

Morell River Management Cooperative

2026 Annual Report



Watershed Management Group for the St. Peter's Bay Area Drainage Basin

Bristol Creek · Morell River · St. Peter's Harbour · Marie River · Midgell River

St. Peter's River · Schooner Creek · Greenwich

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Everglades – East branch of the Morell River

2026 AGM Agenda

Call to Order

Welcome & Land Acknowledgment

Approval of Agenda

Review and Approval of 2025 AGM Minutes

President's Report

Treasurer's Report

Coordinator's Annual Report

Board Nominations Committee Report

Business Meeting Adjournment

Refreshment Break

Guest Presentations

Kate MacQuarrie - Wildlife Tracks and Signs

Abegweit Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery - PEI Fish Stocking Program



Land Acknowledgement

MRMC acknowledges that we are gathered on the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We pay our respects to the Mi'kmaq people who have occupied this land for over 12,000 years, past, present, and future. We also acknowledge the ongoing Treaty relationship between the Mi'kmaq and the Crown, and the importance of honouring these treaties in our ongoing relationships.

We also recognize the vital collaboration between Morell River Management Cooperative and Abegweit First Nation in conserving our rivers. This partnership is essential in protecting the health and sustainability of our waterways, respecting the sacredness of water, and ensuring that future generations can benefit from these natural resources. Together, we strive to uphold the principles of stewardship and conservation, honouring both ecological and cultural values.



Main branch of the Morell River above Indian Bridge

2025 AGM Minutes

April 24th, 2025 Morell Consolidated School

Call to order

7:04 pm by Santina Beaton-MacEachern, who also provided a land acknowledgement.

In Attendance

The sitting board members, (regrets from Trent MacSwain) and: Hannah Murnaghan, Emma Power, James Morrissey, Lois Crane, Monica Tremblay, Craig Ono, Pauline Scoffield, Shaymus McGuire, Lily Corlett, Brezlyn Knockwood, Maureen Whiting, Rob Sharkey and family.

Approval of the Agenda

Motioned by Dale McIsaac, seconded by Steve Collins.

Motion carried.

Approval of 2024 AGM Minutes

Motioned for approval by Doug MacEwen, seconded by Brian Crane. Motion carried.

President's Report

Presented by Santina Beaton-MacEachern

Treasurer's Report

Presented by Brian Crane

Coordinator's Report

Presented by Hannah Murnaghan

Board Nomination Committee Report

Completed by Dale Mclsaac.

The following people have agreed to let their names stand for election to the Morell River Management Co-op Board of Directors for the 2025-2026 fiscal year:

Santina Beaton-MacEachern, Brian Crane, Dale Mclsaac, Angela Frain, Trent MacSwain, Steve Collins, Doug MacEwen, Craig Ono, Will Proctor, and Brezlyn Knockwood.

Motioned by Dale, and other nominations were called for three times; the nominated names were presented as representatives for the 2025-2026 board. Seconded by Will Proctor. Motion carried.

Guest Presentation

Goals and Activities of the Watershed Alliance by Heather Laiskonis

A twenty-minute presentation was made that covered the 15 years of operation for the Watershed Alliance and its current direction. The Alliance is a representative voice for the 25 watershed groups on PEI. There are shared human resource services offered for staff members in the watershed groups, including health benefit plans. The Alliance is enacting a recently developed strategic plan under Ms. Laiskonis' leadership, and it collaborates the efforts of all the watershed groups.

Motion for meeting adjournment

Angela Frain 8:01 pm

President's Report

The Morell River Management Cooperative (MRMC) experienced another busy and successful 2025 field season. This work gets completed under the guidance and direction of our Watershed Coordinator, Hannah Murnaghan.

Many thanks to Hannah for her efforts and dedication to MRMC and the Mooney's Pond Interpretative Center, including upkeep and upgrading of the trail system surrounding Mooney's Pond. The number of trail users and photo enthusiasts continues to grow each year to the point that finding a parking spot can be a challenge on weekends. Last fall, a trail counter placed on the Mooney Pond property logged close to 10,000 trail users during the months of September and October, certainly proof to the popularity of this beautiful area.

In addition to regular instream restoration and all of our other 2025 annual activities, MRMC's Stream Enhancement Team maintained connectivity to forty-four (44) kilometres of aquatic habitat on the Morell River, including cold water tributaries and ninety (90) cold water patches identified during a 2024 thermal imaging-equipped helicopter fly-over. With increasing heat waves and low water levels such as experienced in 2025, it is very beneficial to continue this cold-water enhancement work on the Morell River. Connectivity work was also completed on five (5) kilometers of the St. Peter's River, Bristol Creek and Marie River systems.

As with many watersheds, beaver management is an important component in stream management. Board Member, Steve Collins coordinates beaver management for MRMC. With respect to fish passage, MRMC crews removed fourteen (14) beaver dams, including a significant dam that was blocking the entire east branch of the Morell River. Of course, this work requires access trails to be cleared and maintained and the MRMC Board of Directors appreciates and thanks the many property owners who allow us to use their land to create access trails.

Brush mats are a proven effective and cost-efficient method of improving instream habitat for Brook Trout and Salmon. The MRMC 2025 Stream Enhancement Team built brush mats on the south branch of the Morell River and a very large one hundred (100) foot brush mat above Mooney's Pond that will be checked on an annual basis to monitor functionality.

As we have witnessed over the past years, severe storms can create havoc for watersheds with downed-trees eliminating shade and cover for aquatic species that leads to increased water temperatures and run-off during rainstorms. In 2025, the MRMC crew planted one thousand (1000) trees along the Morell River. These yellow birch, sugar maple, red oak, eastern hemlock, service berry, white pine, mountain ash and eastern white cedar will create diversity within the riparian zone, providing future shade to protect important aquatic habitat.

The MRMC Team completed a shoreline cleanup along twenty-one (21) kilometres of Crowbush Cove Harbour and St. Peter's Bay using funding from our partnership with the Island Nature Trust. The Team collected an estimated one thousand (1000) pounds of garbage and marine debris. Staff from PEI Mussel King picked up and transported the piles.

Funding from the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund was used to place and maintain garbage bins at popular angling sites along the Morell River in hopes of reducing litter. We plan to continue with this program for this season as well.

MRMC has continued to work on the Bowen Collins Wood Duck Box program, and Hannah and Board Member Steve go out annually to clean the boxes and refresh the wood chip bedding to attract new or returning occupants.

MRMC staff work each year with the Department of Forests, Fish and Wildlife and staff from the Abegweit Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery. June 2025 saw the release of thirty thousand (30,000) Atlantic Salmon fry and one thousand (1000) Brook Trout in the Morell River. MRMC staff assisted with the collection of the broodstock with the installation of the fish trap at Leard's Pond, and all the broodstock were safely released back into the river where they were collected.

These are just some of the MRMC projects from 2025! Please spend some time on the annual report, where you can read about other work such as Hobo loggers, water quality data, Atlantic Salmon Redd surveys, electrofishing index sites, Juvenile Atlantic Salmon tracking, Hemlock Wolley Adelgid Monitoring, Smooth Greensnake Monitoring, River Otter and Bat Monitoring, Bathymetric Pond Surveys, Watercress Study, Community Connection and Outreach, Go! East Partnership, Bowen Collins Memorial Fishing Derby, and the Morell River Run Festival.

Going back to June of 1975, the Morell and Area Land Use Steering Committee, with the Provincial Government of the day, successfully designated PEI's first green belt, the Morell River Conservation Zone. The Green Belt protects sixty (60) meters on each side of the Morell River from development of any kind! On Sunday, July 20, 2025, MRMC gathered at Rossiter Park in Morell to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Green Belt. A large red oak tree was planted in recognition of the members of the 1975 Steering Committee.

I want to thank our many funding partners, which are listed in the 2025 Annual Report, as this work would not be possible without the help, advice and collaboration of other organizations. On behalf of our Board of Directors, thank you!

Sincere thanks and appreciation to our Watershed Coordinator, Hannah Murnaghan, on managing all MRMC projects, Mooney's Pond Interpretative Centre, and Peggy's Trail. Anyone that knows Hannah, knows her abilities and commitment to the work. Not only the stream enhancement work but her efforts in identifying funding opportunities, completing funding applications and her staff management. A testament to her management skills is the fact that we have a full crew of returning staff for the 2026 season!

The MRMC Board of Directors would like to thank our 2025 Stream Enhancement Team: Lily Corlett, Riley Kelly, Gabriel Murphy, Shaymus McGuire, James Morrissey, Fionn McAdam-Young, Damon Fleming, Chloe MacKinnon, Emma Power, Jack Rossiter and of course their canine assistant, Laya.

I want to recognize and thank my fellow Board Members for a very successful year in 2025: Santina Beaton-MacEachern, Steve Collins, Angela Frain, Trent MacSwain, Will Proctor, Dale McIsaac, Craig Ono, Brian Crane, Brezlyn Knockwood and Student Rep, Eva Gaudet.

I would also like to say that it has been my pleasure to chair the Board for the past year!

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug MacEwen

Treasurer's Report

2025 Funding	Amount
PEI Watershed Management Fund	\$107,173.00
Abegweit Conservation Society Partnership with the Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration Fund & Fish Friends	\$45,876.00
Foundation for the Conservation of Atlantic Salmon	\$43,920.00
Skills PEI Post Secondary Program	\$19,968.00
PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund Spring & Fall	\$16,800.00
PEI Watershed Alliance Salmon Habitat Restoration, River Watcher, Training, River Otter & Bat Monitoring Projects	\$9,320.17
MPMC HST and WCB Rebates	\$9,166.18
Forests, Fish & Wildlife Smooth Greensnake Monitoring Project & Leard's Fish Trap Repairs	\$8,228.00
Dalhousie University Partnership with the Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk	\$7,000.00
Jobs for Youth Program	\$5,324.80
Canada Summer Jobs	\$5,082.00
Island Nature Trust Partnership with the Community Nominated Priority Places Fund	\$4,000.00
Donations & Clothing Sales	\$3,548.00
TOTAL	\$285,406.15
Special thanks to the Department of Transportation for their in-kind work on the Kenovan Road to reduce sediment from entering Bristol Creek	

2025 Expenses	Total Cost (HST included)
Employee Payroll 12 staff, MERCs included	\$261,806.08
MPMC Expenses Mooney's Pond Interpretive Centre & Trail maintenance, office supplies, events, and meeting expenses	\$13,112.08
Bookkeeping & Accounting	\$9,364.47
Mileage & Work Truck Expenses	\$6,747.26
Project Equipment & Materials PPE, monitoring equipment, chainsaw expenses, waders and tools	\$7,617.66
Beaver Trapping Services	\$2,550.00
Maritime Electric	\$3,126.83
Workers Compensation Board	\$1,462.31
Internet & Phone	\$1,513.63
Employee Health Benefits	\$1,940.40
Liability and Vehicle Insurance	\$2,789.00
Property Tax	\$344.00
Trees & Shrubs	\$458.85
TOTAL	\$312,832.57
Many thanks to Brent Callaghan for providing snow removal services at Mooney's Pond	

Board of Directors

Doug MacEwen, President - 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.

Dale McIsaac, Vice President - 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.

Brian Crane, Treasurer - Brian has been on the MRMC board for many years. He lives along the 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.

Will Proctor, Secretary - 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.

Angela Frain – Angela grew up in the city of Kawartha Lakes with a family that loved to fish and hunt. As an outdoor enthusiast, she enjoys hiking trails and waterways and spending time in nature. She joined the MRMC board of directors to learn more about the area and its watersheds.

Brezlyn Knockwood – Brezlyn is the MRMC board representative for the Mi'kmaq First Nation. He was born and raised in Prince Edward Island and has been working as a Hatchery Technician at the Abegweit Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery since September 2022. Brezlyn has a deep cultural connection to the Morell River and the surrounding areas. He has many years of experience harvesting food and gathering knowledge in the Morell River. "Being part of the MRMC board is important to me because I feel like I have a closer connection to the River I love. The same River my father fished and his father before him."

Craig Ono – Craig is a fly-fishing guide based in St. Peter's Harbour and the owner of Fly Fish PEI, where he offers private guided experiences on the Morell River. With a deep appreciation for the watershed and its world-class trout fishery, he joined the MRMC board to support conservation efforts and help protect the river for future generations.

Eva Gaudet - Eva joined the MRMC board through the Youth on Board Program. She is a grade 12 student graduating from Morell Regional High School. Eva has lived in Morell her whole life with her parents, brother Mack and new puppy Honey Bear. Eva is a very busy student. She takes pride in maintaining high academic standards and spends a lot of time participating in sports in her community. She also loves to spend time being active outdoors, hiking, paddleboarding and enjoying the beach. In the fall, Eva is attending UPEI to pursue a degree in Kinesiology. Eva has enjoyed her time on the board of Morell River Management Cooperative, learning more about local ecosystems and how boards work to benefit communities

Santina Beaton-MacEachern- 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 volunteers with MRMC because of her investment in previous MRMC projects and her passion for all things involving the environment, agriculture, and wetlands.

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.

Trent MacSwain – Trent has previous watershed experience working with the Winter River Tracadie Bay Watershed in his youth. He has a Holland College diploma in Wildlife Conservation Technology and is a certified Wildlife Technician. Trent grew up hunting and fishing the Morell River. He joined the MRMC board to help preserve the world-class recreational opportunities that the Morell River has to offer.

2025 MRMC Crew

We had a full crew of returning staff for the 2025 field season.

MRMC would like to thank the crew for their hard work and dedication!



Gabriel Murphy, Jack Rossiter, Shaymus McGuire, Fionn MacAdam-Young, Damon Fleming, James Morrissey, Riley Kelly, Emma Power, Chloe MacKinnon, Lily Corlett and MRMC field dog Laya. Photo by Watershed Coordinator, Hannah Murnaghan.

Watershed Management

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 very good relationship with the PEI Forest, Fish & Wildlife Division, the PEI Watershed Alliance, the Abegweit Conservation Society, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Department of Transportation, and many other environmental organizations.

Several technical documents help guide our work, including *A Renewed Conservation Strategy for Atlantic Salmon in Prince Edward Island*, and *The Technical Manual for Watershed Management on Prince Edward Island*. Our organization also follows the *MRMC Beaver Management Plan* and *Atlantic Salmon Management Plan for the Morell River*, which can be found on the MRMC website.

The PEI Watershed Alliance provides online webinars, training sessions and workshops for watershed groups, and our partnership with the Abegweit Conservation Society has allowed MRMC staff to participate in many training opportunities. In 2025, MRMC staff attended various workshops, seminars, and training days to continue building our capacity as a watershed group.



Abegweit
Conservation Society



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada



Projects

Barrier Management

Morell River Management Cooperative manages barriers to fish migration annually. Windfalls can create significant blockages by catching debris, impeding fish passage and creating stagnant water. The MRMC crew selectively cuts windfalls to create good flow and fish passage while leaving large woody material in-stream for fish cover and habitat. In some locations, windfalls can be strategically cut to produce a pinch point, creating favourable conditions for Atlantic Salmon spawning habitat. Some trees are left spanning the river to create wildlife crossings.

MRMC also appreciates that recreational uses of the Morell River are important and works to create a balance of providing quality fish habitat while still allowing recreational activities to occur safely. MRMC maintains the Morell River canoe route from Leard's Pond to Indian Bridge, access trails for anglers, and has cleared large windfalls that blocked fishing access on the main branch of the Morell River.

In 2025, the MRMC crew maintained connectivity to 44km of aquatic habitat on the Morell River, including cold-water tributaries and 90 cold-water patches identified during a 2024 thermal helicopter flight. Given the increasing number of heatwaves and low water levels observed in 2025, it would be beneficial to continue cold-water enhancement work on the Morell River. Connectivity work was also completed on 5km of the St. Peter's River, Bristol Creek and Marie River systems.



Beaver Management

The wetlands created by beavers can provide valuable habitat for many species, including furbearers, waterfowl, amphibians, and many invertebrates. These ponds may also provide rearing habitat for juvenile Brook Trout. MRMC's goal is not to eradicate beavers, but to manage the influence of beaver dams, where they act as barriers to fish migration and/or contribute to the development of poor salmonid habitat. Each beaver dam location is evaluated for the impact it will have on the aquatic habitat.

The crew surveys migration routes in the spring and fall to ensure that beaver dams do not impede the migration of diadromous fish. This work also ensures that fish at all life stages can access estuaries, spawning sites, feeding areas, and cold-water refuges.

MRMC works with local trappers to manage beaver activity and follows the *MRMC Beaver Management Plan* to identify priority areas. In 2025, MRMC removed 14 beaver dams, including a significant dam that was blocking the entire east branch of the Morell River.



Access Trails

MRMC has many access trails throughout the watersheds we manage. They are essential for safe and efficient access to our project sites. Annual maintenance of access trails was completed in the spring of 2025. We appreciate and thank the property owners who allow us to use their land to create access trails.

Brush Mats

Building brush mats is an effective and cost-efficient way to improve in-stream habitat for Brook Trout and Atlantic Salmon. Brush mats collect sediment during high-water events, which helps to narrow and deepen the stream channel. By removing excess sediment, gravel and cobble substrates are uncovered, creating suitable spawning areas and better-quality juvenile habitat for salmonids. In 2025, the crew constructed brush mats on the south branch of the Morell River and a very large 100ft brush mat above Mooney's Pond. MRMC plans to revisit these sites annually to monitor the function of the brush mats.

Riparian Zone Restoration

One of MRMC's long-term goals is to develop healthy, diverse, and resilient riparian areas that contribute to a healthier aquatic ecosystem. By planting a variety of native trees and shrubs, the riparian zone becomes more diverse and resilient to the impacts of climate change. In 2025, MRMC planted the west and main branches of the Morell River, which are protected by the Morell River Conservation Zone. These branches are remote and hard to access for planting. The crew completed this task by loading trees into canoes at Leard's Pond and Grant's Bridge and paddled the trees along the river to add diversity to a large area. A third planting site along an important cold-water tributary was selected for planting after a beaver dam flooded the area, causing a loss of tree cover and shade.

The MRMC crew planted yellow birch, sugar maple, red maple, red oak, eastern hemlock, serviceberry, white pine, mountain ash, and eastern white cedar to create diversity within the riparian area. A total of 1,000 trees were planted along the Morell River, which will provide future shade and protect important aquatic habitat.



Shoreline Cleanup

Thanks to funding from our partnership with the Island Nature Trust, MRMC completed a clean-up along 21km of shoreline between Savage Harbour and St. Peter's Bay. With some of the most picturesque views on the Island, MRMC takes pride in keeping the shoreline free of garbage to not only maintain the Bay's natural beauty but also to protect the home of PEI's native wildlife and coastal species at risk, including piping plovers, bank swallows, willet, and other migratory shorebirds.

The MRMC crew collected an estimated 1,000 lbs of garbage and marine debris, including Styrofoam buoys, rope, and fishing gear. PEI Mussel King assisted in the clean-up effort by picking up the piles of garbage from the shoreline by boat. Using a boat to collect the garbage is ideal as it avoids driving vehicles on the sensitive shorelines. MRMC is proud of removing so much debris from the shore, keeping the environment clean and safe for people and wildlife.



Morell River Garbage Bins

Thanks to funding from the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund, MRMC installed garbage bins at popular angling locations along the Morell River. The goal of providing the bins is to reduce litter and protect wildlife. MRMC plans to continue installing the garbage bins annually during the PEI Angling Season, from April 15th to October 31st.

Bowen Collins Wood Duck Boxes

Several wood duck boxes have been installed throughout the Morell and Midgell watersheds in memory of Bowen Collins. He was an avid hunter, trapper, and angler and loved the outdoors. The wood duck boxes are cleaned and filled with new bedding annually in late winter or spring for the next breeding season.



PEI Fish Stocking Program

MRMC staff assisted the Department of Forests, Fish and Wildlife, and the Abegweit Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery with the release of 30,000 Atlantic Salmon fry and 1,000 Brook Trout in the Morell River in June 2025. In October and November, MRMC helped collect adult broodstock by operating a fish trap at Leard's Pond. The fish collected provided Atlantic Salmon and Brook Trout eggs for the 2026 stocking program. All broodstock collected for spawning were safely released back into the wild into the river where they were collected.



Surveys & Monitoring

Water Quality Monitoring

The rivers within the St. Peter’s Bay drainage basin are considered warm-water systems, with summer water temperatures often reaching 20°C or higher. Warm water holds less dissolved oxygen (DO) than cold water and can create poor water quality conditions for native fish, especially cold-water species like salmon and trout. To monitor temperature and DO, MRMC installed Hobo™ loggers throughout the watersheds.

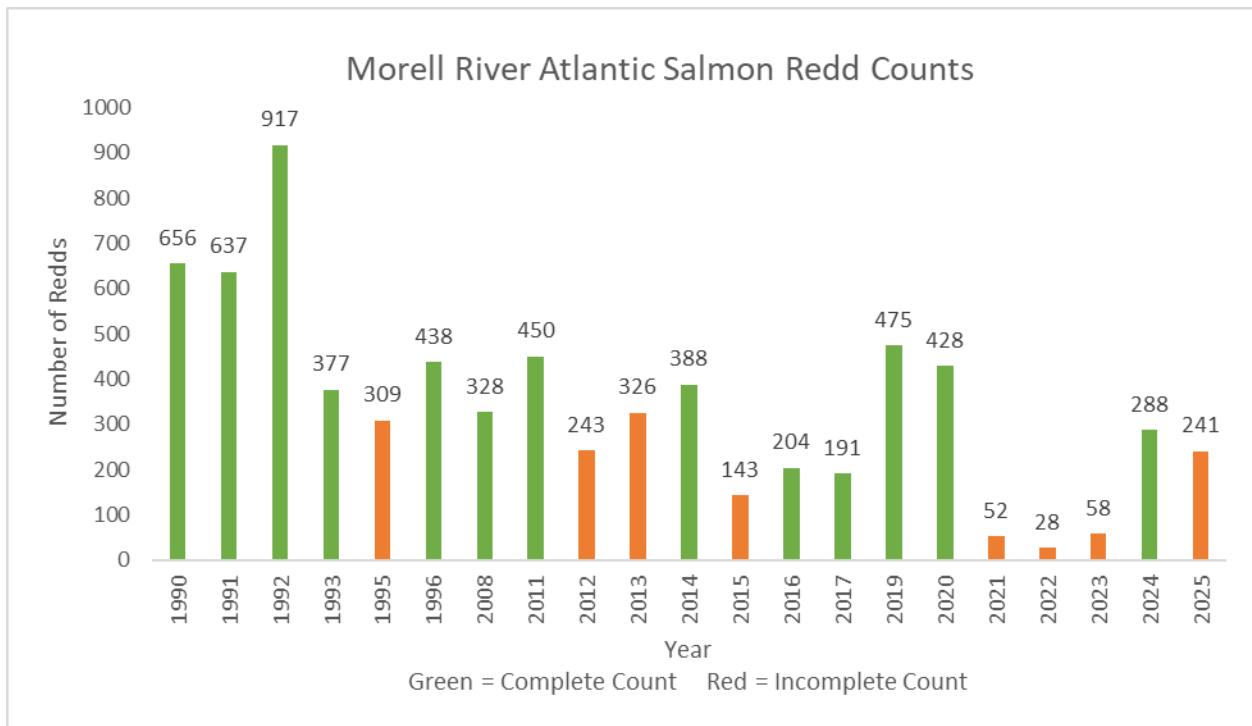
When temperatures exceed 20°C, Brook Trout and Atlantic Salmon become stressed and seek cold water. Angling during these temperatures causes additional stress to the fish. Temperature information from the main branch of the Morell River was posted on the MRMC Facebook page every week during the summer months so that anglers could make informed angling decisions based on water temperature.

All of MRMC’s water quality data can be found on the open data platform, Atlantic DataStream.



Atlantic Salmon Redd Surveys

An Atlantic Salmon redd (spawning nest) is a depression and gravel pile in the stream bed where a female salmon lays her eggs. Redd surveys are completed by walking or paddling a section of the river and marking redds with GPS points. Thanks to our dedicated field crew, counts were completed on Morell (241 redds), St. Peter's (20 redds) and Bristol Creek (0 redds). The counts for 2025 are considered incomplete due to late spawning activity. It is presumed that the Atlantic Salmon migrated upriver later due to low water conditions.



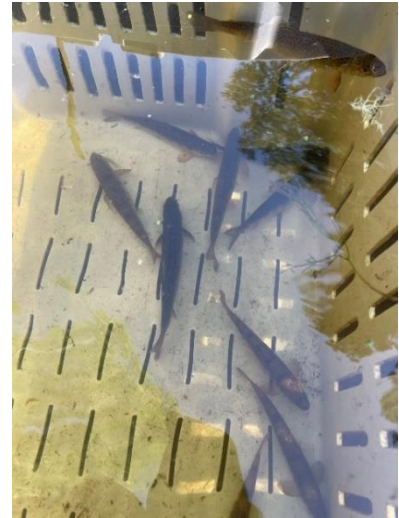
Electrofishing Index Sites

Electrofishing Index Sites are a standardized way of monitoring fish populations in rivers and streams. The data collected from the surveys is used to determine relative abundance and species composition, which can be compared year after year. MRMC completed two annual electrofishing index sites with the Department of Forests, Fish and Wildlife on the west and east branches of the Morell River in the fall of 2025. Additional sites were completed on the south branch with the University of Prince Edward Island and on the upper east branch of the Morell River. Juvenile Atlantic Salmon and Brook Trout were present at all sites. Other species included American eel, red-bellied dace, stickleback and banded killifish.



Juvenile Atlantic Salmonid Tracking

MRMC assisted Dalhousie University with an Atlantic Salmonid tracking project, which focuses on the use of electronic tagging and tracking technology for informing species recovery plans for brook floater and Atlantic Salmon in the Gulf Region. In 2025, micro acoustic transmitters and receivers were used to monitor the movement of juvenile Atlantic Salmon and Brook Trout on the main branch of the Morell River. The project aims to better understand the habitat use of these salmonids at a sub-reach scale. Work is being carried out by Paris Mastrodimitropoulos, who is pursuing her master's with a final report to be completed in 2026.



Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Monitoring

For the past two years, MRMC has partnered with the PEI Invasive Species Council to monitor for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) in the Eastern Hemlock stands at Mooney's Pond. HWA is an aphid-like insect whose lifecycle depends on Hemlock trees. The HWA causes crown and branch dieback, loss of needles and eventually leads to the death of the tree. HWA has not been detected on PEI but is present in Nova Scotia. For more information on how to identify HWA, visit the PEI Invasive Species Council website: www.peiinvasives.com/hemlock-woolly-adelgid/



HWA on the underside of an Eastern Hemlock branch.

Photo taken from PEI Invasive Species Council Website.

Smooth Greensnake Monitoring

From May to September 2025, MRMC partnered with the PEI Department of Forests, Fish and Wildlife (FF&W) to complete habitat, visual encounter and coverboard surveys for Smooth Greensnakes within the Morell watershed. Monitoring sites were chosen based on a suitable habitat model developed by FF&W. The project aims to help identify critical habitats for Smooth Greensnake and find pinch points in the landscape that are important for movement. Over the survey period, the MRMC crew found three Smooth Greensnakes and many Eastern Garter and Red Belly snakes.



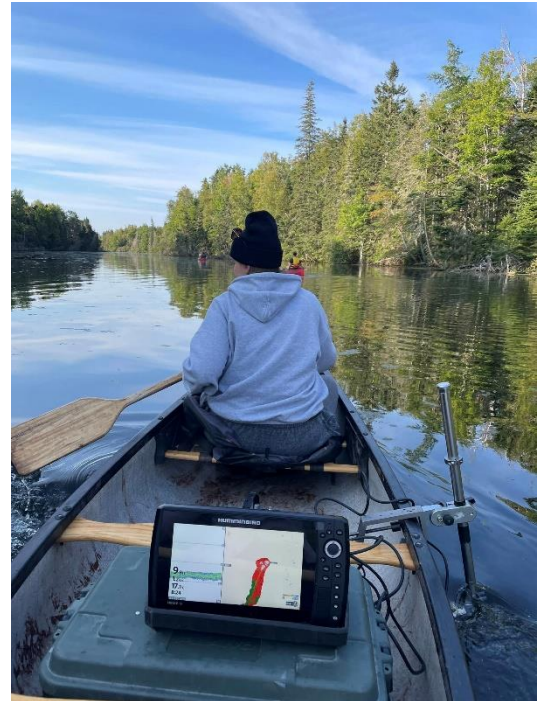
River Otter & Bat Monitoring

Bat and River Otter monitoring projects were completed within the Morell River Watershed in partnership with the PEI Watershed Alliance and Forests, Fish and Wildlife. To monitor bat presence, MRMC installed acoustic monitors at four sites and completed one mobile survey. To monitor the presence of River Otters, two trail cameras were installed at river crossings. No River Otters have been captured on camera to date.



Bathymetric Pond Surveys

MRMC would like to thank Kris Hunter, Regional Director of the Wild Salmon Watersheds Program at the Atlantic Salmon Federation, for assisting us with a bathymetric survey of Leard's Pond. A bathymetric pond survey is the measurement and mapping of pond depths and topography. This information will help us determine the available habitat for fish and help us plan future restoration projects.



Watercress Study

During the summer field season, MRMC staff assisted UPEI biology student and honours thesis candidate Julie Goodwin with the monitoring of watercress (*N. officinale* and *N. microphyllum*) in the Morell River. Watercress is a non-native species that is found across many Island watersheds. The surveys were part of a larger study across several watersheds to learn more about how watercress contributes to the overall health of a watershed, including impacts on water flow and fish habitat.



Community Connection & Outreach

Plamu'k na Kitapina'q - Salmon Are Our Friends Program

The MRMC crew always looks forward to Fish Friends days in June when students visit Mooney's Pond for fish releases. Schools participating in the program raise Atlantic Salmon fry in classroom fish tanks until they are ready to be released. Members from Abegweit First Nations and the Abegweit Conservation Society performed smudge ceremonies and Honour Songs for the Atlantic Salmon before being released into the Morell River by the students. The students also enjoyed doing a scavenger hunt around Peggy's Trail, looking at the MRMC taxidermy, and hot dogs for lunch!



Family Fishing Day at Mooney's Pond

May long weekend is Free Family Fishing weekend on PEI. Angling licenses are not required, but you must abide by all regular fishing rules and regulations. MRMC's Family Fishing Day was held on May 17th, 2025. There was a BBQ sponsored by the Morell Consumers Coop, and lots of amazing prizes given away thanks to the PEI Department of Forests, Fish & Wildlife, Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited Canada, and the Atlantic Salmon Federation.

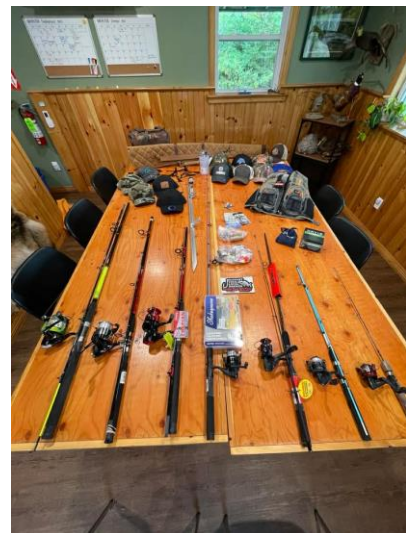
Go!East Partnership Events

The Eastern Region Sport and Recreation Council (Go!East PEI) and MRMC co-host several annual events at Mooney's Pond. Each event encourages people to get outside and get active by incorporating a 1.9km hike around Peggy's Trail. In October, we hosted the very popular *Great Pumpkin Walk*, and in February we held a *Come Try Snowshoeing* event. We look forward to hosting more events with Go!East this season!



Bowen Collins Memorial Fishing Derby

The bi-annual Bowen Collins Memorial Fly Fishing derby was held September 6th to 13th 2025. There were adult and youth categories, and prizes were awarded for the top three biggest Striped Bass and biggest Brook Trout caught. On Saturday, September 13th we ended the derby with a Fly Tying and Casting Workshop at Mooney's Pond with a BBQ and amazing door prizes from our generous sponsors: Eskape Anglers, Going Fishing, Bender Over Bait Shop, Three Rivers Flies, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Fly Fish PEI, Visualize Promotional Products, Delta Waterfowl and MacEwen Initiatives. We look forward to hosting this event again in 2027!



Morell River Run Festival

The Morell River Run Festival is an annual event in the Village of Morell to celebrate the community and its connection to the Morell River. MRMC participates in the festival every year. In 2025 MRMC put a float in the parade and a booth was set up with taxidermy and information on MRMC's river restoration projects at the River Run Expo.

50th Anniversary Celebration of the Morell River Conservation Zone

In June 1975, the Morell and Area Land Use Steering Committee, with the Provincial Government, successfully designated PEI's first green belt – the Morell River Conservation Zone. The green belt protects 60 meters on each side of the Morell River from development of any kind, which protects and conserves the river for present and future generations to enjoy.

On Sunday, July 20th, MRMC celebrated the 50th Anniversary at Rossiter Park. A large red oak tree was planted in recognition of the members of the 1975 steering committee.



Communications

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

The MRMC website provides information about our organization, funding partners, projects, and links to additional environmental resources. PDF versions of MRMC's Annual Reports can be found on the website.

www.morellriverpei.com

Educational Outreach

MRMC hosted several educational field trips in 2025. Examples of field trips include a guided nature walk at Mooney's Pond, a tree planting day, or a visit to Leard's Fish Trap in the fall. Reach out to the Watershed Coordinator if you would like to plan a field trip with a community group or class!



Mooney's Pond Interpretive Centre & Nature Trail

MRMC continues to operate and maintain Mooney's Pond Interpretive Centre, Peggy's Trail, and Anderson's Accessible Angling Pool. Maintenance of the trail is completed year-round. In 2025, several repairs were made to the lookouts and bridges. September and October continue to be the busiest time of year for visitors, with nearly 10,000 people recorded on our trail counter in fall 2025.



Partners

MRMC's projects and events would not be possible without the support of our partners, event sponsors, and funding programs. Many thanks to our supporters!

Abegweit Conservation Society - partnership with the Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration Fund

Atlantic Salmon Federation

Bender Over Bait Shop

Canada Summer Jobs Program

Community Foundation of PEI - Wildlife Conservation Fund

Dalhousie University - partnership with the Canada Nature Fund for Species at Risk

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Delta Waterfowl

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Eastern Region Sport and Recreation Council

Eskape Anglers

Fly Fish PEI

Foundation for the Conservation of Atlantic Salmon

Going Fishing

Island Nature Trust - partnership with the Community Nominated Priority Places Fund

Jobs for Youth Program

MacBeth's Farm Stand

MacEwen Initiatives

Morell Consumers Co-op

PEI Department of Environment, Water & Climate Change

PEI Department of Transportation, Infrastructure & Energy

PEI Invasive Species Council

PEI Mussel King

PEI Watershed Alliance

PEI Watershed Management Fund

Skills PEI Post Secondary Program

Three Rivers Flies

University of Prince Edward Island

Visualize Promotional Products

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

2026 Work Plan

Projects

Thermal refuge enhancement on the Morell River
Beaver and barrier management in all watersheds
Annual maintenance of Bowen's wood duck boxes
Shoreline Cleanup of St. Peter's Bay
Installation and maintenance of fishing location garbage bins
Tree planting – east branch of the Morell River
Trail expansion and upgrades at Mooney's Pond
Bat, Smooth Greensnake & River Otter monitoring

Surveys and Monitoring

Temperature monitoring - data loggers and drone surveys
Dissolved oxygen monitoring on Morell River
Rapid Geomorphic Assessments
Redd surveys
Electrofishing index sites
Sediment monitoring
Fish trap count and broodstock collection

Community Outreach and Events

Events with Eastern Region Sport and Recreation Council
Family Fishing Day at Mooney's Pond
Salmon are our Friends Days at Mooney's Pond
Morell River Run Festival
Educational field trips

Contact Information

Hannah Murnaghan, Watershed Coordinator

Cell phone: 902-583-3144

Email: coordinator@morellriverpei.com

Doug MacEwen, Board of Directors President

Email: douglasmacewen@gmail.com

Office Address:

Morell River Management Cooperative

2720 Mount Stewart Road, Route 22

Peakes, PE, COA1T0

