

# waterlines

COVEHEAD-BRACKLEY WATERSHED NEWS

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## WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT TASKS FOR 2010

*While much progress has been made this past summer, tasks remaining for 2010 include:*

- Beaver trapping during October 31 to March 31 season where blocking streams.
- Beaver blockages and dam removal next spring.
- Cass's and Marshall's ponds restoration planning.
- Clearing of upper ends of Bell's Creek and Black River.
- Re-clearing of all streams after spring runoff, where required.
- Additional springs to be dug out including access to streams and gravelling.
- More digger logs on streams, where required.

- Several more brush mats, especially below silted areas and runoffs.
- Cover logs where there is no fish cover.
- Review of public and private hanging culvert crossings.
- More water and silt testing (see page 2).
- Cleaning of the silt trap on Bell's Creek.
- Removing vehicles from Auld's Creek.
- Consideration of a silt trap on Auld's Creek below large silt deposits.
- Assistance on new stream crossings at two locations.
- More solutions to siltation presently in streambeds.
- More solutions to siltation in all wide and shallow estuaries.
- Develop options on siltation in Covehead and Brackley Bays.
- Elimination of siltation sources.
- More Environmental Farm Plan education and uptake.

« *Vehicle in Auld's Creek.*



## UPEI CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION RESEARCH GROUP STUDY

The PEI Institute of Island Studies at UPEI wants to study the socio-cultural systems of human communities on the north shore, to gauge the capacity of our coastal communities to cope with climate change impacts, and help them to increase their capacity for informed, collaborative decision-making of the sort that will be necessary as climate change unfolds. This group wants to

survey 10% of the landowners in our watershed between December 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010 to generate basic information on what geographic sites are most valued by residents and non-resident landowners.

Research team members include:

- Dr. Irene Novaczek, IIS – Project & Research Leader
- Dr. Darren Bardati –

Research Team Advisor

- Dr. Ann Howatt, IIS Research Associate – Research Supervisor
  - Dr. Josh McFadyen – Researcher/GIS Specialist
  - Fogho Ikede – Research Assistant
- More information can be obtained by contacting Dr. Irene Novaczek at: [www.upei.ca/islandstudies](http://www.upei.ca/islandstudies), e-mail: [iis@upei.ca](mailto:iis@upei.ca), or phone (902) 566-0386.



## CASS'S AND MARSHALL'S PONDS RESTORATION PLANNING

Cass's and Marshall's ponds/dams have collected a lot of silt from upstream and are shallow and choked with vegetation. These shallow ponds warm up during hot weather and contribute to warm estuaries and bays. Community

planning is to begin on the best options for restoring these ponds. Other communities have restored their ponds using a large excavator and placing the silt on banks and in new islands. A variety of funding sources have been

accessed and community plans have included fishing, recreation, walking trails, schools tree planting, duck and bird habitat, erosion control and water quality improvements.

Water Testing (ppm)	Cass's Pond	Marshall's Pond	Provincial Average
Calcium	26.76	21.43	21.9
Magnesium	15.12	12.35	6.9
Chloride	16.0	14.0	12.1
Sodium	6.64	6.72	6.2
Nitrates	3.93	1.71	3-5
Sulphate	7.88	6.55	6.35
pH	7.90	8.20	6.5-9

Although these numbers seem high and appear to indicate chemical input problems upstream, Provincial Surface Water Biologist and Environment Canada

people suggest that the higher readings are fairly typical and close to provincial averages, with the exception of zinc in Marshall's pond silt which may be

coming from upstream steel culverts or fence wire. For more information, please see the 1999 Canadian Water Quality Interpretive Report at [www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/waterquality\\_99.pdf](http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/waterquality_99.pdf)

## SIX BEAVERS REMOVED FROM WATERSHED

During early November, a professional trapper was recruited to remove beavers from three locations in the watershed where fish access was blocked. Beavers were trapped in season and using humane trapping methods. Six beavers were trapped but the remaining beavers have since been putting sticks in

the traps. Further trapping will continue during winter after ice forms. Current blockages will have to be removed in spring with permits. Large fish have been spotted during October and November waiting patiently below blockages to move upstream and spawn.

*Beavers cutting trees near Bell's Creek. »*



## FALL PLOWING CLOSE TO STREAMS

Plowing within 15 metres of a stream is prohibited and can result in a fine between \$3,000 and \$10,000. Fall plowing uphill of a stream can result in erosion running downhill into the stream during every heavy rain and especially

during the 1-2 week period of spring snow melt. Huge amounts of topsoil and water can run off the field and into the stream causing siltation along the entire waterway and ultimately in the bays. FCBB would like to promote PEI

Environmental Farm Plans, wide grass headlands and leaving of fields directly above a stream in vegetation over the winter.

## NEW TAXIDERMIST BUSINESS IN WATERSHED

A new taxidermist business has begun in our watershed at the site of the former MacMillan's store on Route 25. Danny Clark has a very large assortment of beautifully mounted

birds and animals. Most of these specimens on display are completed for private customers. Residents have been dropping in regularly to see the birds and animals up close.

*Ducks on display at Danny Clark's.*



## ACADIAN FOREST RESTORATION — PEI NATIONAL PARK

Mixed hardwood and softwood trees are part of PEI's native Acadian forest. Within PEI National Park, there are pockets of original forest, as well as former agricultural lands, now dominated by white spruce or remaining as open fields.

A goal of PEI National Park is to sustain healthy, biodiverse woodlands that increasingly represent mature Acadian forest. In 2002, park staff began to return fields around the Homestead Trail in Cavendish to forest. Over the next three years, this project will continue on an additional 51 acres.

To restore fields to Acadian forest, softwood trees are planted first. Over a period of 10 to 15 years these trees

create conditions (i.e. reduced grass competition), that allow hardwood trees to survive. When this stage is reached, young hardwoods will be planted among the softwoods to create the basis for future, mixed forest.

In other locations within the park, such as restoration sites in Dalvay, park staff are planting a mix of hardwood and softwood species. These trees will help diversify stands now dominated by white spruce.

"As these young trees grow and mature, they will provide a diverse seed source and create the foundation for healthy, mixed forest," says Phil McCabe, park ecologist.

For more information, please contact Phil McCabe at (902) 672-6367.



*Photo caption: Young tree seedlings will contribute to the restoration of Acadian forest in PEI National Park. Photo credit: Parks Canada*

## THE VALUE OF BUFFER ZONES



The areas along streams (riparian zones) are rich in animal species as well as many micro-organisms, insects, reptiles and a variety of trees and shrubs. Buffer zones provide cool shade and insect food for fish, reduce stream vegetation growth and trap silt and runoff. Buffer zones also filter water, store water and chemicals, and stabilize stream banks. Tree swallows that eat mosquitoes, flies and other insects

will inhabit buffer zones if there are sufficient cavity trees (2-3 every 100 metres).

Areas uphill from buffer zones are very important in maintaining buffer zone and stream health. Cover crops, filter strips, grassed waterways, conservation tillage, strip cropping and keeping the land in vegetation over the winter are ways of protecting these valuable, sensitive areas.

## SHORELINE EROSION CONTROLS

There is an excellent little booklet available from the PEI Department of Energy, Environment and Forestry on how shoreline erosion occurs, and examples of three legal methods of reducing erosion on your shoreline. However, all three methods involve expensive construction and may impact nearby unprotected shoreline. The booklet, *Shoreline Erosion on PEI*, does not mention what shoreline owners cannot do to reduce erosion within 15 metres of a shoreline.

There are many regulations under the PEI Environmental Protection Act

which prohibit almost all activities within 15 metres of a watercourse or wetland, without a permit, including:

- Dumping brush or anything else.
- Removing anything.
- Operating equipment.
- Disturbing soil or vegetation.
- Placing anything in, over, or near a stream.
- Cutting live trees and shrubs.

For access to legislation and regulations concerning watercourses and wetlands go to [www.gov.pe.ca/envengfor](http://www.gov.pe.ca/envengfor) and follow the links: Environment/Water/Legislation.





*Friends of Covehead-Brackley Bay Inc. (FCBB) is a community-based volunteer organization established in 2000, incorporated in 2001. It was formed by a group of community members concerned with the health and sustainability of the Covehead-Brackley watershed area. Its mandate is to create a watershed area that is healthy: one which nourishes the land and water, one which is sustainable to native flora and fauna, and also balances the interests of residents, including those working in aquaculture, forestry, agriculture, fisheries and tourism.*

*The FCBB Board will be holding planning meetings, open to the public, early in 2010. Send any comments to [coveheadbrackley@gmail.com](mailto:coveheadbrackley@gmail.com). Please visit the website for upcoming events, current newsletters, and contacts. [www.stanhoppecovehead.pe.ca](http://www.stanhoppecovehead.pe.ca)*



## ACTIVE AT 80 YEARS


Longtime supporter, one of original FCBB founders and current Co-Chair Dave Latimer, reached age 80 during October, 2009. Dave is still very active and spends his winters in Florida and summers in Stanhope.



## FEEDING BIRDS IN WINTER

Many watershed residents enjoy feeding birds during winter at backyard

feeders. Following is a list of some common birds and their food preferences:

	Sunflower Seeds	Cracked Corn	Suet	Berries	Other
Nuthatches	√		√		
Chickadees	√		√		Niger seed
Redpolls	√	√			Oatmeal
Sparrows	√	√			Grain
Woodpeckers			√		
Grosbeaks	√			√	
Waxwings				√	
Blue Jays	√	√	√	√	Grain
Goldfinches					Niger seed
Juncos		√			

*Adding shapes or silhouettes inside of windows can keep birds from hitting them.*



## LATEST WATERSHED STRUCTURE PLANS

At the Annual Watershed Alliance meeting on **January 16, 2010**, provincial representatives and two representatives from each watershed will develop a PEI Watershed Plan from which any changes to existing programs will follow.

Charlottetown HRA consultants will

facilitate the meeting and are asking watershed representatives for input on the following questions:

1. What are the burning environmental issues in your watershed?
2. In watershed management, what work is best done by government?

3. In watershed management, what work is best done by community watershed organizations?
4. Does this level of involvement in the planning process meet your needs?
5. What else, if anything, would you like to happen?

## FUNDING PARTNERS

*Friends of Covehead-Brackley Bay Watershed wish to thank the many funding partners and great volunteers, without which, very little could be accomplished.*

### 2009 Funding Partners:

- PEI Dept. of Environment, Energy & Forestry
- Environment Canada
- Shell Environmental Fund

- Greening Spaces Program
- Parks Canada
- PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund
- Service Canada
- PEI Employment Development Agency
- PEI Rural Jobs Initiative
- North Shore Community Council
- PEI Environmental Futures
- Canada Summer Jobs
- FCBB Volunteer Board of Directors

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