



Currents

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association

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Welcome from the Editors

The intent of this newsletter is to provide updates on the progress and recent developments of the *Winter River - Tracadie Bay Watershed Association* and its partners. Newsletters will be published occasionally throughout the year and will highlight various initiatives, projects and events that we are pursuing. If you have any questions about the newsletter or interests in the work please contact us. We are interested in signing up new members and welcome anyone interested in just helping out for a day.

Summer Stream Work

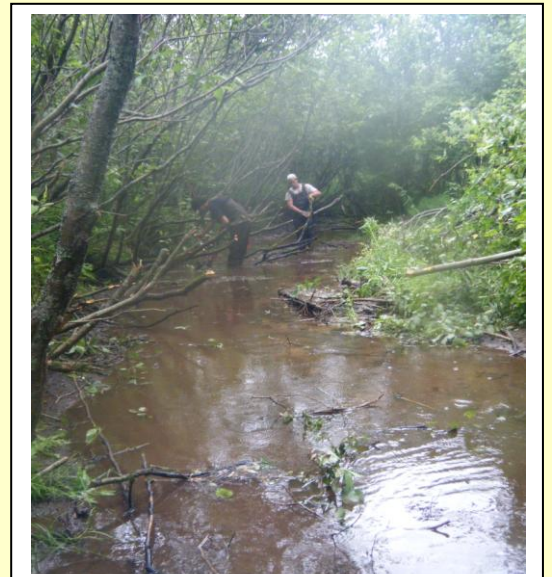
Here we are at the end of another beautiful summer season in Winter River-Tracadie Bay. I hope everyone took some time out to relax and enjoy all the wonderful sights and sounds that our watershed has to offer!

We had a great team working with us this year and we accomplished so much! We'd like to send a big thank-you to Paul Strain at the Dept of Transportation for lending us his crew for much of the summer and also thank the landowners who, without their support, this work could not happen. Additionally, we would like to thank Candy MacDonald (DEEF) and Darryl Guignon for coming out and offering some recommendations on dealing with erosion control and other in-stream issues.

This year we decided to focus our attention on the upper part of the watershed. This is an area that includes the 2 main tributaries between Brackley Point Road and Union Road, and the 1 main tributary to the east of Union Road. Based on the results of the *Winter River Survey* we completed this spring, we decided on this area because it needed a great deal of cleaning up and clearing out. In order to maintain a healthy watershed, it is important to protect it at its source.

We removed numerous blockages throughout the ~5.3 km area and cleared a great deal of excessive alder growth to

allow for better stream flow. The 'before and after' pictures shown below indicate just what we were up against the whole summer! We also installed a number of *brushmats** to catch silt runoff which we found to be especially high in this area.



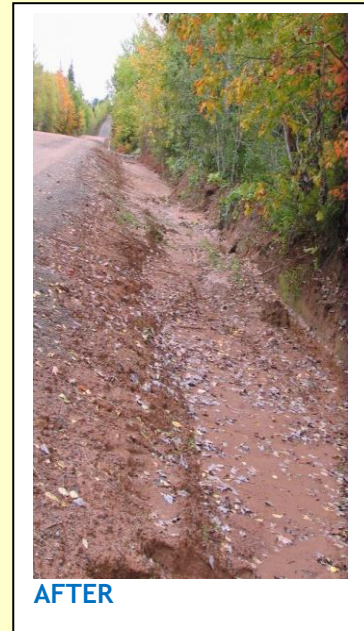
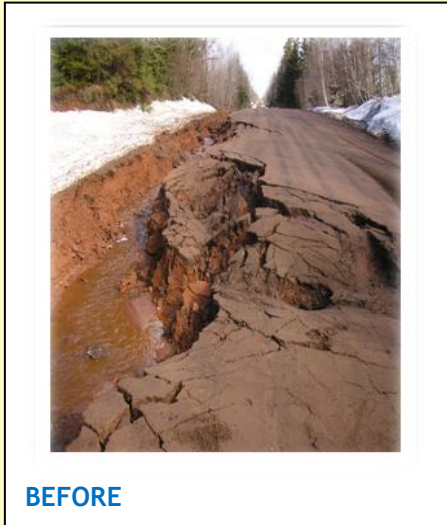
***Brushmat:** a brushmat is meant to trap silt and other in-stream sediment, narrow the width of the stream and increase the speed of flow.



Suffolk Road Improvements!!

For anyone attempting to travel on the Suffolk Road this past spring, it would have been quite the challenge!! The spring thaw caused major parts of the road to wash out making it virtually impassable. The silt and runoff from the road was carried into a tributary stream leading down into the Winter River causing damage to important fish and wildlife habitat. The WRTB Watershed Assoc sprung into action by writing a letter to the Department of Transportation requesting that this problem be fixed. Thankfully, the Department responded and worked on the road to make much needed repairs. Some of the improvements include:

- **Building** the damaged areas of the road up to grade
- **Expanding** the width of the existing ditches in a section of the road (see photo at right)
- **Installing** stone *Check Dams* in ditches every 50-60 meters on grades above watercourse crossings
- **Installing** *Sediment Collection Ponds* at the bottom end of ditches adjacent to watercourses and
- **Replacing** a culvert at the northernmost watercourse crossing and re-aligning the culvert with the natural path of the stream.



TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

On Saturday, September 26, our group organized a cleanup of some of the beaches on Tracadie Bay in conjunction with the Tracadie Area Residents for Resource Protection (TARRP). This event was part of a national event, the TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup. In the period of September 19-27: almost 57,000 Canadians in groups like ours were doing cleanups at 1568 shorefronts all across the country, and collecting data about what we found there. The data was then sent to the Vancouver Aquarium and will be combined with the results from the other sites to provide a broader view of what's contributing to the debris on our beaches. For more information about the national campaign and to see the results, please visit www.tdgc.ca.

We focused our attention on several beaches around the Bay. Our small, but enthusiastic group, spent a sunny morning on Queen's Point and at the MacIntyre Shore on the west side of the

Bay, while TARRP worked on the beach at the Old Bedford Road and other selected spots on the east side of the Bay. Together, we cleaned about 5 km of shoreline.

While there was some debris in the "recreational activity" category (bottles, cans, food wrappers, plastic bags, etc), the large majority of what we collected was related to fishing. Along with a fair bit of rope, some nets and a few bait containers, we had collected 140 buoys by the time we finished for the morning.

And there were some interesting and unusual items we encountered that we did not pick up, including what looked like an old set of railway tracks that went directly into the water from the shore, perhaps part of a mussel operation at some point.

All in all, we considered it to be a successful event and enjoyed our morning walking on the beaches.

Thanks to our participants - Donna and Allan MacCormac, Buck Watts, John Hughes, Cathy Corrigan and Don Mazer - and to Gloria and Gary Griffin, Wayne Corrigan and Paul Lund from TARRP. We plan to continue our participation next year and look forward to having you join us for an enjoyable and productive fall morning cleaning our shoreline.



Nitrate Testing Clinic



Nitrates occur naturally in our environment and are an essential nutrient for plant growth. However, if there are more nitrates than plants can use, the excess nitrates can contaminate groundwater and affect water quality in rivers and streams. Over time, as agricultural practices became more intensive and housing development increased, Prince Edward Island has had to deal with this issue more and more. Today, nitrates are the most common chemical contaminant in water.

The key sources of nitrate pollution are agricultural fertilizers, manure storage and spreading operations, septic systems and fertilizers applied to lawn, golf courses and other recreational facilities.

Source: Commission on Nitrates in Groundwater 2008



WRTB Board and Nitrate Testing Crew

On July 25th, 2009, the WRTB Board organized a nitrate testing clinic for all the residents of the watershed. It was a beautiful day and we were very happy to see many people take part of their Saturday to come out and have their water tested.

We are also very happy to report that many of the results came back favourably. Sixty (60) water samples were tested with the following results:

- 5 of the 60 samples tested over 8mg/L - re-testing was advised!
- 21.7% < 1.0mg/L
- 56.7% 1.1 - 5mg/L
- 13.3% 5.1 - 7.9mg/L
- 8.3% > 8mg/L



“It is recommended that nitrate levels in drinking water do not exceed 10mg/L.”

Plans for Fall & Winter Activities

List of projects we would like to pursue:

- Developing a Watershed Management Plan (phase 1)
- Watershed Project Planning for 2010
- Prioritizing work on *hung culverts* (impediment to fish passage) throughout the watershed
- Riparian Assessments and identification of tree planting areas?
- Corran Ban Bridge Dredging Project
- Constructing in-stream silt traps



Corran Ban Bridge Dredging Project - Update!!



The Issue:

Although the Winter River - Tracadie Bay watershed appears to be quite healthy, there have been local concerns over the water quality in the Winter River for several years. The river has exhibited aspects of poor water quality in the past thus sparking a study into what might be causing it and what measures could be taken to fix it. In a study completed in Oct 2008, it was suggested that *“the presence of poorly flushed deep water upstream of the bridge may contribute to water quality issues”*. It was further suggested that the shallow sill in the area of the bridge tends to isolate the deep waters upstream of the bridge from Tracadie

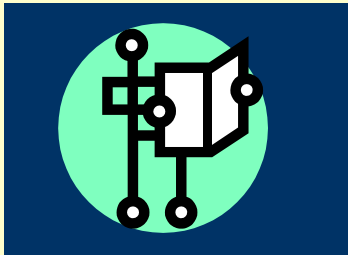
Bay. About 20% of the estuary upstream of the bridge lies below a depth of 2 meters, while the gap under the bridge has a maximum depth of less than 2 meters.

The Recommendation:

The survey states that, “Given the cost of bridge removal and relocation, we recommend that consideration be given to improve deep flushing at Corran Ban Bridge by dredging a deeper channel through the existing bridge gap”. The dredging (suction Type I) would join the deep water in the river to the deep water in the Bay.

Initially, the work was to begin this Aug - Sept, but now it is hoped to take place sometime this Fall 2009. The project is expected to take 4 - 6 weeks.

If you would like further information on this project, or any other work we are doing, please feel free to contact us at the address below. We would love to hear from you, or you can even send some feedback on the newsletter! Tell us what you think, or what other watershed topics you would like to read about!!



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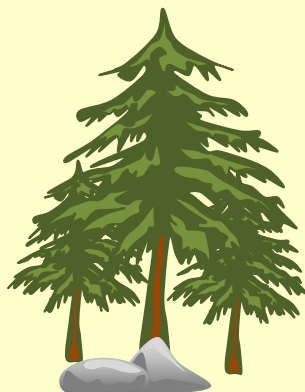
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“Environmental protection doesn't happen in a vacuum. You can't separate the impact on the environment from the impact on our families and communities.”
 -Jim Clyburn

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.wintertracadie.ca