would result in an estimated 55% reduction in the number of cool water sites and in an estimated 35% increase in the number of warm water sites. Future climatic warming and careless land use and development practices may exacerbate warm water conditions on trout populations. For these reasons, focusing on conserving our cool water habitat in streams and lakes and protecting and enhancing habitats could be of great benefit to the salmonid resource in the province. The new Wildlife Habitat and Watercourses Protection Regulations that were implemented by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources are a very important step towards maintaining and establishing protective tree buffers around streams. Many volunteer organizations involved in this electrofishing project have been involved in the Adopt-A-Stream Program. The Adopt-A-Stream Program provided funding and expertise to undertake stream enhancement projects to benefit trout and salmon; hopefully, new financial resources will be accessed to support the future initiatives of this worth-while program. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries would like to thank the volunteers and organizations involved in the water temperature monitoring project and the electrofishing project.



Ron Russell, Minister
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Future Initiatives

More data is needed to properly assess the interrelations among water temperature, competition, other stream habitat variables, and Nova Scotia salmonids. We plan to continue the electrofishing project in the 2003 field season with the help of interested volunteer organizations. We hope that their valuable support continues in the future. For a more detailed report please contact the Inland Fisheries Division at Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Box 700, Pictou, Nova Scotia, B0K 1H0. ➔

Table 1. Organizations and volunteers involved in the Nova Scotia Water Temperature Monitoring Project and Electrofishing Project, 2000-2002.

Contact	Organization	River
John Kennedy	Port Morien Wildlife Federation	Trout
John Boudreau	NS Fed Anglers and Hunters/Rich Co Fish and Game	Grand
Chuck Thompson	Cape Breton Sportfishing Advisory Council	Middle
Blair Bernard	Eskasonie Fish and Wildlife Service	Middle
Jack MacKillop/ Billy Stevens	Cape Breton Sportfishing Council	Baddeck
Leonard Forsyth	Margaree Salmon Association	Margaree
Mary MacNeil	L. Ainslie and Margaree River Heritage Association	L. Ainslie
John King	Stewards of River Denys Watershed Association	River Denys
Charles MacInnis	Department of Fisheries and Oceans	James
Bob & Len MacDonald	Mulgrave and Area Lakes Enhancement Project	St. Francis Harbour
Bill Carpin	St. Mary's River Association	St. Mary's
Bill Cardiff	Pictou County Rivers Association	East & West
Walter Regan	Sackville River Association	Sackville
Brooke Cook	Bluenose Atlantic Coastal Action Project	Mushamush
Carol Randall	LaHave Salmon Association	LaHave
Garth Trider	LaHave Trout Association	Upper LaHave
Doug Bell	Petite Riviere Association	Petite Riviere
Dave Dagley	NS Federation of Anglers and Hunters	Medway
Paul Smith	NS Fed Anglers and Hunters/ Shel Co. Fish and Game	Roseway
Richard Swaine	NS Fed Anglers and Hunters/ Shel Co. Fish and Game	Clyde
Charles Trask	Tusket River Environ Protection Association	Tusket
Roland Smith	Annapolis Fly Fishers	Nictaux
Roland LeBlanc	Salmon River Salmon Association	Salmon
Stephan Hawbolt	Clean Annapolis River Project	Annapolis
Doug Warner	Canard River Trout Association	Canard
Mike Brylinsky	Estuarine Center Biology Department Acadia University	Habitant
Peter Bagnall/ Derrick Fritz Mac Miles	Friends of Cornwallis River Black River Environmental Committee	Cornwallis Black
Darrel Brown	Wildlife Habitat Advocates	Avon
Chris van Sylk	Nine Mile River Association	Nine Mile
Ivan Polly	Cobequid Salmon Association	Salmon
Danny Ripley	Cumberland County River Enhancement Committee	Philip
Ron Allen	Wallace River Trout Management Committee	Wallace



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A Walk In The Woods

Spring Leads Us To Silviculture

"These old forests hold secrets that cannot be extracted from today's regrowth replacements."

—Robert Leverett

Now that spring has arrived, or so we are told, it is a time for events that enable people to become more involved or aware of natural resource management. For instance, over the past few weeks there have been three - one day regional woodlot management conferences held across the province. Open to the public and primarily designed for woodlot owners and operators, the sessions provided opportunities where more than 450 people learned about subjects such as an update on the provincial forest strategy and regulations, woodlot owner association activities, low impact forestry, wildlife habitat protection, wood market update, agritourism, woodlot financial management, taxation issues, and ATV safe use and laws pertaining to ATV abuse.



Don Cameron

Inevitably in these types of settings, the topic of clearcutting is discussed in some length. The fact that it is generally overused in Nova Scotia tends to be the most common criticism. People are often surprised to hear that the average size of clearcuts in Nova Scotia is less than 10 hectares. It is difficult for some to understand that the economics of forest harvesting make it possible for logging companies to harvest their timber much more cheaply over the short term by clearcutting than by a form of selection harvesting.

However, it must be clearly stated that there are many benefits to using other selection harvesting options. Although it may be more expensive in the short term to exercise this harvesting technique which encourages a more uneven-aged management style, it provides many long term benefits, including financial, aesthetic, wildlife habitat, water protection and recreation potential.

A silvicultural system is a planned process for tending trees and establishing new trees in forests. It is also used to guide in the cutting of forest stands. Silviculture plans are developed for woodland to enhance forest benefits including visual and scenic qualities, wildlife habitat, ecological aspects, water quality and quantity, wood production, and recreation enjoyment.

Each of these silvicultural systems provide the framework for maintaining healthy forest communities over very long periods of time. An appropriate silvicultural

system can create and maintain a particular set of desired forest benefits to meet the landowner's objectives.

We often think of forests as quiet places that never change, but forests are continually changing - even when we do not disturb them in any way. A young forest changes rapidly. In older forests, changes are so subtle that they are often not noticed from one year to the next.

One of the more "picky" things about which you may hear foresters and forest technicians preach is the fact that selective harvesting is not the same as selection harvesting. Simply stated, selective harvesting is sometimes knowingly or unknowingly used to replace the older term of highgrading which means logging the best, most valuable trees and leaving behind the worst, lowest value trees. This, of course is the most profitable method over the short term, but of course produces a lower quality forest of the future. This makes sense when you consider that the only trees left standing are often those with poorer form and quality which often reflects poorer genetic makeup. If these trees become the parents for future forest generations, it will reflect in the poorer tree genetics over time.

Selection harvesting, in its different forms, usually refers to the harvesting of trees of various size, age and quality. This creates a more open, uneven-aged forest stand that will improve in growth and development while producing some immediate financial return to the owner.

Following is a list of different forms of selection harvesting. See if you can recognize these methods when you are out and about in and around the forest.

Single-tree selection: This system removes single trees dispersed through-

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out the forest. It is associated with uneven-aged stands; those that have a mix of trees of all sizes, or ages, are removed. Small openings are created for the establishment of new naturally regenerating trees. Also, by removing some of the trees, nutrients and growing space are available to the remaining trees.

Group selection: With this system small groups of trees covering one-fifth to one-half an acre (1 to .2 hectares) are removed to create an opening. The openings provide conditions for the establishment of new trees. Between the openings, the cutting will also remove scattered individual trees to thin the rest of the forest, and promote the growth of the trees remaining. Repeated application of this system creates groups of trees of different ages, dispersed throughout a stand. Due to the locations and sizes of the groups, each of the age classes occupies a similar amount of space in the stand.

Shelterwood: This system creates stands where all the trees are about the same age. Generally one-half to two-thirds of the mature trees are removed. This lightens the understory, but leaves a reserve of tall trees to serve as a source of seed and to partially shade the ground. New trees become established from their seeds. Then another cutting removes the remaining older trees when the new trees reach heights of 5-10 feet.

Seed-tree and clearcutting: These systems create forest stands where all the



This photo is of a shelterwood which has created abundant natural regeneration of red spruce and balsam fir.

trees are about the same age. The seed-tree method removes all but a handful of widely scattered mature trees, and these provide seeds for the new trees. A second cutting removes all of the mature trees when new trees reach heights of 5-10 feet.

Clearcutting removes all the older trees at one time providing an open environment for a new age class to become established and grow. ➔

Don Cameron is the Information Officer for the Nova Scotia Section of the Canadian Institute of Forestry.

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Hunting Turns Boys Into Men Of Heart, Scientist Claims

Dr. Randall Eaton, an evolutionary psychologist claims that hunting is the right medicine for turning boys into men of heart. "Men evolved to protect and provide. Around the world for hundreds of thousands of years, boys became men by proving themselves worthy as hunters. To this day among hunting-gathering societies, successful hunting qualifies a man for manhood and marriage," Eaton said.

An award-winning author and TV producer, Eaton said that the primary dimensions of masculinity are warring, sex, hunting and sport, but according to Eaton only hunting connects men profoundly to nature. "The instinct to hunt awakens spontaneously in boys, but the taking of a life opens the heart and tempers that instinct with compassion. If we want to transform boys into men who respect life and are responsible to society and the environment, then we need to mentor them in hunting as a rite of passage," he said.

Eaton is convinced that hunting teaches empathy and that it would be a less competitive, more peaceful world if more men hunted. "The hunt is the ideal

way to teach universal virtues, including generosity, patience, courage, fortitude and humility," Eaton said.

He pointed to wilderness survival programs in which delinquent boys' lives were successfully transformed by subsistence hunting. He said, "Hunting is good medicine for bad kids because it's good medicine for all kids."

Eaton also encourages vision quest and artistic expression as rites of passage for initiation of adolescent boys to adulthood. He said, "Modern civilization has forgotten the critical importance of properly initiating boys to men. I think that hunting as a rite of passage is a major answer to the social and environmental crisis."

According to Eaton, hunting is justifiable in terms of its benefits to environmental conservation. He said, "Look at Ducks Unlimited. Never have so few done so much for the environment.

They've permanently conserved over ten million acres of wetlands." But, he said, the social justification for hunting lies in its positive influence on the development of our youth. ❖

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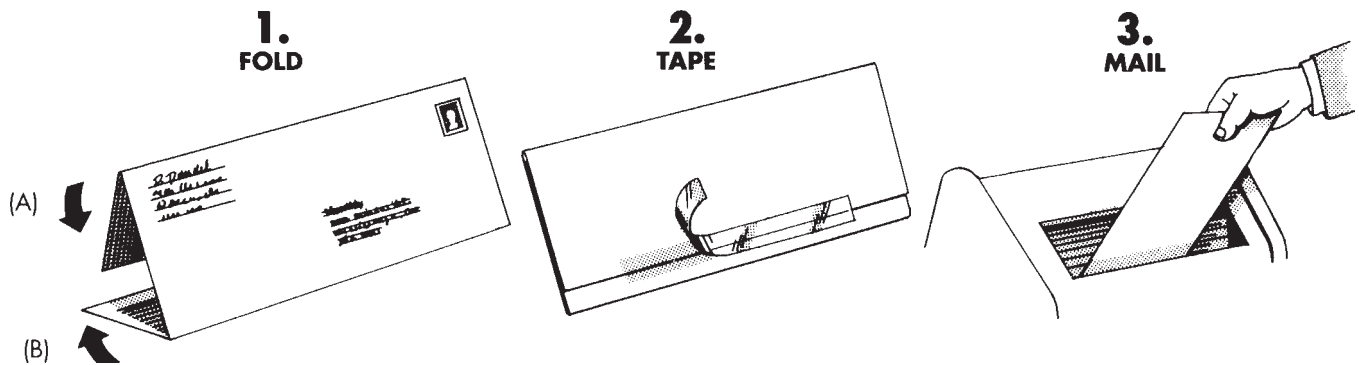


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