



LIGHT LINES

SPRING 1998

Volume 9, Number 2

\$10,000 DONATION TO CRAA

The **Toronto Star Salmon Hunt**, in conjunction with the **Toronto Sportsmen Show** donated **\$10,000.00 to CRAA** this spring to support our work.

The Salmon Hunt has developed a philosophy of putting profits back into the conservation of our waters and our great fishery. We received the grant due to our extensive work on rehabilitation of the Credit River and our up-welling box operations and the positive influence our work has on the Lake Ontario fishing.

CRAA's work is beneficial to tens of thousands of anglers who fish from Charter boats, from piers and shorelines, trollers, river anglers, fly fishers and more.

This money will enable CRAA to complete many major projects including the boulder placement, the pool rehabilitation project planed for Erindale Park, our reforestation project, improving access and habitat for all salmon and trout and our up-welling box operations.

CFIP Comes Through With \$\$

CRAA applied for approximately \$5,000 in funding for all our 1998 projects. The great news is they have all received funding in full, with the exception of one project which will receive 80% of the requested amount.

Our many thanks to the Aurora MNR District and

area Biologist Paul Savioe for their assistance. New personnel and a willingness to work together have put CRAA and the MNR on course to ensure the Credit River becomes all it can be!

CRAA Fund-raising

CRAA has a number of major projects that will provide an additional financial boost to our many projects. Approximately half of all membership money is put towards our many projects while the other half covers mailings. The Spring Raffle is well under way and has already netted CRAA close to \$1,000.00. I urge all members to not only purchase a few tickets, but to take a booklet to work and sell them to support our work. You will be able to pick up a booklet at any event including the fish ladder and the Annual General Meeting.

CRAA has also approached the city of Mississauga to request permission to take over charging boaters and anglers at the Port Credit Launch Ramp. If the City Council approves the request CRAA will hire six summer students to collect launching fees from all boaters from July 9 to September 7. This project will not only cover the salary of the students, which will also be working for us to plant trees and on conservation days, but the profits will be put into CRAA's river rehabilitation projects. We have met with the city officials a number of times and they are behind the project, so it is a matter of passing it through council this spring.

Credit River Anglers Association LIGHT LINES

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

Send your articles, messages
or suggestions to:

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Or call the CRAA 24 hr hotline at:
(905) 608-0169

Contributions by John Kendell, Aaron Bodiam
Mike Wiedemann and Mike Tost

CRAA Executive

President	John Kendell
Vice President	Mike Wiedemann
Treasurer	Jack Gibbons
Secretary	Paula Carrasco
Membership	Jurgen Richter
Volunteer Cord'tor	Aaron Bodiam
Fish Rearing	Mike Tost

Commercial advertising rates:
1/16 page - \$20.00, 1/8 page - \$30.00
1/4 page - \$50.00, 1/2 page - \$80.00

Newsletter production. 300

CALLING VOLUNTEERS

We now have over 50% of our membership listed on our active volunteer list. If you're a member and would like to help at one of our many conservation days or the fish ladder please call the hotline or just come out to one of the workdays.

Our volunteer coordinator (Aaron Bodiam) tries to call everyone on the list, but cannot reach you all the time. Don't wait to hear from us, just show up with all your friends at the set times.



The many projects we have planned are fun and the work we accomplish is rewarding, both at the time and later on when we catch more fish.

It took 20 volunteers over 600 hours to complete the work at the fish ladder last fall, and there was six years of experience that led to the designs which we surveyed and drew. The results of our hard work have meant over 90% of the steelhead reaching the Streetsville Dam have passed the ladder quickly and easily.

Make sure you post the conservation days on your calender and call all your friends out to help. The more people who pitch in the more we can accomplish in less time!

Don't forget, we also provide cold refreshments and lunch at all major work days! Don't be left on the river banks, be a part of the action!

CRAA Annual General Meeting

April 15, 1998 at 7:00 PM

The Agenda:

- Discuss the management plan and how our work is progressing. **If you want to ensure steelhead have a future in the Credit River you better attend.**
- Look at our big projects for 1998 and input ideas for 1999 work. How you can get involved.
- If you're a student and would like to work for CRAA you should also attend. CRAA will hire between 2 and 10 students this summer depending on approval of funding and project applications.
- We will choose a new crest and display new clothing like golf shirts, new hats, sweat shirts and more that are available to club members at reduced prices.
- Discuss the river watch program
- Review CRAA's 1997 budget and 1998 projected budget
- See our baby Atlantic salmon on display
- Voice your ideas
- Annual election for CRAA executive

GUEST SPEAKER : Ian Duffield from Talon Rods, rod building and options

VIDEO of underwater fishing and CRAA's projects by Rick Matusiak

April 15, 1998

7:00 PM to 9:30 PM

Credit Valley Conservation Office

1255 Old Derry Road West

Free refreshments and snacks - Raffle tickets available

Make sure you are apart of the future of CRAA. Your attendance and ideas will ensure a successful future for all our work.

We must be united to ensure steelhead and all trout and salmon have a fair chance to reproduce in the Credit River.

Don't loose the steelhead fishery like we almost did in 1988, just before CRAA was established. As anglers we must unite to save our fishery!

FISH LADDER SUCCESS

GREAT NEWS!

This is what we've all been waiting for! We've set a new record for steelhead passing through the ladder this spring and the number climbs daily!

The Streetsville Fish ladder is working incredible well. We've had the ladder set on swim through since March 23, 1998 (as well as March 6 to 13, 1998 and November 1 to January 3). We have completed timed estimates of the number of steelhead passing the ladder and have manually lifted fish over the past few weeks to collect eggs and tag fish.

In 1995 we set a record with an estimated 3,000 steelhead using the fish ladder. As of today, April 2, 1998 we estimate 4,400 steelhead have passed the ladder over the past month (mostly the past 10 days) with an additional 500 last fall. We also estimate 500 steelhead passed the dam on their own last fall and another 500 have passed to date.

We visit the ladder five times a day to take counts and for the past three days have only seen a few fish jumping at the dam, while the fish ladder was passing a fish every few minutes! For the first time ever we have had more steelhead jumping at the fish ladder than at the dam!

I visited Norval yesterday and lost count after 1,000 jumps in less than 30 minutes! Many of the fish had our new tags, some of which had the new red tags which we used three days before, meaning these fish swam all the way to Norval in 3 days! Unfortunately, the fish jumping at Norval have no chance with the fast water and a seven foot jump. The fish were being slammed by the extremely fast water when they landed, often boiling up 40 feet below where they jumped from. Steelhead are not allowed past the Norval dam (and the fish ladder is closed by the MNR) until the management plan is changed to allow steelhead past the dam as they once were, between 1976 and 1990! Make sure you fill out the survey and send it back to us if you want more steelhead in the Credit River!

It seems there are few steelhead left below Streetsville with the new fish ladder, but there is still another run to come in. Steelhead have begun spawning in many rivers so expect good drop back fishing this year, but if May is hot (as in weather) the steelhead will disappear quickly and not provide an incredible drop back fishery like last year.

It's very exciting for us to see all our work and planning pay off so well. The fish ladder at Streetsville is working much better than we hoped. Now we will focus on Norval once the management plan is changed! The \$10,000 grant from the Toronto Star Salmon Hunt may be put partly towards a new fish ladder at Norval once the steelhead are allowed past the dam!

Keep posted to the hotline for the next lift. Since most steelhead have already past the fish ladder we will have to wait for another run for manual lifts!

LIMITED EDITION PRINTS

CRAA has found a gallery wholesaler that will supply us with limited edition prints to use as fund raisers.

We will feature two of the prints at the Annual General Meeting, both by artist Mark Susinno. The prints are a steelhead and a brown trout, both from the 'Matching the Hatch' series. All prints are signed by the artist and numbered, with a limited edition of 950 each. There are 13 limited edition prints by the artist that are available, including muskie, bass, brook trout, rainbow trout, brown trout, walleye and tarpon.

The prints will be available to CRAA members for \$100.00 to \$120.00 each (unframed) or \$200.00 to \$230.00 (framed and single matted). The regular retail for the prints is \$150.00 to \$200.00 unframed and \$400.00 to \$500.00 framed. This is an excellent deal that should not be passed on.

CRAA NURSERY GROWING

On March 7, 1998, 12 CRAA members met to collect willow cuttings for rooting. We collected approximately 4,000 willow cuttings up to seven feet tall. Virtually all have rooted and begun to grow. They will be potted at the fish ladder and transferred to Terra Cotta with the rest of CRAA's trees for holding until future tree plantings.

During the month of April we will also collect large cedar trees and pot them for summer planting. If you have time or expertise with planting come on out.

We are planning to plant over 15,000 trees this year, so there is a lot of work ahead. Lets hope we get the funding for the summer students so they can complete much of the work.

MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

By John Kendell

Since the last newsletter two steering committee meetings have occurred, attended by myself and Mike Tost. The MNR has set a goal of completing the new plan by February, 1999 which is very good considering there will be 2 public consultation meetings, set for June and November.

As a member of the steering committee CRAA will assist with other groups in making decisions and choosing a list of options for the public based on information from the MNR and the technical committee.

The groups involved in the steering committee are: CRAA, Izaak Walton Fly Fishers, Trout Unlimited, CVC, MNR, Federation of Naturalists, Ontario Streams and the Ontario Bait Association.

CRAA will be representing river anglers from all

MEMBERSHIP RISING

As many of you already know, CRAA is getting bigger. We have signed up 20 new members since February 1998 and picked up many renewals. Things are looking GREAT!

We must have a large and strong membership to ensure a strong future for fishing in the Credit River. There are many special interest groups that would take your fishing away, so we must stand united. There are other angling interest groups, developers, politicians, animal rights activists, anti-fishing groups, property owners and more who don't like steelhead or us fishing for them. Protect your rights by standing together with CRAA! Get your friends involved. The larger our membership the greater power we have to protect and improve the fishery. **It only cost's \$25.00 to be a member.**

sides, with an emphases on steelhead and Atlantic salmon, as well as representing shore and boat anglers. Since all our fish are born in the river and spend part of their life in the lake we have a very big group to represent. CRAA will ensure that steelhead do not get shafted in the new plan, as they did in 1989!

When the public consultation meetings arrive I hope every member and ALL their friends will be out to make their case for steelhead and all salmon and trout in the Credit River. If we do not have a strong showing of steelheaders and salmon fisherman we may loose our fishery. **DON'T LET IT HAPPEN.** Stay posted to this column for the upcoming open houses!

1998 CRAA CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Some dates and projects have been changed. Please update your calender.

Date Project Details

Mar-May	Monitor and feed Atlantic salmon fry
March 20 to April 20	Fish Ladder Operation for steelhead We will operate the ladder to collect 250,000 steelhead eggs and to tag, weigh and measure. Meet at the fish ladder at: Weekdays at 5:00 PM, Weekends 8:00 AM and all day. Bring friends.
March 9th to June 30th	Up-welling box operation for steelhead CRAA volunteers will monitor the up-welling box daily to pick dead eggs and clean egg trays. Dead eggs must be removed daily to prevent fungus. Mike Tost needs a lot of help on this one.
April 4th NEW	Tree collection (cedars, poplar, willow, aspen) We will transplant trees from selected areas into pots for our nursery for tree plantings. Meet at the fish ladder at 9:00 AM, bring waders, a shovel, boots and friends.
April 11th NEW	Tree collection (cedars, poplar, willow, aspen) We will transplant trees from selected areas into pots for our nursery for tree plantings. Meet at the fish ladder at 9:00 AM, bring waders, a shovel, boots and friends.
April 19th	Steelhead spawning survey Volunteers will map out spawning steelhead locations above the Streetsville Dam. Meet at the fish ladder at 8:00 AM. Bring boots, polarized glasses and friends.
May 9th NEW	Tree Planting with Councillor Culham CRAA volunteers will join Mississauga Councillor David Culham to plant trees in Erindale Park. Meet at the Dundas parking lot at 8:30 am. Bring a shovel and a friend or two.
May 23rd	Atlantic Salmon release day and Glen Williams Tree Planting. 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. Trees will be planted at one of our planned sites. Meet at the fish ladder to car pool at 8:00 AM. Bring waders, extra clothes a shovel and friends.
June 13th NEW	Bottom Draw Conversion Project CRAA will convert a number of on line ponds in the Glen Williams area to 'bottom draw' so the cold water in the bottom of the ponds will flow into the Credit River. Meet at the fish ladder to car pool at 8:00 AM. Bring waders.
June 14 27, 28	Steelhead fry release days. We need 20 volunteers out to help to release 250,000 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 walking the river. Meet each day at the fish ladder at 8:00 AM to car pool. Bring waders.
July 4th	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. Bring your kids to fish.
July 11 and 12 NEW	Erindale Park Pool Creation Project Volunteers will construct two large current deflectors in Erindale Park to change the river's hydraulics to dig out deep pools. The Most important project will be at the Clay Bank hole which filled in last year due to bank erosion. We need 30 volunteers to complete this work so please mark it on your calender and bring all your fishing buddies! Work will run from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM each day. Come any time! Bring your waders and meet us anytime at the clay banks.

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

Credit River Anglers Association

Member Survey for Steelhead in the Credit River

As you know, the MNR recently opened meetings for the management plan of the Credit River. CRAA has been pushing the MNR to change the management plan because steelhead got the short end of the stick in the 1989 plan.

Steelhead had access to the upper Credit River since the 1970's with a major increase in access in 1982 when fish ladders were built at Streetsville and Norval and the McCarthy Dam was taken out. On high water years large numbers of steelhead reached the upper river and had excellent success reproducing naturally. In 1989 the electro-barrier was set up to keep steelhead out of the Forks due to concerns from a small group of anglers over competition. Atlantic salmon were the big news of the time and they were given most of the upper river, thus excluding steelhead from the cold water to spawn in. The MNR stocked large numbers of steelhead (100,000 to 180,000 a year from 1976 to 1988) and have since cut stocking significantly. CRAA has always pushed for WILD, self sustaining steelhead and other fish and has had excellent success with the 1995 and 96 adult transfers. We have had to resort to the up-welling box in 1997 and 98 because the MNR will not allow adult steelhead past Norval until the new management plan is completed.

We must have your input and ideas to ensure a strong and healthy future for steelhead in the Credit River. Listed below are 4 options that have been suggested by the Izaak Walton Fly Fishing Club to their members. We have chosen the same options to compare.

Options:

1. Stop steelhead at the Streetsville Dam. This would eliminate steelhead from the Credit River unless the river was stocked. Estimated run would be 500 fish/year.
2. Stop steelhead at the Norval Dam. This is the present situation. Water temperatures are too warm in this section so steelhead have very poor success reproducing. Estimated steelhead run would be 1000 to 4000 fish/year.
3. Stop steelhead at the electro-barrier in Inglewood and the first barriers on Silver Creek, Black Creek and the East Credit. This is the option CRAA has recommended is best for all anglers. This will not influence the Forks resident fishery and will not influence brook trout above Stewarttown, upper Silver Creek and the upper East Credit. Steelhead have had incredible success in this section when they have reached it. The estimated steelhead run would be 25,000 to 40,000 adults/year.
4. Give steelhead full access to the entire river below the escarpment including the Forks. This may influence some resident fish in the Forks and other tributaries. The estimated steelhead run would be 35,000 to 45,000 adults/year.

The MNR ranks native species (brook and Atlantic) above naturalized species (steelhead and browns). Therefore brook trout are protected much more and may prevent development of areas due to their special cold water needs. There have been many scientific studies to compare

competition and some surprising results. Studies have shown that brown trout displace brook trout by competition, larger size and predation. Some studies have also suggested steelhead may influence brook trout, but many more studies have suggested steelhead do not hurt brook trout. Studies have also shown that brown trout and rainbow trout can live together with minimal effects on each other. The main reason is steelhead inhabit fast riffle water while brook trout and brown trout usually inhabit slower pools and relate more to structure.

There are many rivers where rainbows and browns or rainbows and brook trout co-exist. The point is, do we want to risk the time and effort that has been put into the Forks for brown trout and brook trout. CRAA believes the electro-barrier is a safe alternative. Why risk a small but good fishery when we don't have to. There would be plenty of steelhead under option 3.

Please choose an option and mail it back to CRAA. If you have any ideas or comments please write below. **If you want to ensure steelhead have a future in the Credit River you MUST return this survey to CRAA!** You can mail it back or return it at the Annual General Meeting.

Option _____ Name(print) _____ Signature _____

Ensure steelhead have a future in the Credit River!

Map of Credit River

