

Annual Report – April 25, 2012

New 5-Year Forestry Operating Plan

FABEC participated on the planning team for the District 4, 5, 6, and 8 Five-Year Operating Plans for Crown and Corner Brook Pulp and Paper lands. We were successful in getting the following incorporated in the Plans:

- Corner Brook Pulp and Paper agreed to (1) a 100-m no-cut buffer on Middle Brook and First Burnt Pond in the Square Pond Cutting Block. Also agreed to develop winter roads only near Pussel Pond, but if this is not possible will work with FABEC to come up with another solution to discourage vehicle access into the area.
- DNR agreed to (1) a 100-metre no-cut buffer in proposed cutting areas on west side of Terra Nova River, (2) a landscape design approach for other areas visible from the River, and (3) decommissioning of all roads to be constructed between the railway bed and the River.
- DNR agreed to (1) a 100-metre no-cut buffer on Rodney Pond, (2) decommissioning of the access road on the south side of Rodney Pond and rerouting of a long-term access road further away from Rodney Pond

Decommissioning of George's Pond Road

The George's Pond access road has been partially decommissioned as per the District 4 Operating Plan. DNR has not responded officially to our enquiry on when the remainder of the road will be decommissioned. Verbally we have been told that, due to opposition from cabin owners, a political decision will be necessary to resolve this issue.

Cottage Development Areas

FABEC made recommendations to the Land Management Division on areas that should be excluded and not excluded from cottage development. Communications are ongoing, but no official response as yet. Our recommendations included:

- Freeze cabin development on George's Pond on Terra Nova River
- Freeze cabin development upstream of Square Pond in the Middle Brook watershed.
- Consider designating the Chain Pond area in the Maccle's Brook watershed for future cabin development

Fishway Counts

Terra Nova River

09	10	11
2655	4539	5175

Middle Brook

09	10	11
1789	2509	2564

Summer Activities

- Contracted with DFO to operate salmon counting fences on Terra Nova River, Middle Brook and Salmon Brook (Glenwood)

- Employed students as river monitors for Terra Nova River. No students on Gambo rivers in 2011.
- Hope to continue and improve these activities in 2012. No answer on student applications yet.

Terra Nova River, Upper Fishway

Reconstruction of the Upper Fishway by DFO was completed last July. FABEC sent a letter concerning the security of salmon in the pool at the outlet of the Upper Fishway.

Kevin – what was answer?

Salmon Management Options - Terra Nova River

Due to the recent healthy returns on Terra Nova River, there is public interest in increasing the salmon retention limit from 2 to 4 fish. Over the past year, FABEC has conducted research and consultation in order to take a position on this issue.

This included (1) a public meeting with a presentation by DFO biologist, Martha Robinson, (2) a review of weekly salmon returns for 2002 to 2011, and (3) discussions at meetings.

We have concluded that asking for a change at this time may be premature. More time is needed to see if the improved returns are temporary or a long-term trend. We passed a motion at our March meeting not to recommend any changes at this time.

Salmonid Council (SCNL) Annual Meeting

Kevin Stroud represented FABEC at the SCNL annual meeting last October at Camp Hancock, Square Pond.

Proposed Hook and Release Study(s)

The NL Wildlife Federation is proposing to do an opinion survey of anglers as well as a scientific study on the effects of hook and release on salmon survival and spawning. FABEC has offered to cooperate on the angler survey by using summer students to conduct angler interviews. We have asked for more information on the scientific study.

Trout Management on Middle Brook

DNR's positive response to our request that the access road to Rodney Pond be decommissioned after forestry operations cease has increased confidence that overfishing of the vulnerable trout population can be reduced. Biologist Rob Perry with the Wildlife Division has agreed to present information on the health of the Middle Brook stock and discuss management options for improving its sustainability. One option to explore is a minimum size angling regulation similar to Jonathan's Pond, which would allow for more fish to survive to spawning age.

Angler's Guide

FABEC made a recommendation to DFO on wording changes in the Angler's Guide to reduce confusion about the boundaries between retention and catch and release only salmon angling areas on Terra Nova River.

Spencer's Bridge Boat Launch

The Town of Glovertown has agreed to FABEC's request to place "NO OVERNIGHT CAMPING" and "NO DUMPING" signs at the new boat landing next to Spencer's Bridge on the TCH.

DFO Responsibility for Fish Habitat

The Atlantic Salmon Federation is concerned that the federal government is planning to remove habitat protection as a DFO responsibility. This would be a devastating blow to environmental protection of water systems and fish habitat. To sign an ONLINE PETITION for continued inclusion of habitat protection in the Fisheries Act, visit the ASF website (www.asf.ca).

Illegal Fishing

FABEC has expressed concern to DFO about anglers at the mouth of Northwest Brook exceeding their bag limits. Other instances of angling activity out-of-season have been reported as well at the mouth of Terra Nova River and other locations.

President's Resignation

Kevin Stroud resigned as President in October but has continued as Treasurer. We've operated without a president since then.