

Morell River Management Cooperative

Annual General Meeting



April 21st, 2022

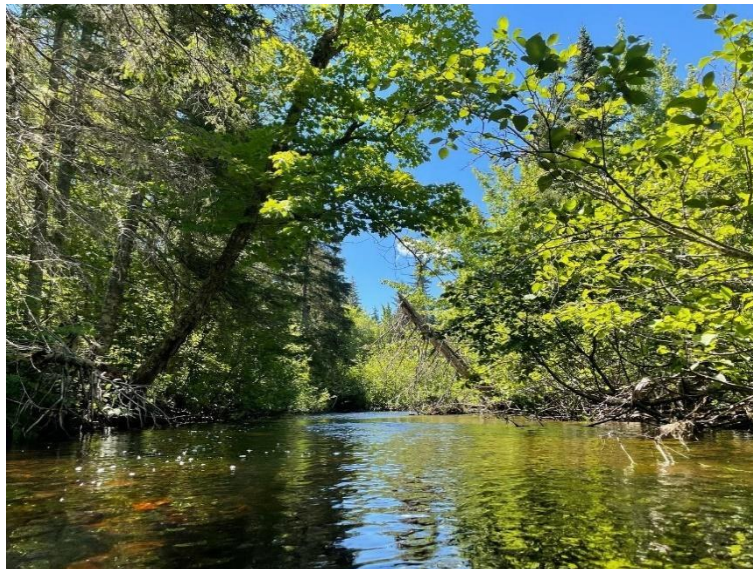
Morell Consolidated School

Annual General Meeting

April 21st, 2022 - Morell Consolidated School - 7 pm

Agenda

1. Call to Order - Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. President's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Coordinator's Report
6. Nominations Committee Report - Board Member Elections
7. Guest Speaker – Gordon Bernard
8. Meeting Adjournment



MRMC President's Report

The cooperative had a good season in 2021 through a Covid environment, and significant projects were completed.

Looking over the past five years, the core funding support primarily from the provincial government, has allowed the cooperative to now have a fulltime coordinator since I joined the board, and this stability, which can be seen as the best since the group formed is showing dividends. These core dollars for managing the acreage of watershed that the group is responsible for, is also leveraged, and all our funding partners know that available synergies between staff time, and equipment are used to make the largest effect from the group's investments. There is a financial cushion now between field seasons, and the board is able to review seasonal and longer-term goals ahead of time, and provide that rank of priorities before the season starts. The current direction is for additional information on the trout and salmon populations in all the St. Peters Bay, and Schooner Creek watersheds, as a support to the long term redd counts, and index site sampling data.

It is great to be able to report on significant maintenance to long term infrastructure, in place for two decades; that were river diverters on the main branch of the Morell, which created pools along the main branch in a natural way since they were installed. The MRMC is able now to respond to immediate needs and maintenance, in addition to being able to fulfill its long-term planning goals.

We are thankful for the management Ducks Unlimited Canada has initiated on the upper part of the Morell watershed near the 48 road. A very long-term goal of having fish passage in and out of McKenna's pond is now possible, and about five km of stream habitat is now accessible to the trout, that can return there from saltwater, as a full lifecycle.

Though not the most fancy of the boards' work, the board has good oversight of financial controls, by the new KOS accounting firm out of Montague providing professional advice.

Sincere thanks to Hannah Murnaghan for her work throughout the year, always completing the required reporting to funding partners on time; and for her encouraging leadership to the staff during the summer, who have been happy to return, and work with the Co-op in successive seasons. Our staff continue to complete in stream work, that is work: installing boulders as fish resting spots, moving timbers over several kilometers, and staking bales for bank stabilization is hand work that has to be memorable for the blisters, but it is hoped, also satisfying for the improvements that each of our staff contributed.

I would very much like to thank our board members over the past year: Brian Crane, Heather Deziel, Travis James, Dale McIsaac, Tyrone Paul, Jim MacAulay, Doug MacEwen, Steve Collins, Brad Mooney, and Santana Beaton-MacEachern

Respectfully submitted,

Will Proctor

MRMC Treasurer's Report

2021 Fiscal Year Funding	Amount
PEI Watershed Management Fund	\$84,879.00
PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund	\$10,505.00
Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk – Partner with the Abegweit Conservation Society	\$118,071.00
Skills PEI Post Secondary Program	\$17,472.00
Jobs for Youth Program	\$8,652.80
Canada Summer Jobs Program	\$4,132.00
Youth Employment and Skills Program	\$6,901.32
Habitat Stewardship Fund – Partner with the PEI Watershed Alliance	\$9,000.00
Community Nominated Priority Places Fund – Partner with Island Nature Trust	\$1,500.00
Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI – Partner with ESRF Smolt Tagging Project	\$3,742.89
Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation	\$21,500.00
Donations	\$11,520.00
Workers Compensation Surplus Distribution	\$572.87
Watershed Alliance	\$100.00
Bowen Collins Memorial Fishing Derby Fundraiser	\$964.00
North America Bat Project – Partner with Watershed Alliance	\$1,005.00
TOTAL:	\$300,517.88

2021 Fiscal Year Expenses	Amount
MRMC Employees – 10	\$177,036.80
Bookkeeper & Sage Accounting Software	\$3,883.55
Canada Revenue Agency Fee	\$441.05
Employee Health Benefits	\$1,567.20
Mileage	\$9,510.00
MRMC Expenses	\$10,872.44
Mooney's Pond – Building and Trail Maintenance	\$9,565.00
Financial Review – KOS Accounting	\$2,012.50
Work Equipment and Materials	\$34,798.94
Signs	\$596.85
Trees & Shrubs	\$473.80
Beaver Trapping Services	\$1,050.15
Maritime Electric	\$2,405.89
Bell Aliant & Mobility	\$1,838.74
Website	\$
Insurance	\$1,180.00
Property Tax	\$305.00
Snow Removal	\$250.00
Workers Compensation Board	\$1,040.05
TOTAL:	\$258,827.96

Watershed Coordinator's Annual Report

2021 Field Season

Prepared by Hannah Murnaghan



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	7
2021 Board of Directors & Staff.....	8-10
Watershed Management - Planning & Training.....	11
2021 Field Season Projects	
Leard's Pond Spillway Stabilization.....	12-14
Morell River Salmonid Habitat Enhancement.....	15-17
Morell River Deflector Structures.....	18-20
Bristol Creek Spawning Sites	21
McKenna's Pond Fish Passage.....	22
Morell River Rock Cluster Project.....	23
Riparian Zone Enhancement.....	24
Barrier Management.....	25
Access Trails & Shoreline Cleanup	26
Other Projects	27
Surveys and Monitoring	
Temperature Monitoring.....	28
Pit Tagging and Antenna Stations.....	29
Smolt Tagging.....	30
Redd Surveys.....	31
Fish Trap & Broodstock Collection.....	31
Community Outreach and Events	
Go!East Events.....	32
Salmon are our Friends.....	32
Educational Outreach	33
Bowen Collins Memorial Fishing Derby.....	34
Mooney's Pond Interpretive Centre.....	35
Communications.....	36
Contact Information.....	36
Work Not Completed.....	37
Partners & Special Thanks	38-39
2022 Work Plan.....	40

Introduction

The 2021 field season was one of the busiest yet for the Morell River Management Cooperative (MRMC). Multiple funding opportunities fostered new partnerships and collaborations, which allowed for several important projects to be completed. Additional funding also allowed for the recruitment of additional students, resulting in our biggest crew to date with ten employees hired for the 2021 field season.

The MRMC crew completed an extensive amount of stream and riparian restoration work. Repairing the spillway at Leard's Pond and rebuilding the deflector structures on the Morell River occupied most of the season. The MRMC crew put in some long, strenuous days moving rock and timbers. I can't thank the staff enough for their dedication and hard work!

Our partnership with the PEI Watershed Alliance on Atlantic salmon habitat enhancement continued with funding from the Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP). The MRMC crew completed 17 Atlantic salmon spawning sites, managed beaver impoundments and monitored temperature on Bristol Creek as part of the HSP project.

Work on the Morell and Midgell rivers continued with the Abegweit Conservation Society (ACS) through the project *Etuaptmunk (Two-Eyed Seeing) Stewardship of Freshwater SARs and Ecosystems in the Midgell, Morell, and Mill Rivers of PEI*. Our groups have been working together to address threats to Atlantic salmon and American eel. This funding has allowed us to complete large restoration and monitoring projects, including the Leard's spillway project and tagging and tracking Atlantic salmon with pit tags and antenna stations. We are grateful for this partnership and look forward to continued collaboration with the ACS.

In the fall, we assisted the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Abegweit Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery with broodstock collection and spawning. We look forward to releasing the young brook trout and salmon in the spring as part of the PEI Fish Stocking Program.

MRMC continues to be stewards of Mooney's Pond Interpretive Centre, Peggy's Trail, and Anderson's Pool. The trails, wheel-chair accessible boardwalks, and fishing platforms continue to grow in popularity each year. Last fall we installed a trail counter and we were amazed to see that during the month of October there were over 3000 visitors. The facilities and trails at Mooney's Pond are often used to host community events which generate great attendance. We hope to expand the trail system at Mooney's Pond to encourage more people to get out and explore what nature has to offer!

2021 was a great year all around and I am excited for all of the upcoming projects planned for 2022!

- Hannah, Watershed Coordinator

Board Of Directors

Executive

Will Proctor, Chair

Will has previous stream enhancement experience in the Miltonvale watershed. He has a degree in Agri-biology from NSAC and works for the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land. Will volunteers with MRMC to continue its long history of good river management.

Santina Beaton-MacEachern, Vice-Chair

Santina is a Conservation Program Specialist with Ducks Unlimited Canada. She has a Wildlife Conservation degree from UPEI and was the coordinator at MRMC from 2015 to 2018. She lives in the Morell watershed and volunteers with MRMC because of her investment in previous MRMC projects and her passion for all things involving the environment, agriculture, and wetlands.

Heather Deziel, Secretary

Heather has an educational background in Environmental Science and has been volunteering with MRMC for the past eight years. She joined the group to donate some time to help preserve and enhance some of the natural beauty of PEI. She spent eight years working with Atlantic salmon in both academia and industry and is glad to help PEI play a role in preserving the species.

Brian Crane, Treasurer

Brian has been on the MRMC board for many years. He lives along Cranes Conservation Zone on the Morell River. Brian joined the MRMC board of directors because of his close connection with the river and its importance to him.

Directors

Travis James - Travis became a member of MRMC because of his passion for conservation and his deep connection to the area. His background is in the aquatic sciences, primarily estuarine and marine systems. He has work experience in finfish aquaculture and currently works with Parks Canada.

Steve Collins - Steve is very conservation-oriented. He is an avid trapper, hunter, and fisher. He joined the board of directors to represent the trapping community and to see positive changes to the watershed.

Tyrone Paul - Tyrone has been a lifelong land-steward, or conservationist, at heart. He grew up hunting, fishing, and trapping with his family in BC before moving to PEI some years ago. Throughout his life and career, he's been involved with natural resources development and protection. He's always been a concerned citizen but has also been involved through professional positions as an active member of different organizations or boards dedicated to nature conservancy or management. Tyrone joined the MRMC board through his involvement as the Director of Natural Resources for the Abegweit First Nation.

Dale McIsaac - Dale is a lifelong fisherman, outdoor enthusiast, and educator. He has a passion for improving the watershed's habitat. Dale was invited to join the board by a long-time member of the group.

Jim MacAulay - Jim represents the area of St. Peter's Bay. He has had an interest in community development all his life. While principal at Morell Regional, he served on various committees in the area. He has an interest in the proper management of the rivers and waterways all through the St. Peter's Bay area watersheds.

Doug MacEwen - Doug has had an interest in nature for nearly all his life. He has spent many years fishing, hunting, and trapping. He spent time on the Wildlife Conservation Fund committee, which provided him with extensive exposure to watershed management in the province. During his time outdoors he always took note of the MRMC stream enhancement efforts and their benefits. Doug first joined MRMC for beaver removal services, then was invited to join the board of directors.

Brad Mooney - Brad joined MRMC to represent the fly-fishing community. The Morell River is important to him, and he wanted to give back by volunteering with the watershed.

2021 MRMC Staff

From Left to Right:

Chloe MacKinnon – Funded by Jobs for Youth

Emily Sanderson – Funded by Canada Summer Jobs

Steven Cockram – Funded by Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk (CNFASAR)

Vanessa Jackson – Funded by the Youth Employment and Skills Program

Lily Corlette – Funded by Skills PEI

Riley Kelly – Funded by the Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk

Grant MacCormack – Funded by Skills PEI

Shane Collins – Funded by Jobs for Youth

Gabriel Murphy – Funded by the Watershed Management Student Fund & CNFASAR

Photo by Watershed Coordinator – Hannah Murnaghan



Watershed Management - Planning and Training

Proper planning and organization are key to using our resources wisely and maximizing our efforts as a watershed group. Watershed management planning takes place during monthly meetings of the MRMC Board of Directors. We collaborate with our partners for technical expertise to assist us in our watershed restoration work. Our group has a positive relationship with the PEI Fish & Wildlife division, the PEI Watershed Alliance, the Abegweit Conservation Society, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, and many other environmental organizations.

Technical documents help guide our work, such as *A Renewed Conservation Strategy for Atlantic Salmon in Prince Edward Island*, and *The Technical Manual for Watershed Management on Prince Edward Island*. Our organization is in the process of creating an Atlantic salmon management plan for the Morell River which will help guide future enhancement work on the river system.

The PEI Watershed Alliance provided online webinars and training sessions for watershed groups in 2021. Our partnership with the Abegweit Conservation Society has also allowed MRMC staff to participate in training opportunities throughout the CNFASAR project. We attend workshops, seminars, and training days to make informed decisions and build our capacity as a watershed group.



2021 Field Season Projects

Leard's Pond Spillway Stabilization Project

Leard's Pond is a former grist mill pond located on the West Branch of the Morell River. A concrete fish ladder and spillway now exist at the site for fish passage and pond water level control. The goal of this project was to stabilize the eroding spillway channel to protect important Atlantic salmon spawning habitat downstream and to provide better fish passage through the spillway. This project was completed with a design plan by 5R Environmental Consulting Inc.

Three tandem truckloads of Island sandstone were used to construct a rock toe on the left and right banks of the spillway, creating a new low-flow channel width. A mix of 125 hay and straw bales were anchored behind the rock toe to provide a stable bank-full width and bank protection. Alder brush mats were constructed along 57 meters of the spillway to prevent further bank erosion. The bales and alder brush mats will collect sediment during high flow events and eventually create a new stream bank. The natural regeneration of the alders used will help increase the integrity of the stream bank as they grow.

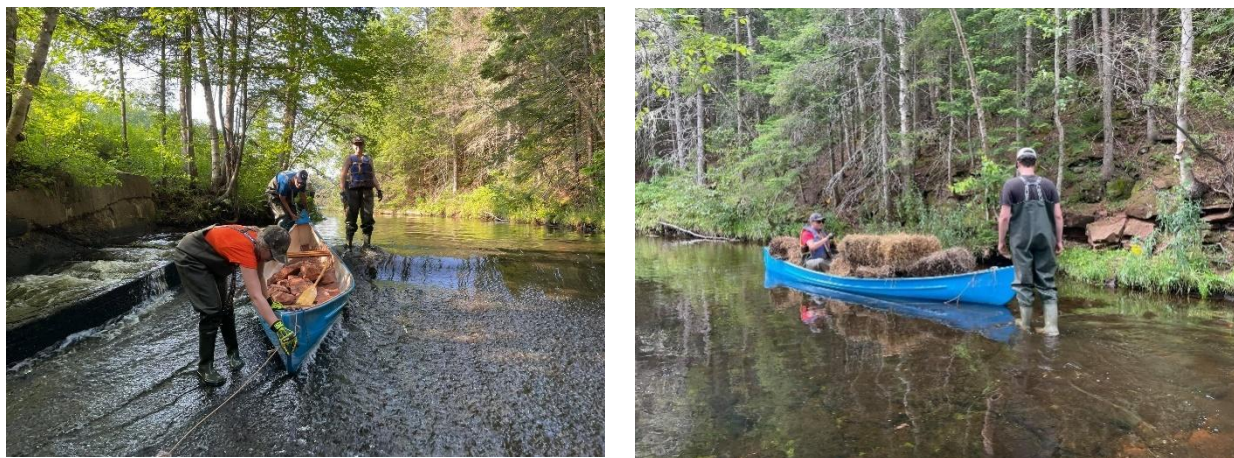


At the bottom left bank of the spillway, 16 meters of balsam fir bank protection was added in alignment with the natural radius of curvature of the stream channel. The addition of the balsam fir brush mat will help direct high flows in the correct path for the stream while creating a new bank as the trees decompose.



Building a balsam fir brush mat at the bottom of Leard's Pond spillway.

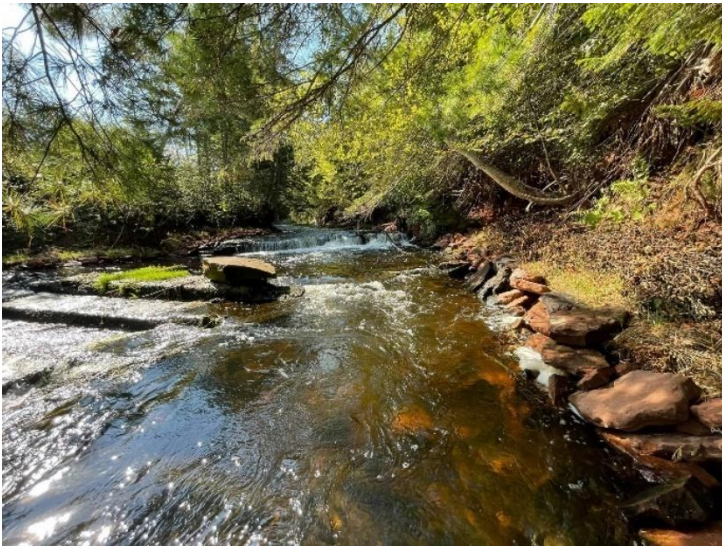
All parts of the project were completed manually by the MRMC field crew. The crew had to be creative and used various techniques to get the material to the project site. They put in many days of hard work. Many thanks to Grant, Shane, Riley, Vanessa, Gabriel, Lily, Emily, Steven and Chloe for all their efforts in completing this project.



Moving island sandstone and hay bales to the project site by canoe.



*New bank protection consisting of the rock toe, hay bales and alder brush matting.
Large rock in the center of the channel for fish resting areas.*



*Looking upstream from the bottom of the spillway.
MRMC crew working on Leard's Pond spillway project.
Ron Jenkins from 5R Environmental Consulting giving guidance to the MRMC crew.*

Morell River Salmonid Habitat Enhancement

Brush mats in conjunction with alder and blockage clearing on the South Branch of the Morell River will improve habitat for Atlantic salmon by flushing excess sediment and narrowing the stream channel. This section of river was chosen for restoration in 2021 because a new fishway was constructed at McKenna's Pond allowing unimpeded access for salmonids on this branch of the river. The MRMC crew built 28 brush mats in this section.



Heavy sediment load along the South Branch of the Morell River along with newly constructed brush mats.

The MRMC crew also constructed large brush mats on the main branch of the Morell River near the “spring hole”. This specific site was chosen due to heavy sediment deposits on the bank. The accumulation of sediment had blocked the spring from entering the deep pool which serves as an important cool water refuge for fish. The MRMC crew dug out the spring to restore the flow into the pool and built two very large brush mats along the bank to collect sediment.



While alders can provide shade and cover for in-stream habitat, they can quickly grow up and create an impenetrable mass blocking the stream. These alder thickets slow water, allowing suspended sediments to accumulate on the stream bed causing the stream to become wide and shallow. This does not provide ideal habitat for salmonids. As seen in the photos below, there was very heavy alder growth and heavy sedimentation along the South Branch of the Morell River. The MRMC crew cleared nearly a kilometer of thick alder growth along this section of stream to improve habitat for Atlantic salmon.

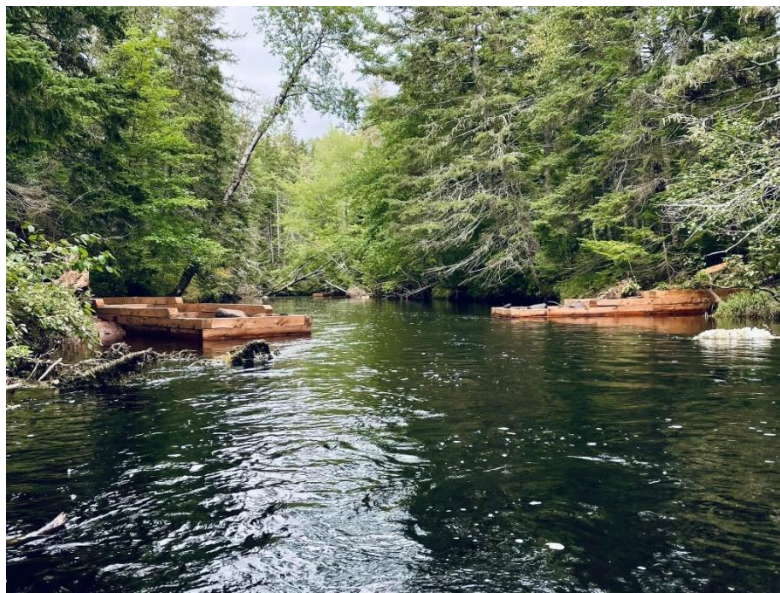


Alder clearing before and after photos on the South Branch of the Morell River.

The top branches of the alders are left to provide shade.

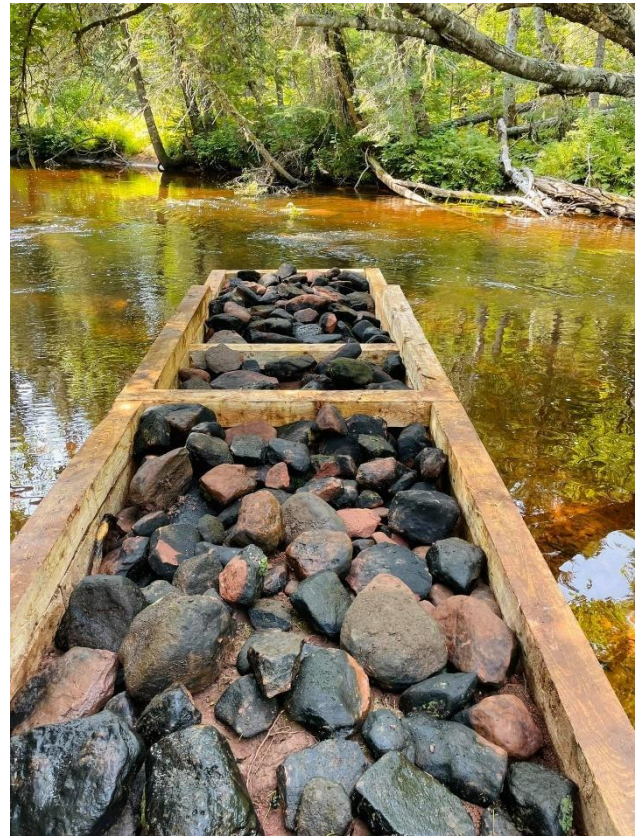
Morell River Deflector Structures Project

A huge project completed over the summer of 2021 was the reconstruction of eight deflector structures along the Morell River. The structures were re-built for the purpose of creating and maintaining resting areas for salmonids by scouring pools. Before the construction of the new deflectors began, the sites were assessed to determine the best angle and height of the new structures. The crews floated 740 eastern larch timbers and other materials from Grant's Bridge to the deflector structure sites. The most time-consuming task was tearing out the old structures built in the 1990s.





Crews moving eastern larch timbers to deflector structure sites.



Tearing out the old deflector. New deflector filled in with river rock.

This project was no easy task, and we want to recognize everyone that played a role in completing the new structures. The project was made possible through collaboration with the PEI Department of Transportation and the Central Queens Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation (CQWF). Special thank you to project leaders Jordan Condon and Charlie Ralph, Provincial Freshwater Fish Biologist Rosie MacFarlane, and Transportation and Infrastructure Environmental Coordinator Paul Strain.

CQWF Crew

Jordan Condon, Brett McQuaid, Patrick Duguay, Isaac Arsenault-Saunders, Knowlton Parkman, Mark Campbell, and Andrew Docks.

Department of Transportation Queens & Kings County Crews

Dylan Murphy, Devan Gormley, Dannika Dowling, Daniel MacIntosh, Austin Kickham, Connor Ching, Evelyn Guignon, and Sydney Strain.

MRMC Crew

Hannah Murnaghan, Grant MacCormack, Emily Sanderson, Vanessa Jackson, Steven Cockram, Gabriel Murphy, Lily Corlett, Riley Kelly, Shane Collins, and Chloe MacKinnon

Without the hard work of all the individuals listed above, this project would not have been possible. Thank you!



Bristol Creek Spawning Sites

By looking at historic redd survey maps, spawning areas that are utilized by Atlantic salmon every year can be identified. On Bristol Creek Atlantic salmon spawn primarily in the reach from Kenovan Road to the Confederation Trail. Since this reach of Bristol Creek is used by Atlantic salmon on an annual basis, this section was chosen for salmonid habitat enhancement in 2021. The MRMC crew completed 17 spawning sites on this reach of Bristol Creek. To create a spawning site, a raking technique is used to loosen embedded substrate and proper size cobble is farmed from the stream and added to the site. By loosening the substrate and providing ideal spawning substrate, expectantly female salmon can dig a more successful redd with greater embryo survival.

During the fall Atlantic salmon spawning survey, the MRMC crew counted 5 Atlantic salmon redds in this reach. The redd survey conditions in the fall of 2021 were not ideal with very high water making it challenging to spot salmon redds. The redd survey on Bristol Creek was incomplete due to the poor weather and survey conditions. This project was funded through the Habitat Stewardship Program and Wildlife Conservation Fund in partnership with the PEI Watershed Alliance.



McKenna's Pond Fish Passage

In the fall of 2021, a new nature-like fishway was constructed at McKenna's Pond on the South Branch of the Morell River. The previous structure at the site did not allow fish passage. This project was completed by Ducks Unlimited Canada in partnership with MRMC and the Abegweit Conservation Society. The new nature-like fishway allows Atlantic salmon, brook trout, and other native fish to migrate throughout the entire south branch of the Morell River.



Photo by Ducks Unlimited Canada.



Morell River Rock Placement Project

Clusters of large rock were added to a long straight section of the Morell River with bedrock bottom. The rock was brought to the stream bank using a long-reach excavator operated by Wayne Boyer from Island Coastal. The MRMC crew moved the rock, arranging them in diamond patterns recommended in *“The Technical Manual for Watershed Enhancement on PEI”*. The new large rock clusters will provide resting areas for adult salmonids and habitats for juveniles.



Riparian Zone Enhancement

Four sites along the Morell River and one site in the headwaters of Bristol Creek were selected for riparian zone planting. The sites on the Morell River were planted to increase diversity. The site on Bristol Creek had been flooded by a beaver dam, killing all trees but speckled alder. The MRMC crew planted native trees including yellow birch, eastern larch, sugar maple, red maple, eastern hemlock, mountain ash, red spruce, eastern white cedar, and red oak. The trees planted will provide shade to the river during the warmest months of the year, creating better habitat for Atlantic salmon. A total of 865 trees were planted in 2021.



Barrier Management

Windfalls

Windfalls can create large blockages which can impede fish passage and slow water. MRMC manages blockages in all our watersheds by selectively removing woody debris to improve streamflow and provide unimpeded access for fish to critical habitats. We are careful not to remove all woody debris from the stream as it provides important cover and habitat for fish and invertebrates. Where possible, only limbs are removed from windfalls, leaving the main trunk as cover and a wildlife crossing. A route on the main branch of the Morell is kept open for paddlers.

Beaver Dams

MRMC works with local trappers to manage beaver activity within the Beaver Management Zones outlined in the MRMC Beaver Management Plan. Six beaver dams on Morell River and Bristol Creek were trapped in 2021. The MRMC crew removed the dams to prevent the loss of riparian tree cover and to allow for fish passage.



Access Trails

Access trails provide safe and efficient access to project sites for MRMC staff. Aside from providing safety for the crew, trails also prevent the crew from accidentally stepping on juvenile Atlantic salmon during the spring when fry are emerging.

Trail maintenance was completed on the Bristol Creek trail system. It had been severely impacted by post-tropical storm Dorian. A new access trail was made along part of the St. Peter's River where tree planting will take place during the 2022 field season.

Our trail systems are essential for the crew to complete all stream enhancement and monitoring activities. We appreciate the property owners that allow us to use their land to create access trails.

Annual Shoreline Cleanup

MRMC participates in the Aquaculture Alliance Shoreline Clean-Up every year, collecting tons of garbage from the St. Peter's Bay shoreline. Mussel King assisted the MRMC crew by using a boat to pick up the garbage bags collected along the South Shore of St. Peter's Bay.



PEI Fish Stocking Program - Fish Releases

MRMC staff assisted the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Abegweit Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery with the release of Atlantic salmon and brook trout on the Morell River and Bristol Creek.

North American Bat Monitoring Program

As part of the PEI Watershed Alliance bat monitoring project, MRMC installed stationary acoustic monitors at four sites and completed one mobile transect within the Morell watershed. We also posted information on our social media pages requesting locations of old wells that bats may use as winter hibernation sites.

Canadian Wildlife Service - Goose Banding

The MRMC crew was excited to help Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Service with goose banding at three sites in 2021.

Wood Duck Boxes

We installed two wood duck nesting boxes around Mooney's Pond in 2021. We plan to build more boxes and install them throughout the Morell watershed in memory of Bowen Collins.

Mooney's Pond Pollinator Garden

Over the past few years, we have been planting swamp milkweed at Mooney's Pond to create a pollinator garden. The garden is doing quite well and has attracted some interesting insect species. Swamp milkweed is essential for the lifecycle of the endangered monarch butterfly.



Surveys and Monitoring

Temperature Monitoring

MRMC installs 26 HOBO Pendant data loggers in our six watersheds each year. Eleven loggers get deployed on the Morell River, and the remaining 15 are divided equally and deployed on the Midgell, Marie, St. Peter's, Bristol, and Schooner Creek systems. Data loggers are installed in May and retrieved in November. The data is sent to the Department of Fish & Wildlife and is available to anyone interested. In the future, we hope to have the temperature data uploaded to the online data platform Atlantic DataStream.

MRMC also installed a satellite temperature station at the 'forks' on the Morell River. This remote station collects real-time temperature data. Data collection was delayed in 2021 as new parts had to be ordered and repairs were needed before the remote satellite temperature station was up and running. The station is used to inform anglers and the general public about current water temperatures.



Pit Tagging and Antenna Stations

With the assistance of the Abegweit Conservation Society, 10 multi-sea-winter Atlantic salmon and 8 grilse from the Morell River were implanted with new pit tags in 2021. Two pit tag reader stations located on the East and West branches of the Morell River recorded any fish previously tagged in 2019 and 2020. Fish moving through Leard's fish trap were also scanned with a portable pit tag reader.

The antenna wire on the West Branch reader station was replaced in September 2021. The addition of a third pit tag reader station installed lower on the main branch of the Morell River will provide us with information on when these fish leave the river after spawning. Three new wooden stands were built for the reader stations and new signs were installed at the sites.



Smolt Tagging Project

MRMC was excited to collaborate with the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI and the Abegweit Conservation Society on a new Atlantic salmon tracking project funded by the Environmental Sciences Research Fund. The project involves tagging and tracking Atlantic salmon smolts and kelts across eastern Canada to learn more about their migration. MRMC assisted with this project by running a fyke net on the main branch of the Morell River to catch smolts. We also assisted the ACS with catching smolts on Midgell River. The information collected from this tagging project will reveal migration movements of Atlantic salmon which will assist with future management plans of many ocean resources. Partners in the project include DFO, the Ocean Tracking Network, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, Indigenous organizations, and many other environmental groups.



Redd Surveys

The weather conditions for redd surveys were not ideal during November and December of 2021. Heavy rainfall on the already saturated ground caused the river to rise quickly, making it challenging to spot Atlantic salmon redds and difficult to walk in the river. Due to poor conditions, redd surveys were incomplete in 2021.

Location	Number of Atlantic Salmon Redds
Morell River	50 *incomplete
Bristol Creek	5 *incomplete



Fish Trap and Broodstock Collection

Morell River Management Cooperative is responsible for maintaining and monitoring Leard's Pond's fish trap on the Morell River. The fish trap was installed in October and removed in mid-November. The trap is used to collect brook trout and Atlantic salmon broodstock for the PEI Fish Stocking Program. Broodstock was also collected by electrofishing with the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The eggs provided by the fish are hatched at the Abegweit Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery. Trout and salmon fry are released back into their native rivers in the spring of the following year.

Community Outreach and Events

Eastern Region Sport and Rec Council Events

The Eastern Region Sport and Rec Council (Go!East PEI) and MRMC have been co-hosting events at Mooney's Pond for the last number of years. These events encourage people to get outside and get active by incorporating a hike around Peggy's Trail with every event. We were able to host several events in 2021 including a Fall Hike & Photography Night, The Great Pumpkin Walk, and a Winter Hike & Bonfire with a local storyteller. Attendance for these events varies from 25 to 150 participants. For many people, these events are the first time they visit Mooney's Pond. We look forward to hosting more events with Go!East this season.



Plamu'k na Kitapina'q - Salmon are our Friends Program

Due to public health restrictions, schools were not able to visit Mooney's Pond in June for the annual salmon fry fish release. Instead, the Abegweit First Nation Early Childhood Centre friends released the final salmon from the program at Mooney's Pond. Katie and CJ from the Abegweit Conservation Society performed a smudge ceremony and Honour Song for the salmon before they were released into the Morell River.



Educational Outreach

Every year MRMC hosts several educational outreach events for elementary school groups, Girl Guides, 4-H groups, post-secondary classes, etc. Our educational outreach experiences can range from a full day of tree identification and planting to a one hour guided nature walk around Mooney's Pond. Listed below are the educational outreach events held in 2021.

- UPEI SEAM Program - tree ID and planting day
- Go!Nature Summer Camp day at Mooney's Pond
- École La-Belle-Cloche - Mooney's Pond tree ID and nature walk field trip
- Holland College Wildlife Conservation Technology class - fish trap and broodstock collection day demonstration
- Stratford Girl Guides - Leard's Pond fish trap and redd survey demonstration



Bowen Collins Memorial Fly Fishing Derby & Fly Tying & Casting Workshops

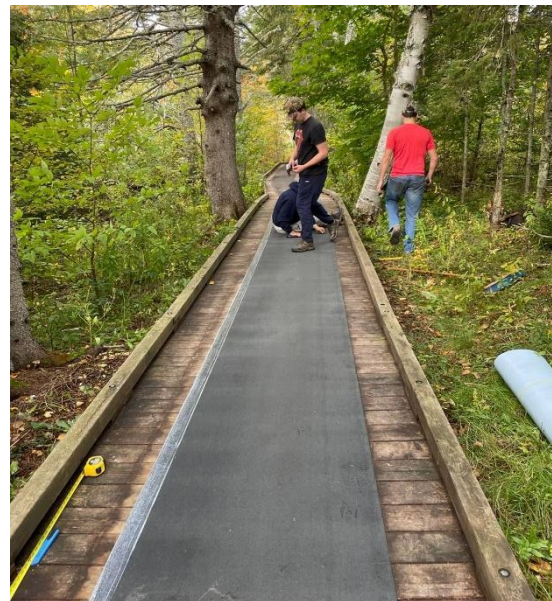
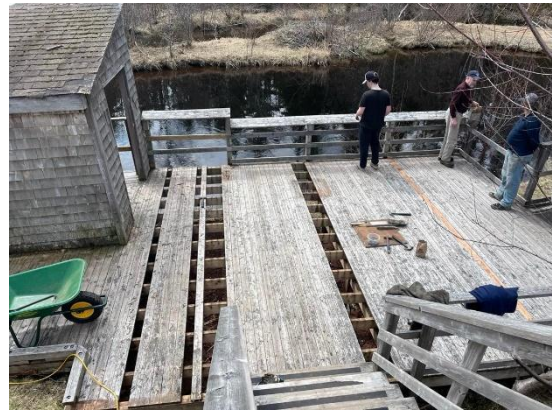


In September 2021 Morell River Management Cooperative hosted the first Bowen Collins Memorial Fly Fishing Derby and Fly Tying & Casting Workshops. Bowen worked as part of MRMC's stream enhancement crew during the 2014 field season and became a beaver trapper for the group. Bowen loved the outdoors. He spent much of his time in the Morell area fishing, trapping, and hunting, so it was only fitting to have the memorial derby on the beautiful Morell River.



Mooney's Pond Interpretive Centre

MRMC continues to operate and maintain Mooney's Pond Interpretive Centre, Peggy's Trail, and Anderson's Pool. Regular maintenance is completed on the trails, wheelchair-accessible boardwalks, and fishing platforms. In 2021 rotting boards were replaced at Anderson's Pool, a new asphalt mat was added to the wheelchair-accessible boardwalk, gravel was added to Peggy's Trail, and a new mini barn was purchased to replace an existing old barn used for equipment storage. A trail counter was also installed to gauge the use of the trail. We were amazed to see that during the month of October we had over 3000 visitors.



Communications

The MRMC social media pages allow for connection and engagement between community members and our organization. The MRMC social media pages highlight our watershed enhancement efforts, and are used to inform community members about our public events. These channels are updated regularly and provide information about the activities performed by our organization.

The MRMC website provides information about our organization, our funding partners, our projects, and links to additional environmental resources.

PDF versions of the Annual Report can be found on the MRMC website.



Facebook @morellrivermanagementcoop – 1,534 followers



Instagram @morellrivermanagement – 611 followers



Website www.morellriverpei.com

Contact Information

Coordinator - 902-583-3144 or coordinator@morellriverpei.com

Board of Directors President - president@morellriverpei.com

Address: 2720 Mount Stewart Road, Route 22, Peakes, PE, C0A1T0

Work Not Completed

Indian Bridge Project

Heavy foot traffic has caused damage to the riparian zone at Indian Bridge. During periods of heavy rain, sediment is washed from the road and footpaths into an eroded gully and enters the holding pool downstream of the bridge. The overall purpose of this project is to restore the holding pool and riparian zone at Indian Bridge that has been altered by human activity. The project objectives are to redirect human traffic and restore the stream bank. The project would involve creating an area for canoes and kayaks to launch that would not disturb the holding pool or cause sediment to wash into the river. In the early spring of 2021, the province acquired the property and met with members of MRMC to discuss possible solutions. The Department of Transportation plans to complete work at this location in 2022.

Gill Road Extension Repairs

The Gill Road extension is eroding and allows heavy sediment loads into the Morell River during heavy rain events. ATV use has intensified the erosion of the road and has caused significant damage to the riparian area. MRMC board members had discussions with the Department of Transportation, local landowners, and community groups to discuss solutions. The Department of Transportation has done some grading work, has replaced a culvert on a tributary that crosses the road, and has plans to build a crossing over the river in 2022. After the project is complete, MRMC plans to replant and restore the riparian zone in the area.

Partners

Without the support of our partners and funding programs, we could not complete our conservation, monitoring, and enhancement work.

- Abegweit Conservation Society
- Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation
- Atlantic Salmon Federation
- Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk
- Canada Summer Jobs Program
- Central Queens Wildlife Federation
- Community Nominated Priority Places Fund
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Eastern Region Sport and Rec Council
- Habitat Stewardship Program
- Island Nature Trust
- Jobs for Youth Program
- Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI
- Mussel King PEI
- PEI Department of Forests, Fish and Wildlife
- PEI Department of Transportation
- PEI Post Secondary Program
- PEI Watershed Alliance
- PEI Watershed Management Fund
- PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund
- Skills PEI Post Secondary Program
- Youth Employment and Skills Program

Finally, to all of the individuals that support our efforts including community members, anglers, landowners, fellow conservationists, and friends - thank you!

Special Thank You

Morell River Management Cooperative would like to sincerely thank everyone that made donations to our organization in memory of Kevin Coles.



“Kevin Peter Coles, 58, cast his last Peter Ross on June 25, 2021, much to the relief of all the fish in the Morell River.”

Donations in Memory of Kevin Coles - \$11,500

The donations will go towards enhancing brook trout and Atlantic salmon habitat on the Morell River. Red oak and red maple trees were also donated and have been planted along the Morell River as a memorial that will benefit the river for years to come.

2022 Work Plan

Projects

- Clear windfalls for canoe route on Morell River
- Beaver Management in all watersheds
- Wood duck boxes in memory of Bowen Collins
- Riparian zone restoration - planting along St. Peter's River and Morell River
- Alder clearing in Bristol Creek
- Spawning sites on Bristol Creek
- Identify possible locations for fish holding pools
- Annual Shoreline Cleanup
- Review the possibility of resuming the Semi Natural Rearing program at Mooney's Pond
- Expand Peggy's Trail system at Mooney's Pond
- Department of Transportation: work to be completed at Gill Road Extension and Indian Bridge Road
- Work with landowners to address sediment issues on Morell River (Possible future project with the Agri-watershed Partnership)
- Install one new deflector structure at Mooney Road location
- Complete Atlantic Salmon Management Plan for Morell River

Surveys and Monitoring

- Temperature data loggers & remote satellite monitoring station on Morell River
- Redd surveys
- Smolt tagging
- Electrofishing index sites
- CABIN sampling
- Sediment monitoring
- Fish trap count and broodstock collection
- Pit tagging Atlantic salmon

Community Outreach and Events

- Events with Eastern Region Sport and Recreational Council
- Family Fishing Day at Mooney's Pond
- Salmon are our Friends Days at Mooney's Pond
- Morell River Run Festival Expo & Parade
- Maintaining the website and social media pages
- Educational outreach activities with local school groups