

# Currents

Fall 2011

## Winter River Tracadie-Bay Watershed Association

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Picture: Stream crew removing beaver dam at Deroche Pond.

### Quiz

- 1) True or False? A woman in Asia or Africa travels over 4 km on average to collect water.
- 2) What percent of Charlottetown's drinking water is extracted from the Winter River Watershed?
- 3) True or False? Brooke Trout, American Eel, Alewife, Atlantic Salmon and Blueback Herring all use the Winter River.

\*Answers on Page 2\*

***"We never know the worth of water till the well is dry."-Thomas Fuller, 1732***

***"Water is the driving force of all nature"-  
Leonardo da Vinci***

### Upcoming Events:

**Wednesday Nov 23 –  
Important Community  
watershed management  
planning meeting.**

**Come out and express your hopes  
and concerns for the future of our  
watershed.**

**Participate in our FREE Nitrate  
Clinic**



# Our Watershed at Work 2011

With much of the work in 2010 focused on in-stream alder and debris removal, the direction for 2011 focused more heavily on the improvement of the riparian zone and management of unconsolidated silt. Watershed Coordinator Bruce Smith, with support of the board of directors, determined the field work objectives. Assistant Coordinator Christopher Mutch and Education Coordinator Rebecca Peterson led two crews of student employees, often working together, to complete the outlined objectives. The student crews consisted of Nicole Murtagh, Ben McSwaine, Brodie MacDonald, Samantha Hughes, Adam MacDonald, Ben McKinnon, and Nicholas Matheson.

## May

May began with B. Smith making progress on the Watershed management plan. Much of this work centered on continuing landowner contact and initiating multiple permitting procedures with the various governmental departments.

May 12<sup>th</sup>: Volunteers and staff met at the Corran Ban Community Center to participate in a beach clean-up of the Tracadie Bay area.

## June

The focus for the majority of June centered on planting trees along the Brackley branch, upstream of the Union Road. A walking trail was cut along the south bank of the stream with up to 50% of the canopy removed to allow additional sunlight to reach the newly planted trees.

## July

During the month of July the work crews diversified their activities. Tree planting was still the main focus, however, in-stream removal of debris and alder along with maintenance served as welcome alternative daily activities. Debris, alder cuttings and spruce boughs were reused to create brush mats.

## August & September

Tree planting continued to be the main focus of the group. Brush mats and in-stream work also took a high priority as the summer began to wind down. **August 24<sup>th</sup>**: Removed three old beaver dams which were preventing fish passage through manmade out flow of Deroche Pond. The students cleaned the parking lot and ditches at Blooming Point beach.

**September 30<sup>th</sup>** Construction of an in-stream sediment trap below Hardy Mill Pond concludes. This sediment trap will collect the majority of sediment that will move during the Hardy Mill Pond draw down scheduled for spring 2012.



Pictured above: Ben McSwaine with Green Ash on Brackley Branch

Answers to Questions on page 1:

- 1) True. Asian and African women average 5km and carry 20 kg of water.
- 2) 99-100% of Charlottetown's municipal water comes from Winter River
- 3) False. Atlantic Salmon are no longer found in the Winter River

Work	Result
Trees planted	4350
Springs cleaned	12
Brush mats constructed	28

***"Filthy water cannot be washed."*** -African Proverb

## Your Watershed and the City of Charlottetown

The City of Charlottetown meets all of its water needs by pumping more than 18 million liters of water each day from the Winter River watershed, water that is unable to recharge the water supply. The City is now drawing more than 90% of the water they're permitted to withdraw from the river. The amount pumped from well fields in Brackley and Union are well above current guidelines for sustainable extraction.

We have become increasingly concerned about the impact of all this water lost to our watershed, and have identified reducing water extraction as a key feature of our relationship with the City in our developing watershed management plan. We have identified three paths to reducing the demands on our river: (1) the timely development of another well field in Miltonvale Park; (2) new policies that limit extraction from any well field to sustainable levels of recharge; (3) significant reductions in city water use that include clear overall targets.

We have recently done some work in raising public awareness of this issue, but we have a long way to go. During the election campaign, we had two articles in the paper (reprinted on [www.wintertracadie.ca](http://www.wintertracadie.ca)) raised questions at public forums, and had consultations with one of our MLAs and the then Minister of the Environment. While we were offered verbal assurances that work was progressing on the development of the new well field and new policies, the water supply issue wasn't included in party platform, and hasn't been mentioned as an environmental priority in the new government.

We are very encouraged by the release of the City's new water conservation program ([www.bewaterfriendly.com](http://www.bewaterfriendly.com)), asking residents to reduce their water use by 20% and offering a variety of ideas for doing so. We will be asking the City to develop overall reduction targets in their use to help bring water use to more sustainable levels.

There are many ways that you can help us to work on this issue and preserve the Winter River. Take opportunities to educate city residents about where their water comes from. Write to your MLAs (Robert Vessey, Buck Watts), to the Minister of the Environment (Janice Sherrey) or to Premier Robert Ghiz to let them know that it's urgent that the Miltonvale Park well field be developed to take pressure off the Winter River. Find ways to conserve water in your own home. And **enjoy the river**.

## Here are 10 simple tips for saving water and helping rivers.

- 1) Turn the water off while you brush your teeth and save over 8 liters a minute.
- 2) Fix dripping faucets and running toilets. A leaky faucet that drips at a rate of one drop per second can waste up to 10,800 liters a year.
- 3) Save water and money by choosing efficient showerheads, dishwashers, and other appliances. Look for the WaterSense label.
- 4) Only run your washing machine and dish washer when they are full.
- 5) Dispose of chemicals properly at a hazardous waste drop off center – don't pour them on the ground, into the sewer, or down the drain.
- 6) Avoid using pesticides or herbicides on your yard and garden - the chemicals can contaminate groundwater and streams, and can also hurt kids and pets.
- 7) In the yard, use mulch to keep moisture from leaving the soil and minimize the need to water.
- 8) If you must water outdoor plants or lawn, water in the early morning or evening, and try to avoid watering on windy days. This will limit the amount of water that is evaporated by the sun or blown onto sidewalks and driveways.
- 9) Plant a rain garden to add beauty to your yard, while absorbing and filtering runoff. Water absorbed in a rain garden will filter pollution otherwise headed for streams.
- 10) Use a rain barrel to collect rain and help water your plants. Forty percent of the average homeowner's water use is outdoors. Rain barrels reduce the stress on municipal water systems during the dry, summer months

From: [www.americanrivers.org/about-rivers/10-ways-to-save-water.html](http://www.americanrivers.org/about-rivers/10-ways-to-save-water.html)

**Got a new tip to share? Let us know!**



Picture: Winter River at Union Road Pumping station.

***“Water, taken in moderation, cannot hurt anybody.”-Mark Twain***



# A Brief Look Back

## History of Hardy Mill on Winter River

The earliest mill in York was probably built and operated by John Balderston, a millwright from Lincolnshire England who arrived in PEI in 1822. His son Benjamin leased a property a short distance from the Saw Mill Bridge in April of 1847. This was at the time a plank bridge crossing the Winter River near the junction of what are now the York, Hardy Mill and Pleasant Grove roads.

In May of 1847 Issac Thompson leased this land which was then referred to as 'The Old Saw Mill Farm. This name is evidence that a mill had been in operation there for some years previous. This is definitely the case for just upstream of the bridge the remains of the old dam are still evident. This dam and mill would have been quite visible from the bridge on the York road and so the bridge was appropriately called "the sawmill bridge".

Issac Thompson moved to Suffolk in 1856 to operate a sawmill there (which was later to be operated by the Johnson family), William Frederick Hales became the new owner of the old mill farm. He built a new dam upstream of the old mill, most likely at the present site.

Hales continued until 1861, when he sold it to John Morrison. In 1865 the land was leased to Walter Matheson and later to his son Duncan. In 1885 Duncan purchased the 111 acre old mill farm for the grand total of \$118.11

Prior to this, it seems that buying the property was not an option, they had to lease the land from the proprietor of the lot. In this case, Sir James Montgomery the proprietor of lot 34.

In 1888, Henry Hardy purchased the property, which he then sold to his son Elby Hardy in 1899. Elby operated a saw and grist mill, each with its own water wheel and under his ownership, he ran a very viable operation with great water power. A newspaper article at the time provides evidence of this:

'Capt. Elbridge Hardy ,York is doing an extensive business this spring. On March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> no less than 80 loads of lumber were left at the mill to be manufactured into boards shingles etc.'

The mill remained as such until wells were drilled in Union Road area to supply water for the Charlottetown area. When these wells came on stream, the underground water pressure was so diminished that the flow of water through the mill was slowed, severely reducing it's power.

The last year Hardy ran the mill was in 1942 when the dam washed out.

In 1946, Reg Barwise bought the farm and mill, built a new and higher dam and operated a sawmill only. The next, and believed to be last, mill owner was Arthur Simpson, who operated the mill from 1952-1968.

The property is now a Prince Edward Island Government natural area known as Hardy Mill Pond.

Information taken from "The Valiant Connection: A History of York Prince Edward Island", 1993. Compiled by Members of York History Committee.

Note --The Valiant was an English sailing ship which carried settlers to PEI in 1817

## Contact Us

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## Board of Directors

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Photo: Hardy Mill Pond many years ago

## Special Thanks to our funding partners



**Wildlife Conservation Fund**