



LIGHT LINES

WINTER 1997/98 Volume 9, Number 1

10 YEARS!

By John Kendell

This is CRAA's tenth year of actively working to rehabilitate the Credit River. Over the past ten years CRAA has seen many changes and some fantastic changes in the fishery. As this year approaches the early results from electro-fishing prove CRAA's work on the Credit River has had a tremendous effect on improving the steelhead fishery of the Credit River. Electro-fishing results prove that CRAA's aggressive work to improve steelhead reproduction through adult transfers and our up-welling box since 1995 have been a resounding success! In Silver Creek, a major cool water tributary of the Credit River the numbers of juvenile steelhead have increased many times (up to 3000%) since CRAA began our new initiatives. Over the years CRAA has succeeded in many endeavors and as time passes we take on more and larger projects due to more dedicated volunteers!

It all started in 1989 when a small group of anglers joined together to keep Erindale Park open to angling. In a matter of months over 100 anglers joined the club and CRAA was born. We began to operate the fish ladder at the Streetsville Dam on behalf of the MNR in 1991. This has since become our most important annual project. With thousands of hours of volunteer work CRAA has made the fish ladder into a very productive fishway that we expect will have a key role in improving the Credit's steelhead population.

In 1991 CRAA placed thirty large boulders in Erindale Park to create more fishing opportunities

and habitat. In 1992 a few more boulders were placed. We also constructed an up-welling box but were unable to use it until recently due to the stocking cap on Lake Ontario. In 1994 CRAA hatched about 20,000 steelhead from our box, but this past year (1997) we hatched 250,000! Currently the box is loaded with 50,000 Atlantic salmon fry that we hatched from eggs provided by the MNR. In April we plan to fill the box with 500,000 steelhead eggs, all to be hatched and released into the Credit River.



CRAA volunteers with two wild steelhead at the fish ladder during egg collection (April, 1997)

Over the years CRAA has also planted thousands of trees, erected cattle fencing, cattle crossings, done creel surveys, completed electro-fishing research, transferred hundreds of adults rainbows by trailer, tagged adult steelhead, completed construction at the Streetsville fish ladder, organized fishing

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Credit River Anglers Association **LIGHT LINES**

Contributions are welcome from
all members and non-members alike.

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or suggestions to:

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Mike Wiedemann and Mike Tost

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10 YEARS *Continued*

tournaments, assisted at kids fishing days, held club picnics and completed numerous river rehabilitation work.

At the present time we have more major projects planned than ever before. Perhaps the most important of all is the updating of the management plan which prevented steelhead from reaching suitable spawning water for the past ten years. Further in the newsletter there is a list of our major projects and the last page has a list of our work days. If you would like to help, and we really do need your help, even for a few hours, please call the CRAA hotline (905) 608-0169 and leave us a message.

Here's looking forward to a bright future with lots of steelhead (and maybe some Atlantic salmon too!).

MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Management Plan meetings are just getting underway this year, after a delay over the fall for data collection. CRAA has been hammering hard at the MNR to get the proceedings started so we can have the plan completed by the end of 1998.

CRAA will be working with the MNR, CVC, Izaak Walton, TU and other concerned groups to ensure the new management plan recognizes the value of all the fisheries and the thousands of hours of volunteer work that have gone into making the fishery as good as it is.

CRAA's goal is to have the management of steelhead reversed to what it was prior to 1989 when the steelhead were allowed up to the electro-barrier as well as Silver and Black Creeks below the existing barriers (Stewarttown and the escarpment). Our success along with future modifications to the Norval Dam will ensure the steelhead can reproduce entirely on their own with the population potentially tripling to over 30,000 wild fish!

TAKE A GANDER

By Aaron Bodiam

This summer I had an opportunity to head east to fish the beautiful waters of Newfoundland. The trip was three days of fly fishing for trophy Atlantic salmon and brook trout. To accompany me on this trip was my fishing buddy, Grant McGhie.

Grant and I left Toronto on Monday and flew directly to Gander where we were met by a representative from the lodge, Gander River Outfitters. The weather was cool, overcast and windy, but I hear it is always like that in Gander. I figured it was because I went to fly fish!

On Tuesday morning we had a fantastic breakfast that we choked down in order to go fishing sooner. After all, I went to this lodge to catch fish, not eat eggs and bacon. As we were preparing for the first outing, sliding on my Bear waders the guide gave Grant and I the once over. He grinned and said 'ya know, these fish ain't easy to catch. They call them the fish of a thousand casts'. Grant and I looked at each other and laughed, NO PROBLEM!

The Gander River is big, a lot bigger than the Credit, my home river. However with the guides experience we zipped through fast water and arrived at the first pool. After three hours of wading a bomber through the pool Grant became a little board. He went down the river a little farther and boom, was into a 4 lb speck. The guide went to his aid while I questioned why I was still wading the fly for the 999th time. On the next cast I was jealously looking down river when I heard a splash. I looked out to see a wake where my fly had been. With a strong hook-set my fly was set deep into the cedar tree behind me. After a bit of swearing I made the next cast. This time I watched so intently as my bomber waded towards the bank. Meanwhile Grant was into another big speck, but I was not leaving.

Sometime later my sight was going blurry from watching the fly but I was steadfast in my drift.

Finally, it paid off in a big chrome way. The salmon hammered the fly of the surface in a violent manner I will never forget. Before I could do a hook set the fish was out of the water three times and 50 yards past Grant. The fish was a chrome female about 10 pounds that was fresh from the Ocean. After the guide netted the fish he congratulated me as we released the beauty.

For the rest of the day Grant was intent on catching a chromer too. Meanwhile I opted for some of those big specks. By the end of the three days my shoulder was in pain but it was worth it. There were no fifty fish days, but I did manage to land 3 Atlantics and Grant landed two. All the fish were between 8 and 16 pounds.

If you are thinking about going save your money and do it. The fishing is exciting and the cost is very reasonable for a trip of this caliber. We paid about \$2,000.00 each for everything including airfare. You need a good 8 to 10 weight rod, matched fly line and extra leader. Don't bring your roe, it is not allowed! The best time is July and August for Newfoundland rivers so plan accordingly. Good Luck!

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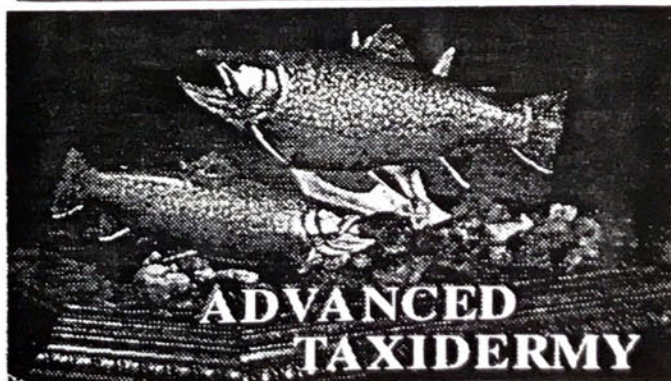
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WHAT'S UP FOR 1998

By John Kendell

Every year CRAA takes on and accomplishes more than ever before. This past year we completed the construction at the fish Streetsville fish ladder and it has so far been a resounding success. We also hatched and released 250,000 steelhead and 19,000 Atlantic salmon. We also have over four hundred trees in our nursery and have the pots to do another 1000 this March/April. We also completed a major temperature survey and have planned a whole lot more for 1998! This is no small task. **We have done a hell of a lot** and our work is really starting to pay off. Juvenile counts are **WAY** up, fishing is better (even with a dry fall), and the **future is looking bright!**

Fish Ladder

Regular operation while we collect eggs and physical information. We have not ascertained whether we will tag or not this year. However, the egg collection requirements suggest we must lift 1000 fish to collect enough eggs because many of the females are not ripe at the ladder.

Up-welling Box

The box is running better than we hoped and dreamed. With the water source and Mikes dedicated and hard work the box should be a resounding success. We're going to need lots of help to hatch and release all these fish. We hope to collect and hatch 500,000 steelhead this spring from April to June and this is no small task. Hope to see you there.

Atlantic Salmon

Preliminary results are exciting. We have 35,000 fry as of now with another 8,000 eggs to hatch in April. If all goes well we should have some three inch Atlantics to release in May which will give them an excellent chance at survival! We're going to need lots of volunteers to let these little guys go so be

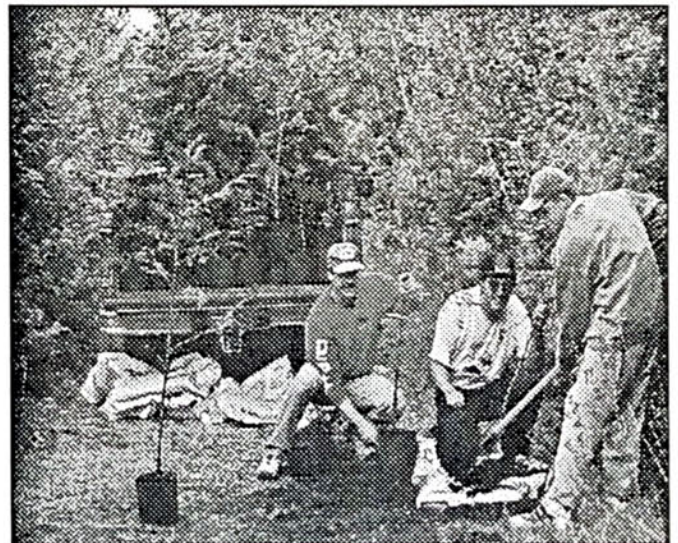
prepared.

Nursery

As mentioned above, the nursery is doing well. We have about 200 6 foot cedar trees at Terra Cotta and 200 willow trees in Mississauga. This March we plan to collect two to three thousand willows and poplars now we have learned a little more on how to root the cuttings. This takes a little time, but if you can spare an afternoon in March let us know.

Tree Plantings (Reforestation)

In 1997 CRAA completed a reforestation plan for the banks of the Credit River between Inglewood and Norval. There are sections 1 km long with no trees to shade the river, as a result water temperatures sky rocket. We hope to have a summer work crew of 3 students for the reforestation work, however, we have planned three major plantings for volunteer involvement. We have also submitted a number of funding applications to purchase trees from nurseries to meet our plans.



Mike, Mike, and Aaron potting cedar trees near Orangeville (May, 1997)

WHAT'S UP FOR 1998 *Continued*

River Narrowing Project

This is an exciting project that could prove to be extremely beneficial to salmonids. Since the Credit Valley was deforested 200 years ago the river has become much wider and shallower. The result is shallow rapids with no deep pools and eroding banks. The river is wider and heats up much easier and the trees cannot shade it enough. The plan is to construct a number of points, vortex weirs, deflectors and stabilizers with large rock and wood debris. We have also applied for funding to purchase the rock and complete follow up survey studies.

Bottom Draw Project

This is something we have wanted to do for some time. There are a number of ponds on small spring fed tributaries that enter the Credit River near Terra Cotta. Often the surface drainage from these ponds is extremely warm (up to 32 C). It is hoped that this will lower water temperatures and create cold water refuge and inputs into the Credit River near Terra Cotta.

Boulder Placement

This is again a project that we have wanted to do, but it is not the top priority. We have put together a funding proposal for this project too, so let's hope we get the money. The problem is it takes a lot of money for this and the benefits are not as productive as working to create more fish.

River Watch Program

Mike Wiedemann has been working on this program for the past few months and hopes to have it ready to go by March, 1998. We have designed a flyer to hand out to anglers to educate them about the fishery and the regulations. We have also been working with the Conservation Officers on dealing with poachers and snaggers. We are also trying to get the OPP and Peel Police involved to patrol the area and lay charges. **POACHERS BETTER WATCH OUT!**

We have a lot planned so post the work days on all your calendars and come on out. **Only you can make your fishing better. If everyone put in just one day to help we could accomplish more than anyone every imagined.**

THANKS SHELL CANADA

This past summer CRAA applied for funding to Shell for the construction at the fish ladder. The funding was approved and recently CRAA was reimbursed for our expenses at the ladder. Shell Canada donated \$500.00 to the cost of the project which paid for the back hoe for the day we used it. There is an outstanding CFIP application that if approved will allow us to fence the area off and purchase new I-beams for the ladder.

For the 1998 year CRAA has a number of funding applications that will be sent into Shell. Let's hope

that they will be able to support CRAA's new projects as they have in the past. Shell also donated \$410.00 to CRAA in 1992 for the purchase of tools such as shovels and pitch forks for tree plantings. These tools have been well used and continue to serve CRAA well.

Thank-you Shell.

STREETSVILLE FISH LADDER

CONSTRUCTION IS FINALLY COMPLETED

By John Kendell

The operation and maintenance of the Streetsville Fish Ladder has been CRAA's key concern for the past seven years. It is the only bypass around the Streetsville Dam which blocks the migration of salmon and trout. For this reason CRAA has focused thousands of hours of volunteer work and a few thousand dollars to ensure its successful operation.

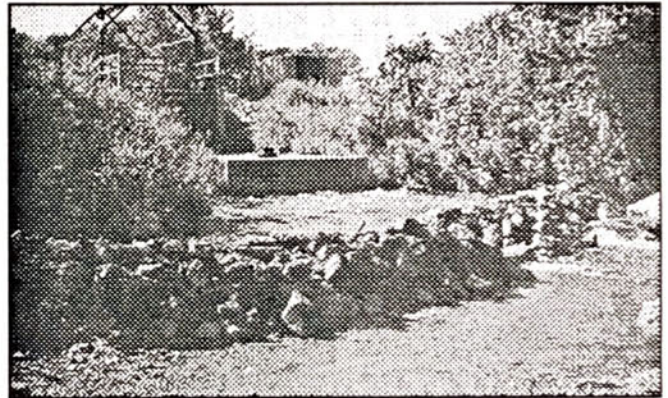
Over the past seven years CRAA has operated the ladder we have seen numerous changes by us, the MNR and mother nature. As most of you know, the ladder was not built close enough to the dam so it has never attracted fish very well.



CRAA volunteers digging the new channel by hand (September, 1997)

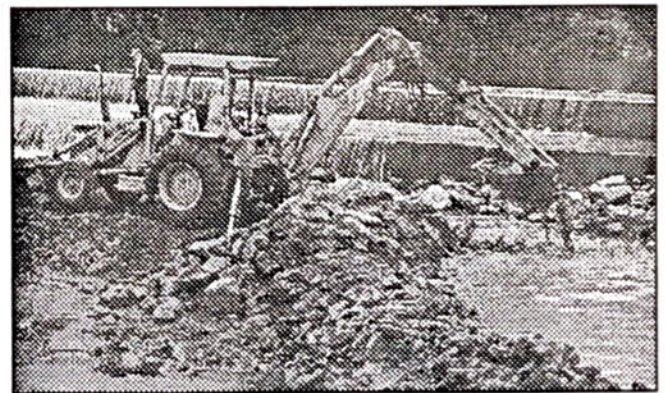
In 1994 CRAA altered the outflow and had a good improvement in success, lifting more than 1000 steelhead that spring, nearly twice the previous record. In the spring of 1995 an estimated 3500 fish used the ladder after further modifications by CRAA. The MNR had a plan to fill in the plunge pool in the fall of 1995 and it sounded good. They spent over \$75,000 and filled the plunge pool with rock and made repairs to the dam. The next spring the river dug out much of the plunge pool again but the ladder still worked fairly well (we lifted 1000

steelhead in 1996). The MNR made further modifications to the area in the summer of 1996 and mother nature whipped out all the work that had been done in the spring flood of 1997. When the water dropped we discovered a gravel bar burying the fish ladder entrance with enough sand and gravel to fill 20 dump trucks. We did all we could but the spring fish lift was dismal. This is what prompted the construction by CRAA this past fall.



New channel wall built by hand (Sept, 1997)

CRAA always wanted the fish ladder to enter the plunge pool directly and it took months of negotiating, surveying and meetings with the MNR to get the OK. In fact, the Okay was not received



Back hoe excavating the new channel (Sept, 97)

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STREETSVILLE FISH LADDER *Continued*

until late August. With our machinery unavailable most of you know we went to work with shovels and picks with some amazing results (and a lot of sore backs). The pictures show the incredible accomplishment that 14 volunteers can do over a weekend.



Volunteers stabilizing the bank of the new fishway channel (Sept, 1997)

The next week we were able to hire a back hoe to finish. The back hoe arrived at 8 AM and started work immediately. Meanwhile CRAA volunteers began to arrive. There was still a lot of work to complete by hand. We had to reinforce the dam with large rocks and construct a rip rap rock wall to prevent erosion of the banks of the new channel. There was also some rock that had to be moved by hand on the other side of the river. Once the

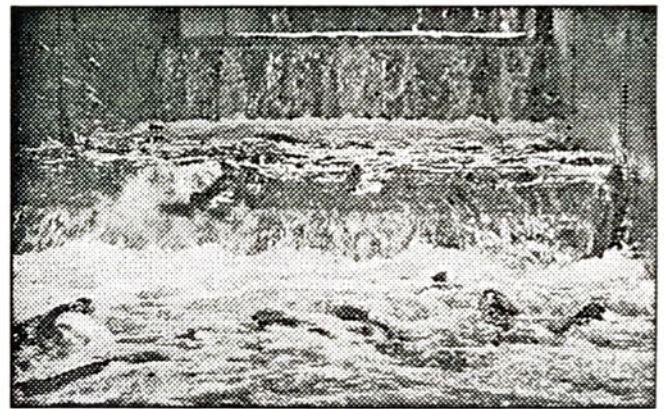


How is that for success! (Sept, 1997)

channel was excavated CRAA members moved in with silt cloth, T bars and rock.

So, after all this hard work the question is; will the fish ladder work better? We had confidence that it would, but mother nature surprised us. Preliminary results are **fantastic**. Within minutes of opening the fish ladder the channel and the ladder were filled with thousands of chinook salmon. In the picture below you can see the back hoe still working to re-enforce the back of the wall while thousands of salmon (and a few chrome September steelhead) filled the new fish ladder channel. With the incredible success of the new channel we were able to plan our next modification to the fish ladder.

In the next picture you can see the fish easily jumping the first jump but the next jump in the ladder slowed a lot of fish down. What we have designed and tested to solve this problem is the construction of new stop logs to make more jumps



Hundreds of salmon in the ladder (Sept, 1997)

in the ladder. After some trial and error this fall we have built stop logs that can withstand the water flow. The 2 new jumps we have created (removable) allow the fish to quickly and easily pass through the ladder over 6 inch jumps, rather than 24 inch jumps. Lets hope mother nature likes the job we did this winter!

Unfortunately we had to close the ladder just after this photo was taken because the MNR does not allow Pacific salmon past the Streetsville Dam.

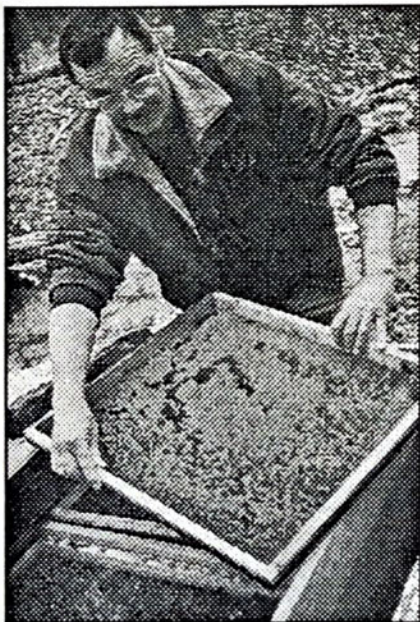
UP-WELLING BOX

By Mike Tost

Another winter is quickly passing by and our Atlantic salmon are doing well. After the successful move from Terra Cotta (which is still dry) to the new site on member Bob Wolf's property the box is running perfectly.

After some ingenuity and a little hard work seven CRAA volunteers moved the box and set it up. We have placed it in the middle of the upper pond on Bob's property to minimize any vandalism. It's also convenient being thirty seconds from my house, at least my wife knows where I am now.

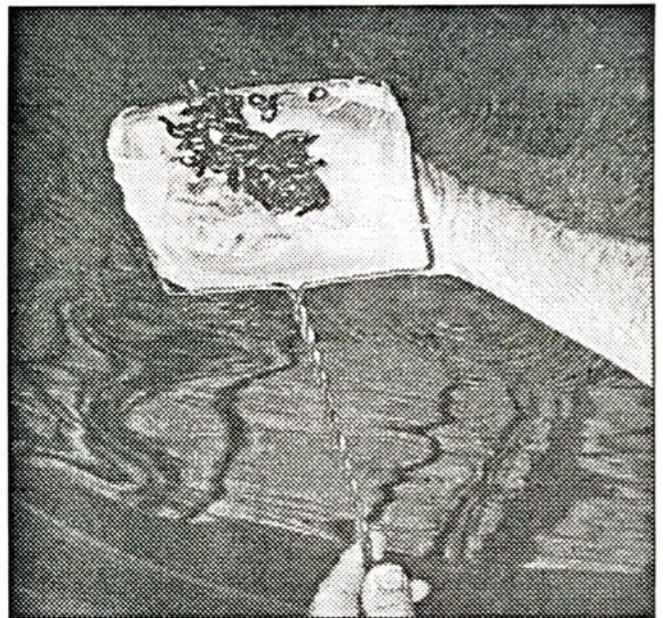
The water source is a spring that Bob has piped underground from its source to the pond. All we had to do is find the correct fitting and plug our 4" pipe into the existing pipe. John, Aaron, Grant and I fastened the pipe with T-bars and wire to keep it from moving. A few nights later Bob and I set up the aerating pipe, a 3" pipe with dozens of small holes drilled in it. The water now flows around the pipe and squirts into the upper chamber of the box.



Mike with 10,000 steelhead eggs in the box, May, 1997.

I took the water temperature and was excited to see it around 47 F (8 C). However John set up one of the clubs temperature loggers and surprised me. The water is actually 51 F (10.5 C). That explains why the Atlantic eggs hatched within days of receiving them.

We built a small up-welling box from the old silt box and placed about 8,000 eggs in it. The MNR wanted some eggs to be held in cold water so we set up on the outflow from one of the lower ponds. It's hard to believe that those eggs were from the same group as the other 35,000 that have hatched in the main box. The cold water eggs have not moved and probably won't hatch until April.



A few hundred Atlantic salmon fry on thier way to be released (May, 1997)

The exciting news is this coming spring with the steelhead. We are planning to hatch 500,000, that's right, half a million steelhead fry in the box this year. We're going to need a lot of help with collecting the eggs, picking dead eggs and of course, releasing the little critters. Even if you can spare a couple of hours you should come out and take a look. Seeing these small fish develop and grow is an incredible sight that should not be missed. Last year we had twenty six people out to release the steelhead fry. This year with twice as many fish were going to need a lot more help. Just remember, in three years these little critters will be big chromers and I'll be looking forward to meeting them again.

SPRING FISHING SHOW

Volunteers needed!

The Spring Fishing Show is coming up soon and we need some volunteers to help in the kids fishing section. The show runs from February 13th to 15th, 1998 at the International Centre. Aaron Bodiam will be organizing the volunteers and the schedules as he has for the past two years. If you would like to help out call the CRAA hotline (905) 608-0169 and let us know. All volunteers receive free admission to the show. All we need is a few hours in the CRAA booth and a few hours in the kids fishing area.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It's very important

The fishing show is also a great opportunity for members to buy crests, pins and renew membership. Without the membership money we would not be able to do the mailings, operate the hotline (which receives an average of 50 calls every week), operate the fish ladder, raise steelhead and Atlantic salmon and **fight to keep the river open to angling**. Without a strong membership the fishing would be greatly diminished. To protect the fishing and to help us improve it I urge you to renew or join and get your friends involved. **Your support will ensure better steelheading tomorrow.**

CRAA CONSERVATION RAFFLE

This spring CRAA will hold a conservation raffle to raise funds so we can complete the project we have planned this year. Although we have submitted funding applications to CFIP, Shell Canada, Canada Trust, Action 21 and others, every project may not be funded completely. With the funds CRAA is hoping to raise from the raffle and other fund-raises we will be able to cover costs not covered by the corporations.

We need your help and support to ensure we raise enough money so please do your part. As CRAA members we encourage you to purchase some tickets and if you can, take some to your office and sell some for the club. The prizes are excellent and should appeal to most people. If you can sell tickets

at work please contact us over the hotline or at one of the events.

Prizes: Golf Clubs (Arnold Palmer 1, 3, 5 woods), Talon 10.5' Presentation Series float rod, custom tied and named donated by D+M Rods, Signed, framed limited edition print "steelhead" ?/200, Shimano spinning reel donated by Angling Specialties (Mississauga), and a matted and framed picture (Walleye). The total value of prizes is \$1175.00.

The Raffle will run from February 13th to June 26th, 1998. See you at the fishing show.

EXECUTIVE OPENING

Jack Gibbons who has been treasurer for the past three years is looking to retire. If you would like to take over we could use the help. The treasurer job is simply keeping track of receipts and doing a financial statement at the end of the year. The job

only takes a little bit of time. Call the CRAA hotline or let us know at an up-coming event so we can put you on the ballot for the Annual General Meeting in April.

CRAA 1998 SUMMER PROJECTS

Date	Project Details
Jan-May	Monitor Atlantic salmon eggs and fry in up-welling box
February 13-15	Spring Fishing Show Volunteers are needed to help with the kids fishing area and the CRAA booth.
March 7, 14	Tree cutting and collection Volunteers will take cuttings from various trees and pot them for the CRAA nursery and our tree plantings for the 1998 season. We will also collect more cedar trees for our future tree planting needs.
March 20 to April 20	Fish Ladder Operation for steelhead CRAA will operate the fish ladder during peak times to collect steelhead eggs for the up-welling box. Our target for this year is 500,000 fry to be released in the summer. Volunteers will also collect physical information from the fish and we hope to continue tagging.
April 1 st to June 30	Up-welling box operation for steelhead CRAA volunteers will monitor the up-welling box daily to ensure smooth operation. Dead eggs must be removed daily and for the amount of eggs we plan to hatch there will be a lot of work.
April 11 th	Tree planting on Black Creek CRAA will plant cedars, willows and poplars in the field above the Stewarttown Dam to shade the river. Meet at Stewarttown, 8:30 am
April 18 th	Tree Planting with Councillor Culham CRAA will join Mississauga Councillor Culham to plant trees in Erindale Park. Meet at the upper Dundas parking lot at 8:45 am.
April 19 th	Steelhead spawning survey Volunteers will attempt to locate any spawning steelhead above the Norval Dam. Meet at the up-welling box at 9:00 am.
May 23	Atlantic Salmon release day. CRAA volunteers will release our Atlantic salmon fry into the Credit River. We need lots of help to spread the fry over the entire stocking area. Meet at the up-welling box at 9:00 am.
May 23 th	CRAA tree planting Trees will be planted at one of our sites near Glen Williams. Bring your shovels.
June 13,14 20,21,27, 28	Steelhead fry release days. We will need a lot of help to release 500,000 steelhead fry. There are over 35 km of river and we would like to release the fry into the entire section that they are allowed into to maximize survival. Some crews will release fish from boats while others will release them by hand walking the rivers. Meet each day at the up-welling box at 8:30 am. Bring waders and coolers.
July 5 th	Urban Fishing Days Volunteers will help the youngsters catch some fish at Lake Aquitaine in Meadowvale. Meet at the Lake Aquitaine dock at 8:30 am.
July 11	Bottom Draw Conversion Project CRAA will convert a number of on line ponds to bottom draw to lower water temperatures of small inflowing tributaries of the Credit River.
August 15 and 16	Norval Site River Rehabilitation Project Volunteers will work to create more habitat and holding pools below Norval.

Call the CRAA hotline for more information (905) 608-0169