

Winter,
2015
Volume 4;
Issue 1

SSWA is online:
www.sswa.ca

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On Page 2:

News from your watershed group:
Projects big and small
rainstorm damage from Dec. 10
our flying squirrels—
tiny BASE jumpers

Here to Help

Private river and stream crossings are plentiful in the South Shore, and when their usefulness ends, SSWA may be able to help. Not with rebuilding, but with removal, under certain conditions. It is not a simple matter for a property owner to haul up debris when materials are in streams. SSWA may aid with advice, with the permitting process and in removal of collapsed structures that pose an environmental issue. Often when crossings collapse, stream blockages occur that redirect water flow to undermine banks and introduce sometimes tons of sediment into stream habitat. Sediment is the enemy of fish eggs and the aquatic life upon which many species depend. It clogs springs, and makes streams shallow and therefore undesirably warm for fish. It does the same thing as it flushes into wetlands and estuaries, where it may contribute to sea lettuce blooms and low oxygen events. Blockages may stop upstream migration for some or all species. Last summer, SSWA assisted in the removal of old crossings and stabilization of affected clay shoulders and banks (see Summer Blog, sswa.ca). Since the severe rainfall event on December 10, reports are now arriving of more failed private crossings.



TRWC Meeting

Wed., March 11, 7 pm

South Shore United
Ch., Fellowship Rm.

**WRWG Annual
General Meeting**

Wed., April 8, 7 pm

Crapaud Community
Hall

SSWA AGM

coming in April

**2014-2015 SSWA
Board of Directors:**

Martha Howatt,
Augustine Cove

Emily Gorman,
DeSable

Daphne Davey,
Westmoreland

Barb Clement,
Tryon

Duane MacDonald,
Tryon

Project Spotlight: The private crossing that is just upstream of Sherren's Pond. This was the one crossing removed with SSWA aid in 2014 that was rebuilt better than ever, although at the owners' expense. Because the failing culvert was a fish habitat issue, SSWA, assisted by funders (see WRWG section, page 2) helped the owners remove the old structure. The owners helped with labor and capital for this phase as well and gave SSWA staff a lesson in manufacture and use of stone gabion baskets. The 20 foot steel span they installed, resting on the baskets and over the east branch should serve them and the local environment well.

Photo Contest: It's ON !!!

Enter the new SSWA Photo contest by **March 15!** The contest features **cash prizes** and the opportunity for one watershed winner to also obtain the 2015 grand prize. *Take images that feature or show interaction with our beautiful natural environment, in one or more of five watersheds from Seven Mile Bay to DeSable, Albany to Inkerman to Maplewood.* Keep note of the image locations and keep clicking. Email up to 5 jpg files, with image locations, name and phone number to sswa@sswa.ca. But first, review the rules on sswa.ca. Note: we cannot accept mailed prints or return images. *Older Images Category, 50 years old or more,* is open again, relating to water, land use, native species or forest. Much has changed on PEI *in living memory* but the record is thinning of the time when water mills operated, clay roads, family farms, hedgerows, and horse labour were plentiful. Do you have shots of when bays were deep, and mud and ice were hauled? All winners from the last 3 years competitions are at sswa.ca. Click on the SSWA Tab.



From Top: Donna Butler, Tryon and 2014 Contest Grand Prize Winner; Regional Awards: Kathy Ives, Augustine Cove-Cape Traverse; Ron Arvidson, DeSable; Peter Bower, Westmoreland; and Kelley Arnold, Seven Mile Bay

Westmoreland River Watershed Group (WRWG)

Have you noticed the exciting activity downstream from Sherren’s Pond on Route 13 in Crapaud? Last fall, work was completed on Phase One of a project to save the pond and restore fish to the waterway. Fish have been unable to access the pond for many years! Additionally, the shelf life of the concrete spillway in the southwest corner is very much in doubt. We don’t want another Scales Pond “incident.” Federal Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program and PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund were key partners in removal of a private bridge upstream of Sherren’s Pond and, with PEI Department of Agriculture, in Phase One at the Pond. Phase One included installation of a rock-lined “natural” fish ladder from the east branch, upstream to a culvert into the pond. Landscaping will stabilize the banks and prevent soil erosion.



Part of Fish Ladder

Phase Two in 2015 will include measures to take some pressure off the spillway and install a draw-down structure to control water height and ensure adequate temperature. Then we will hang out a “Welcome!” sign for trout, salmon and other species to swim through Sherren’s Pond on their way to spawn upstream. Phase Two also includes the development of a park with amenities such as a parking area, signs, and a wheelchair-accessible fishing platform. Restoring recreational fishing at Sherren’s Pond will make a lot of people very happy! It’s good for the watershed, and good for the community. Over winter we are researching the long history of this local landmark. We hope to find ways to honor all the hard-working families who lent their name to this beautiful place.

Tryon River Watershed Cooperative (TRWC)

Who’s out there? P.E.I. has been labeled as a province with little wildlife diversity. While you won’t find deer, moose or a bear walking through your backyard, there is more out there than most people realize, and luckily, most are safe to investigate. Some are even friendly.



A Tryon Northern Flying Squirrel

I made a very cute discovery while investigating some nighttime movement at my bird feeder. A Northern Flying Squirrel had come for a visit. Apparently these little night visitors are quite common, so why after 15 years, is this the first one I have seen? Northern Flying Squirrels only come out at night and almost never go to the ground. They don’t actually fly, but glide from tree to tree using a furry parachute attached to their legs; you could say they have perfected the art of falling gracefully. This mode of transportation limits their home range; they will travel along hedgerows and riparian zones (the area along a stream) but are blocked by a gap in trees too broad to jump. I have been filling my platform feeder at night and my friend has returned and will allow us to walk within a few feet. I plan on installing some nesting boxes with the hope of encouraging a colony. Place some bird foods out on a platform at night (your feeders may be emptied by dark) lock the cat inside, and keep an eye out. You might be surprised too. KL

DeSable River Enhancement & Activity Management (DREAM)

Based on recent weather, it’s tempting to agree with experts who have been saying that storms may be getting more severe. UPEI Climatologist Adam Fenech said that on Dec. 10, 2014 one day rainfall came close to the record, with 156 mm landing at Foxly River. This region saw over 120 mm fall that day. According to Environment Canada, the record 24 hour rainfall on PEI goes back to 1942, when 164 mm of rain arrived in Charlottetown. Most are aware of the dozens of roads damaged up west at a cost of \$millions.

Watershed volunteers and staff are relieved that more did not get damaged locally. For example, the extensive, but incomplete project at Sherren’s Pond did not seem to be impacted, a tribute to planning and engineering. However, such a surge of water flowing over extended hours will be expected to increase erosion, possibly dislodge materials into the streams that in turn cause increased blockage and even affect infrastructure as it did with western roads.

In DeSable watershed, with its steeper grades, some blockages and erosion sites are expected. At least one private bridge has reportedly been taken out. A series of factors led to the new dam at Linden Hill Pond being breached at a point just north of the spillway.

Damage occurred at Lord’s Pond in Tryon. The water from the rain event undermined between the wooden dam structure and the road, resulting in a collapse of the road on the eastern edge of the spillway on the down stream side. The road is passable but the washout is approximately two feet deep adjacent to the wood and could result in vehicle damage or injury to walkers if unknowingly encountered. More is on SSWA blog, accessible from sswa.ca

Augustine Cove- Cape Traverse Group (AC-CT)

Fish Tales—A defunct fish ladder at Webster’s Pond has been talked about and pondered over for the past few years. Remove it? Replace it? Rebuild it? Refurbish it? Finally there are plans in the works to refurbish it and reopen fish passage to Augustine Cove River. There are lots of stories around the Cove about fishing in the River ‘as a kid’. Perhaps in a few years those stories will be told again by children and grandchildren. Come to SSWA spring AGM to hear all about it. Another project in the works is partnering with Camp Abegweit to begin a research project along the fast eroding shoreline. Due to changes in what is allowed in buffer zones we are hoping to cut the spruce along the bank to 4-6’ to halt the rocking of the trees which causes the cliff to break away. The bank will be reinforced with indigenous shrubs and ground cover to help hold the soil/rock in place. We are consulting with the Government so check the website for emerging details.

Membership and /or	Name _____	
Donation Form	Civic Address _____	
South Shore Watershed Assoc.	Mailing Address _____	
(SSWA)	Email _____	Phone _____
PO Box 123	Annual Membership Fee	\$10.00
Crapaud PE C0A1J0	Donation	\$
SSWA is a registered charity and can issue charitable tax receipts	Total	\$

Please make your cheque payable to SSWA

Thank You ! Would you like your local watershed group to contact you ? y___ n___