

TNS Website

Its been a few years and time for our site to have a new look. We have recently purchased our own hosting site and are presently working on a new look. As part of the change our old hotmail email address has been dropped. Direct your inquiries to:

Secretary@troutnovascotia.ca
www.troutnovascotia.ca

Canadian Fly Fishing Championships

Sept 6 - 12 Russell Manitoba

If you are interested in joining Team Canada for 2004 World's this is your chance. For more info contact Paul Marriner at pmarr@tallships.ca

Great Prizes

As part of this newsletter package you will find a book of raffle tickets. The proceeds from sales help TNS in many ways, please support us. If you would like more tickets they will be available at the Sports Show and TNS AGM. Draw Prizes:

Fenwick HMX Fly fishing combo \$275
from Pure Fishing & Fish'nFever
Delux Float Tube \$400 Mark Quade
Shimano Spin Cast Combo \$150 Ian Andrews
Wheatly Fly Box & 2 doz. salmon flies \$150
from Tom Lee, Lee Family Flies
Framed Wildlife Print \$150 Ella Cochrane
Merchandise \$150 John Clark, Halifax Trail Shop
Trophy Game Phot Book \$100 Sherman Hines
Reel & Line combo \$75 Reg Baird, Baird's Snow Country
Merchandise \$50 Corbett's Sporting Goods
Note Cards \$50 Jamie Steeves, Atlantic Stock Images

Join Us, become a member of Trout NS

Yes, I want to be a member of Trout Nova Scotia and help insure an improved and sustainable trout fishery in the province for future generations. For more membership information or to send in your membership contact:

Reg Baird, Membership, Trout Nova Scotia, P.O. Box 22, Clementsvale, N.S. B0S 1G0
T 902-467-3126 F 902-467-0106 e mail: reg.barb@ns.sympatico.ca www.troutnovascotia.ca

Associate (under sixteen): \$ 6.00
Regular Member : \$ 15.00
Family Membership: \$ 20.00
Corporate Membership: \$ 60.00

Name: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Donation: \$ _____ Phone: _____ E Mail: _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

Auction Items Wanted

Please bring along an item (doesn't have to be a fishing thing) for the live auction when you come with a friend to the TNS Trout Expo & AGM.

A Chapter of Trout Unlimited

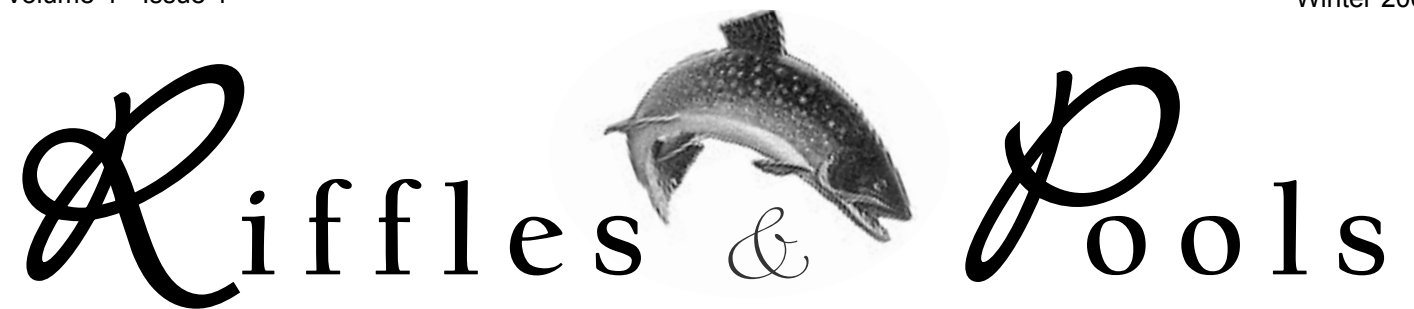
may start up in Nova Scotia again. TNS wishes TU/NS every success. The more anglers out there working for trout in Nova Scotia the better.

You may not know it, but Trout Nova Scotia had its origins as a Chapter of TU. The founding Directors of TNS that started that first TU Chapter, broke with TU Canada when they felt that all of their effort and resouces would be better spent on a Nova Scotia based organization.

Outdoor Sport Show

Drop into the TNS Booth to see the displays or just to talk fishin'. If you would like to volunteer some time to help with the booth, maybe tie some flies, please contact Jamie Steeves

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE CALL
902 823-1839 or email
secretary@troutnovascotia.ca



Dedicated to the preservation of Nova Scotia's trout

President's Musings

With the March AGM I will be stepping down as TNS President. Its time for another director to take the lead. We have good people on the board that can raise the bar to the next level and carry the ideals of the founding Directors forward. That said, the Board is always on the lookout for new Directors that have a commitment to trout.

I will continue as a Director and my plans are not to stray far away from the issues at hand. There is still a lot to do if we are to insure a bright future for trout in Nova Scotia. Seeing the completion of a quality trout management plan for the province as indicated on this page is a top priority item. In this regard, I may need to call on you and I will expect your support.

Please drop by our booth at the Sport & Outdoor Show, introduce yourself, and tell us about your fishing. I also hope to see and hear from you all at our AGM and Trout Expo in March. Until then I wish you all tight lines and successful releases in the spring.

George Taylor

NS Trout Management Plan

During the implementation of the Special Trout Management Areas in the province and the subsequent changes to the regulations in two of those areas it became apparent to TNS Directors in the Spring of 2002 that a Trout Management Plan for the province was needed. Virtually all other jurisdictions in North America have accessible trout management plans.

Such a document is needed on a number of levels. As a tool to inform anglers about the resource, including such things as the factors affecting trout, methods of angling, identification of the range of angling opportunities for trout, the role of hatcheries, etc. etc. In other words, a summary of the trout fishery. The plan would identify goals and objectives for the fishery and set out the management strategies to accomplish them. The plan would also identify requirements for public education, enforcement, and scientific research. Much of this

information is known but it has never been rolled into one master document. By utilizing the Internet, distributing and updating such a large document is no longer a problem. Both the internet and the annual summary of regulations could be used to gather suggestions, direction and information, to help formulate and update the plan.

On the public side, such a plan would help foster stewardship of our remaining trout populations, educate the public about trout and develop support for management of the resource. Some of this work could be done through organizations such as TNS.

On the government side, such a plan would identify what needs to be done to conserve the resource while balancing public expectations about the resource on a timed reviewable basis. Five year reviewable management plans would go a long way to reduce problems surrounding conservation measures or other changes in the fishery. With approximately 60,000 anglers, some 1200 watersheds and 60,000 lakes in the province, management of the resource should have better funding, scientific basis and public input.

TNS realizes that current staffing and funding levels for management of our trout resource are inadequate and have been so for too long. With tens of millions of dollars generated by sport fishing in our province (trout is still the number one species sought in NS) it is time the public and organizations like TNS brought more pressure to bear at the political level to make things happen.

TNS met with Minister Fage on this subject last September during which time he gave us a commitment to produce a trout management plan. Since that time we have been meeting with Inland Fisheries staff, laying out our ideas for plan content and development. Willingness by all parties to make this plan a reality is required. We want the membership to know that TNS is there for trout and committed to making a trout plan a reality.

AGM & Trout Expo

Join us and bring a friend, March 27 2003
Bedford Legion upstairs, doors open 5:45 PM
Registration & Trout Expo 6 till 7 followed by
AGM, Speaker Presentation, Auctions, & Door Prizes

Please renew your TNS
Membership for 2003 details on page 8.



President
George Taylor
Secretary
Lyle Goldberg
Treasurer
Tom Lee
Membership
Reg Baird
Newsletter
Jamie Steeves
Website
Jamie Steeves
Lyle Goldberg

Directors
George Taylor
Tom Lee
Claude Cochrane
Reg Baird
Gary Corbett
Lyle Goldberg
Carl Purcell
Directors at Large
Peter Budreski

The Executive meets the second full week of each month.

Riffles & Pools is published four times per year. Deadlines for 2002 submissions are: February 2, April 6, June 1, September 28.

The Editor reserves the right to edit for length and clarity.

Trout Nova Scotia
P.O. Box 8442 Stn. A
Halifax, N.S.
B3K 5M2

e mail: secretary@troutnovascotia.ca
www.troutnovascotia.ca

TNS Director Nominations

With the 2003 AGM well into the planning stages, the current Board of Directors is on the look out for new Directors to serve a two or three year term. Our Constitution permits 12 Directors in total. We started 2002 with a ten member board which was encouraging for the other Directors. The Founding Directors have now served some five or six years. Presently there are eight directors as one new Director recently resigned while another never showed up to serve and was dropped after four meetings.

A few people are presently being approached to serve as a Director. This is based on their known interest in trout. If you, or someone you know, would be a good candidate Director, please put your name, or theirs forward prior to the AGM March 27, 2003. Board Meetings are held monthly usually with a break in summer.

In past years TNS Director meetings have been held in different places. While we do have members and hear from just about all areas of the province, it would be great if we had Directors from Cape Breton, Eastern Shore or the Antigonish areas. Our present Directors are from Halifax, Dartmouth, South Shore, Valley and Digby.

We are exploring the idea of holding some of next years board meetings in different parts of the province. This would be in conjunction with a local sponsor group such as a river association, fish and game club or other local activity. If you or your group would be interested in hosting such a meeting, please let the TNS Secretary know.



Trout Nova Scotia

TNS is the leading advocate for the trout fishery in Nova Scotia. Our volunteers work with government and other organizations towards program and policy development that positively impacts trout, trout habitat and sustainable trout fishing practices. Our purpose is to ensure an improved and sustainable trout fishery in the province of Nova Scotia for future generations.



Photo © James Steeves

Questions & Answers with Reg Baird

Q. What is a mud trout?

A. A brook trout has, as a means of survival, the ability to change body color and take on the color hues of its existing environment. When taken from a location with a dark, muddy bottom, a trout will appear much darker than a trout taken from a sandy bottomed location. These dark fish are called "mud trout" by some fishermen but they are not a different species of trout - they just live at a different address.

Q. What is an attractor fly?

A. An attractor fly is a fly pattern that bears no resemblance to any kind of natural food, but rather relies on bright colours, flashy material or fly action to arouse a fish's curiosity or trigger a defensive strike.

Q. What is meant by the word taper?

A a) When applied to a leader it means the variation in thickness along the length; starting with a heavy butt section that attaches to the fly line and tapering down to a light section that is attached to the fly. b) When applied to a fly line, it means a variation in thickness of a fly line's coating along its length. For example, a double taper fly line has a long belly section tapering to identical front and rear sections; while a weight forward taper is designed so that most of the weight is in the first thirty feet and then tapers quickly to a long thin section called running line. c) When applied to a fly rod, it describes the way in which a rod narrows from butt to tip.



TROUT DID YOU KNOW? with Gary Corbett

One of the most frequently asked questions concerning trout is: "How do I figure out how old my fish is?"

Trout, of course, grow longer with age but a simple length may not give you much of an indication. Trout of say twenty centimeters found in small brooks may be as old as a sea trout of thirty-five centimeters from a large river. The difference here is due to habitat and food quality. Better habitat produces better food which translates into faster growth.

Biologists study growth and have age related information from many areas. Accurate age determination of any trout can be made by examining a fish scale sample or its "otoliths". Otoliths are tiny ear bones which develop annual growth rings which can be read. The same is true of the scales which have growth rings something like the rings in a tree.

A lot of work has been done on the growth rates of brook trout in Kejimikujik National Park in southwestern Nova Scotia. Reg Baird has become an expert in reading scales. His calculations for spring brook trout in Peskowsk Brook indicate that a one year old fish is around 14.5 cm. (5 1/2 in.); a two year old is around 20 cm. (8 in.); a three year old is around 25 cm. (10 in.); a four year old is around 29 cm. (11.5 in.) and a five year old is around 33 cm. (13 in.). Older trout from some of the larger lakes in the park are longer probably due to improved high protein food sources such as minnows. Some four year olds can be as long as 38 cm. (15 in.) and five year olds as long as 43 cm. (17 in.).

In 1983, Barry Sabeau wrote an article on trout in Nova Scotia and stated that a 3 year old brook trout in a small stream would be around 15 cm.; in a river or lake - 25 cm; in a large lake - 30 cm. and sea run fish would be around 35 cm. The NS Department of Inland Fisheries studies brook trout growth all over the province. They have found that on the Highlands of Cape Breton, a three year old brook trout is around 20 cm. (8 in.) in length whereas on the mainland the average is close to 25 cm. Cape Breton Highlands National Park has looked at trout in lowland lakes and found them to be similar in length to mainland trout. The smaller sizes of Highlands trout may be related the harsh environment and short growing seasons found there. Size of these Highlands trout may also be affected by over-crowding as some lakes have a high abundance of small trout which makes for less food to go around.

Armed with this information, you should be able to get some idea of the age of your trout. When you measure your fish, just remember to measure between the fork in the tail to the tip of the nose! If you catch one over 86 cm. you may, in deed, have a world record or over 66 cm. a Nova Scotia record!

TAiLS from the waters

by Claude Cochrane

I have now named it the "Eradicator", because finally a fly has been tied whose potential is to extirpate trout populations everywhere. Not unlike most tyers I wanted to make a significant contribution to our sport. Not to destroy it. I write, looking over my shoulder, as I describe this phenomenon. I must divulge some "tid bits" of a descriptive nature to be totally believed.

This fly can be fished wet, dry, or nymphed with the same unbelievable results. At first glance, it appears somewhat similar to, but with a second glance more like the original because of the unique body design and color.

I tied three new patterns during the winter of 2002, and on the first decent day of April past, the trials began. A neatly tied Emerger showed little promise strike one. A jointed streamer, strike two. I was not discouraged knowing these were all good patterns. I tied on my third that I had originally named "Triple Treat" and this is when it all started. I was making my second false cast when a trout of about 10 inches leaped from the water and nailed it, with the fly a foot or so in the air. As these were trials I repeated the maneuver with the same results. I tried to "nymph it" and could not reach bottom before huge trout, visible in clear water, were leaving their previously invisible lies to attack.

After each cast I quickly pulled the fly away from the aggressive behaviour exhibited by these huge fish. I wanted to leave these "trophy trout" and fill my quota with pan size. No matter the method of presentation the result was the same. How do I catch the smaller fish. Then "a light came on". I hurried to the local farm store and purchased a 50 foot roll of thirty six inch wide hectagon poultry wire and two 4 foot re-bar stakes, then hurried back to the pool. I waded back and forth in the shallow bottom end moving all the fish to the head. Then stretched the wire across the river, the iron stakes driven in the river bottom held the wire in a vertical position, leaving 6 to 8 inches above the water. I stood below the wire and made a cast a few feet below the blockade. Several trout swam quickly through the 2 1/2 inch mesh in an attempt to reach my offering. It was absolutely amazing. My second cast dropped a foot or so below the wire and before I could reach, a large trout attacked from above and slammed head on into the fence leaving a huge dent in the wire. As the saying goes, "you really had to be there" to believe it.

My next cast landed about 5 feet below and in an instant the largest fish in the pool streaked downstream, leaped the fence and dive-bombed my fly. Then to the tail of the pool, circled back upstream, jumped the fence and with his prize went back to his lie at the head of the pool. Using a trick I learned from my grandfather, I retrieved the fly, leaving the large trout uninjured.

I will not bore you with more trail results as they are all very similar and all substantiate my belief that this fly if released to the public has the potential to end trout fishing as we know it. I have been offered a fortune for the right to this fly and government officials have begged me not to sell. At the time of this report the recipe is under lock and key.

My attempt at making a contribution to our sport turned out not to quite have it's intended effect. Although it was significant.

T's, Hats, Crests & Buttons

Our quality Trout Nova Scotia products are selling well. So much so that we ordered more. They are available by mail at the following prices.
T-Shirts \$18 Hats \$12 Crests \$5 Buttons \$2
all prices include post delivery.

Place your order with Claude Cochrane:
secretary@troutnovascotia.ca

TNS bits 'n bites

Sport Outdoor Show
March 20 - 23

AGM & Trout Expo
March 27



FLY CASTING TIPS with Dennis Grant



Most of us packed away our fly rod, reel and line after our last fishing trip and are planning to open it sometime after April 1st. Here's a few things you should do before the first trip.

Wipe the rod clean with a damp cloth then polish it up with hard wax, also around the guides and tip top. Rub candle wax on the male ferrule, it will keep the ferrules from sticking together and it will also hold quite nicely during fishing. Pull a piece of nylon stocking through each guide, if there is a break or nick in the guide you will find it quickly. Broken or cracked guides should be replaced immediately as they will ruin a good fly line in a day.

Pull the line off the reel and cut it from the backing. You can retie this knot (backing on top of the flyline) it's usually a tube or nail knot. The line should have a good cleaning in warm water with soap then dried with a soft cloth. Look for any breaks, cuts or nicks in the line, then clean with line cleaner from the fly shop, wet the line then clean dry with a very soft dry cloth. Retie the leader knot where it attaches to the line as this is a spot where the line will crack regularly. If the leader has more knots than it should, replace it with a new knotless tapered leader or a hand built one. ALWAYS tie a couple of feet of tippet onto a tapered leader before tying on the fly. Tippet should be replaced at the beginning of every season no matter how good it looks. Tie tippet onto the leader with a double or triple surgeons knot.

If the line has been on the spool all winter, take it off and with one end tied securely, hold the line in a stretched position for a few minutes until it straightens. If you don't have the 90 feet of space to stretch the line then, as you take it off the reel, pull off five or six feet of line and apply tension for a few seconds between your outstretched arms until the complete line is done. Wind line back onto the reel with some tension so as not to tangle.

The reel spool should come out of the reel and you can check for dirt inside the gears. Wipe the reel clean with a soft cloth and a little oil, then grease or oil the gears as per the manufacturer's instruction. If there is hard grease inside the reel, remove and replace. A person who regularly performs reel repair should perform a reel tune-up. Have your local shop take a look if the reel is bent, binding or wearing.

The first trip can be a disaster if you don't check the equipment before you reach the fishing hole !

Fly fishing is catching on, learn to let go.... Tight Lines !



Wild trout, do they still exist? ... a pond...ering by Jamie Steeves

I know when I finally find the time to slip away with my favorite little trout rod to a quiet fishing spot I'm focused on finding and catching some nice trout and enjoying the outing. However, in these cold winter months there is time to ponder the bigger questions that lurk in the recesses of my old biology trained brain. Just where do these beautiful trout come from (I'm talkin' parents here) and how long have they been around? With introduced trout species that question's a lot easier to answer, but what about the others.

On the one hand I know that some trout populations don't move far within a watershed so after awhile everyone must be more than just a kissing cousin (blame it on the water). I would think these trout would be pretty different than the fish found in lakes three counties away, or are they? But then, I know of recorded cases where released trout swam many kilometers into another lake before being caught and released again. Just how many of these rogues are out there mixing up the ol' DNA? What about the genetics of these fish and are there wild trout to be found ?

Let's face it, people have introduced brook trout, rainbows, and those wise old browns all over the place. Every spring and fall the hatchery trucks travel the province like storks making water deliveries. So what do we mean when we talk about wild trout? Obviously these would not be hatchery reared trout dumped into put-and-take fishing lakes. I suppose the purest would say that such a fish would be from a trout population that has been left to its own devices since the last glacier pulled out of Nova Scotia 10 to 12 thousand years ago. I wonder just how likely it would be to find one of these "glacial trout" (after all "brookies" are really char)? Before the rainbows and browns arrived, we had speckled brook trout and lake trout. Before the wheel and the likes of bass boats those early populations would have been all wild trout. What about today's picture?

During recent meetings with Inland Fisheries I asked if wild trout still exist in the province. To my delight, the answer was yes ! Without being very scientific, my inclination would be to say that virtually all Lake trout, *Salvelinus namaycush* would easily fall into the "wild" category and as such should be afforded some additional protection (did I hear Trout Plan). Apparently from a geneticist's point of view, populations of trout that have been left to their own for some 30 or 40 years are considered genetically pure enough to be called "wild". The extended part of the fisheries conversation was the discovery that preliminary studies of two wild brook trout populations (wilder than 30 - 40 years) from distinctly different parts of the province had virtually identical "finger prints". That's not what I would have expected, (where is the NS CSI when you need them). If you are a DNA geek, that's really interesting stuff. Unfortunately, there is insufficient funding for fisheries to delve deeper into this mystery. (If you win the lotto... the fish are calling).

So wild trout do exist, but I think I just touched the tip of the glacial iceberg. To my non-fishing friends trout fishing is a simple affair. Can't be anythin' to it, right! Sometimes it's hard to explain to them just how interesting it really is.

Will that be bait, lures or flies...

When my kids were small I took them to the local u-fish. I thought they would enjoy catching some fish.

Even equipped with appropriate bait they soon found they had difficulty interesting the fish. They weren't alone in this, the others around the pond including some adults were having a hard time getting any action.

Eventually my three did land a couple of nice ones. The kids didn't want to kill the fish so we found a bucket put the fish in and placed them in a cool spot. Both fish had taken the bait deep into their mouths so I didn't think they would last too long. Soon the kids grew tired of watching two fish in a bucket and went off to see the ducks and other animals on site. By this time our two fish were not doing to well so I prepared them for the BBQ.

It was too soon to go home and I was tempted to see if I could coax a few fish to the fly. Everyone else had pretty much given up and the pond surface lay flat and still. I pieced together my little fly rod and began working the line between the trees placing the fly just so on the pond and began stripping it back. I think I had a little hare's ear tied on and it wasn't long before I released my first fish in the bucket. There were rainbows and brookies coming to the fly and I was three fish ahead in no time. I was hooked, but in a dilemma.

I had everyone's attention, they were dropping their bait rods to watch what I was doing (which didn't please the owners too much). Not only was I drawing too much attention, I was catching too many fish. This was getting more expensive by the inch. I slacked the line and released a number of fish but I now had the attention of the owner. There was to be no releasing fish in this situation, it was against the rules.

My own kids returned to see all the action, but they were not pleased to discover we had to kill what we caught. They had seen me release many fish before so what was the difference Dad! In simplest terms they were right. The fish I was catching were all caught on pinched barb hooks, none taken deeply in the mouth so the fish would survive quite nicely.

What to do; the kids thought we should take them home and put them in the aquarium. Whoa! talk about complications, there was too much to explain about that idea, but I tried. I suppose we could have accidentally knocked the bucket over. (One fish did manage to wiggle out of someone's hands and return to the water). However this was a commercial enterprise and that wouldn't have been fair to the owner. I understood the reasons why they didn't want people releasing fish back into their ponds although some operations permit this.

So, I stopped fishing, knacked the fish, paid for them and had to listen to a deep silence from my three all the way home. When we got there, nobody would eat them in my house so the neighbours enjoyed a nice BBQ that evening.

I felt a lot foolish for developing a fishing fever at a u-fish but in the end I think there were more than just a few lessons learned that day.

Jamie Steeves



If you were to ask twelve fly-fishermen to name their top two flies (one dry, one wet) none would agree on the same two. Some might agree on one and others might agree on another, but (short of a miracle) none would agree on the same two.

Some of their choices would seem kind of odd. You just have to wonder where these oddities come from, although I'm sure I have the answer. How can I be so sure? Because these oddities are what I call "faith flies," and I have a couple of my own.

All fly-fishermen have faith flies, ones they tie on their line and know will work-if they don't, then nothing else will.

A "faith fly" is usually one that a tyer has been told about, or seen in a magazine or an old book. It's one he'll tie up, look at (turning it this way and that), and instinctively know it will catch fish. If it's a dry he'll test it in a clear bowl of water and look at it from all sides (including the underside) and if it's a wet he'll throw it in the sink with the tap running and let the water swirl it around. Then he'll stick it in his fly-box for tomorrow, or tie it on his line and head straight for the river. On his first or second cast a fish will take it. He'll spend the entire time with that one fly on his line and he'll hook his limit. He's hooked too, his faith in the fly has been proven.

The next time he goes to a river that same fly will still be on his line, and it will work. During the course of a season that fly will only be removed when conditions are unsuitable (too high and muddy for a dry, too low and clear for a streamer). He'll try every combination of fishing it, upstream, across stream, downstream, in the bushes and in his ear. He'll try different colours and different sizes, and if he's really that crazy and passionate, he'll try it in salt water and on different species of fish. In the end he'll know everything there is to know about fishing that one particular fly.

To the faithless, it may seem that those of us with faith flies are obsessed or fixated. When it comes to faith, it's just not possible to have too much of a good thing.

I believe I'll tie on that old green-bodied, brown-hackled, number sixteen Klinkhamer and go hook a couple of fish.

Klinkhamer-Pat

Access to Timber lands

Trout Nova Scotia (TNS) has received inquiries regarding road access to private lands that are currently gated. In January, TNS Directors met with Jon Porter, General Manger Woodlands Division, Bowater Mersey to discuss what might be done with the Ingram River Road in St. Margaret's Bay.

The meeting was informative and we were able to discuss a wider range of issues and learn about Bowater's recent efforts to improve their environmental standards especially as they relate to water courses, forest buffers and cutting practices. We think there is encouraging news there. We also heard of the problems associated with ATV's, such as destruction of property and damage to sites including identified bird colony nesting sites. It is hoped that local ATV groups will take greater responsibility for these growing problems.



On the subject of access to the Ingram Road, Mr. Porter is prepared to work with us. The problem has been the increased dumping of construction waste and things such as refrigerators. Judging by the quantities involved the feeling is that the offenders may be local contractors or waste disposal jobbers that are doing the illegal dumping. TNS feels that this situation will be best resolved at the local level and will try to coordinate a solution within the community.



ATV's in the news commentary by lam Wilder.

Yes, ATV's seem to be getting only one kind of press these days and it's all bad. Yes, I've ridden them and they are addictive but, like a man with a chain saw and a lil bit o' trimmin' to do, they can get away from you in short order, in the good sense department. An ATV, like a chainsaw, has a purpose, which all ATV owners are quick to defend, but like a chain saw they are noisy and in some people's hands downright dangerous. I point to the news which is full of stories to back up these claims (ATV's, not chain saws).

It's like the lawless wild west has returned to ol' Novieland. Kids, men and women are out there doin' it day and night. Party!! But you know, there are lots more people who are not. People who are really becoming annoyed with ATV owners. I'm told ATV's are here to stay. I suppose the same wide acceptance was true of cigarettes one time.

So far most of what I've seen from ATV users is mankind's continued effort to dominate the natural world. The woodlands that so many have derived so much pleasure and renewal from is being degraded at an incredible rate. I talk to landowners, enforcement people, and other anglers and the story is always the same - ATV's; negative, negative, negative. If they are here to stay then the users had better soon make some changes before the sheriff shows up and takes all their toys away. Ever heard of a luxury tax Billy?

Like so many other woodland users, I've tolerated ATV's but as you may have noted I'm changing my tune.

I was out the other day looking for a full day of nature to calm me from the stress of this mechanized go-go-go world we have created. I was leading a group of cross-country skiers (now I suppose you think I fish with a bamboo pole... not). In the space of half an hour we encountered 20 to 30 ATV's. With the amount of noise in their world we worried that they might not see us in time to stop. As a result, our group of 15 or so skiers have abandoned the local "Rails-to-trails" due to the machinery and ruts. If it wasn't for fallen trees blocking ATV access on a very few trails there would be nowhere to ski or walk in the woodlands these days.

On that outing we did manage to find a trail behind the protection of fallen trees. Once our attention switched from being run down or tripped in a wheel rut, the world began to right itself. We heard the birds, wind in the branches, sounds of a brook running in the distance. I began dreaming of the fishing season, but most of all we began to see lots of wildlife signs: bobcat, fox, deer, mink and otter. Like a notebook, the snow had recorded their every move. The concentration of animals in one area was an observation I had not made before, but think about it. They too have been forced into increasingly smaller spaces by ATV's.

Just like a lot of others, the woodlands are my sanctuary, my church if you will. More than anything, walks in nature have kept me sane over the years. Imagine having ATV's running through your church! I can see them now trying to drive over the pews dripping oil and gas on the carpets. Jeezzz, makes a fella wanna pick up a chain saw and go at 'em! Perhaps we should ban their use on Sundays, not unlike hunting, so others can safely enjoy the woodlands too.

If we have to live with ATV's, then please ride them on the hardened pulp roads. Get off and walk the woodland trails. Stay away from water courses and areas that cannot take the continued traffic. People like me who cherish it and the animals that live there need a break. Try walking the woodlands, the rewards are way and above paying .85 per litre and messing it up for everyone else.