

# Friends of the Salmon River Newsletter

Volume 3 Issue 1

January 2009

## *Dates to Remember:*

### **Wed. March 11**

Talk on Coyotes & Wolves / Roblin

### **Wed. April 1**

Talk on Black Rat Snakes & Snapping-Turtles / Verona

### **Sat. May 9**

Coach Tour

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## **The Coach Tour is Back— Book Now for May 9th**

In the past FSR has had fall coach tours of the Salmon River watershed featuring frequent stops to enjoy the river and environs, and commentary on the geological, historical and biological features of the watershed by experts in each field. This trip will

be different -- it will take place in spring-time when the river is just awakening. More on this in a subsequent newsletter.

It starts and ends in Tamworth: 9 am to 4 pm. For information/tickets contact David Field



at [field.croydon@kos.net](mailto:field.croydon@kos.net)

## **Join us! Community Planting Partners May 11 to May 18**

You can be part of our tree planting partnership. This spring, Friends of the Salmon River and the Tamworth/Erinsville Community Development Committee are organizing individuals and groups to plant seedling trees along the length of the Salmon River and its tributaries.

The goal is to improve the shoreline areas of the watershed. More trees help stabilize the

bank and also shade the water (which is good for many species). We have ordered the following varieties,  
White cedar  
Nannyberry  
High Bush cranberry  
Red osier dogwood  
Black elderberry  
Willow (Sand bar, Black and Peach leaf)  
We are looking for landowners who wish to plant on their properties.

There is no charge and we can provide 10, 20, 30 or more seedlings to each landowner, depending on the demand. We want to cover lots of ground, so we will have planting coordinators (to assist and answer questions) in several villages along the Salmon.

**If you are interested, please contact Susan**

[moorepartnersusan@gmail.com](mailto:moorepartnersusan@gmail.com)

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## Our New Board Members 2008-2009

### Co-Presidents

David Field &  
Gray Merriam

### Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Nathalie Sorensen

### Secretary

Alex Chisholm

### Publicity Director

Susan Moore

### Directors

Ed File  
Steve Medd  
Glen Pearce  
John DuChene

### Additional help from:

Bardi Vorster  
Newsletter Editor

Noreen Dertinger  
Webmaster

## FSR 2008 Activities

**Report:** The President (Gray Merriam) of the Friends of the Salmon River (FSR) gave a brief report on the activities and accomplishments of the FSR:

- i.) **Fall bus tour** – not undertaken this year, expected to resume in future years
- ii.) **Book/CD** – the FSR book has been turned into a CD and is being distributed to schools and libraries and marketed
- iii.) **Canoe Put in/ Takeout signs** - now posted on the Salmon River and a map is posted on the FSR website – thanks to Dugald Carmichael and David Field
- iv.) **GPS Workshop** – held in Cloyne by John Liggett under the sponsorship of the FSR and the Frontenac/Lennox & Addington

Stewardship Councils v.) **Lake Stewards Workshop in a Box** - the Frontenac/Lennox & Addington Stewardship Councils have developed (with the FSR intern) a Workshop in a Box for lake stewards. This consists of a plastic box containing relevant pamphlets, papers, brochures etc.

vi.) **Fisher Talk** – Dr. Jeff Bowman gave a lecture in September 2008, dealing with the facts and myths about fishers. Many misunderstandings were put to rest.

vii.) **Lake Management Planning** – workshops on lake management planning were sponsored and presented by FSR in Cloyne and in Sharbot Lake

viii.) **Festival – The**

**Art of Being Green** – President Merriam attended this festival in Lanark township and added “water” to the art of being green  
ix.) **Turtle Talk** – talks on local turtles were given by Ian Macintosh in Cloyne and in Napanee this spring  
x.) **Field Day** – David and Mary-Jo Field sponsored a “Field Day” reforestation of their property south of Tamworth. With the help of LASC, FSC and Tree Ontario, students and the public planted some 6,000 trees which thanks to favourable spring weather have exhibited a high rate of survival.

In closing, President Merriam concluded that it had been an interesting and productive year. He also thanked the stewardship coordinators for their invaluable input.

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# Friends of the Salmon River Board approved Action Plan for 2008/2009

1. Continue program of focus events either solely sponsored by FSR or in partnership with others where relevant.
2. Develop Education Program with fully developed lessons for public school level in Frontenac Cty. Similar to the species at risk program done for L&A Cty.
3. Continue public education and awareness through—CD sales, press releases, events, newsletter, web site, public presentations to local councils and others.
4. Investigate a project to develop riverine trails where appropriate along the Salmon River.
5. Develop a program to inventory areas of particular ecological importance in the watershed and proactively put in place a stewardship program for these areas.
6. Ensure membership level is maintained or increased by continuing to provide value—newsletters, web site, events etc.
7. Develop an annual budgeting process that provides a budget plan to support the Board approved Action Plan.

Investigate , and if appropriate, secure charitable organization status to further support our fundraising activities and programs.

## FSR Presents Paper at 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Latorne11 Conservation Symposium

The Latorne11 is Ontario's premier conservation symposium, attracting over 1000 attendees. Melodie Green worked with Gray Merriam to prepare a Power Point presentation and Melodie traveled to Alliston, Ontario for the symposium. Thanks to a Bursary from the Lator-

ne11 Committee, Melodie was able to benefit from the entire three-day symposium.

The FSR presentation, "Volunteers and Stewardship Councils Partner to Protect the Salmon Watershed" was well received, initiating comments such as

"refreshing" and "inspiring". Our hope is that other groups will be encouraged to follow our model.

In 2004/05, Melodie also prepared the Salmon River Habitat Strategy Report, a foundation study for our watershed.

## Green Energy Fair–Tamworth Standing Room Only

As a part of the Green Community Initiative being undertaken by the Tamworth/Erinsville area a Green Energy Fair was held on November 22nd, 2008 at various locations in Tamworth. The day featured a seminar, trade fair, site visit and specific demonstrations held the attention of a sell-out crowd of over 130 people.

The day started with a 2 hour seminar held at the Legion. Local renewable energy expert, Cam Mather, spoke addressing both how to use less energy in daily living and what sources of alternate energy are relevant in the local area.

The trade fair was held in the arena where attendees could talk to vendors in heat-

ing, renewable energy products and energy efficient equipment and find out appropriate applications to their own homes. Information was made available on government programs to defer some costs associated with making your home more energy efficient or installing alternate energy systems.

Demonstrations were held to explain a solar heating system installed at a housing project in town as well as a switch grass pellet stove. This was of particular interest to farmers in the area that are considering switch grass as an alternate crop.

The day culminated with visits to two sites in town; Moss's Mill - a restoration project of an 1850's mill to use an installed low head turbine to generate

electricity and the Cam Mather's off-grid residence where his family lives comfortably relying on solar and wind power.

What did we learn? That with minimal advertising an event of interest gets the crowd. Today's growing concern about the cost of energy and the desire to learn more about relevant applications of renewable energy certainly seemed to be on everyone's mind.

Look for further events in the area in 2009.

If you would like to get tin touch with Cam Mather -  
[www.aztext.ca](http://www.aztext.ca)

*Switch: Kingston's  
Alternative Energy  
Cluster—is holding a  
similar two-part  
workshop starting on  
March 3, 2009 for  
further information  
email  
[info@switchkingston.ca](mailto:info@switchkingston.ca)*

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Partner to Protect the Salmon Watershed" was well received, initiating comments such as "refreshing" and "inspiring". Our hope is that other groups will be encouraged to follow our model.

# ELORIN Presentation Biomass for Rural Vitality - January 15, 2009, Tamworth

Under the sponsorship of the Eastern Lake Ontario Regional Innovation Network (ELORIN) a work shop was held in Tamworth on January 15th to address the ELORIN project for Biomass for Rural Vitality. The project is to investigate and determine the viability of developing a commercial biomass industry in the area that can provide the agricultural community with a diversified income base. The Legion was full of interested attendees, drawn

mostly from the local farming community.

Speakers addressed issues such as the need to develop alternate, non-fossil fuel based energy sources, the current market for pelletized biomass products and the opportunities in the market and work being done on various biomass products to enhance yield. A presentation that kept everyone's attention was by Kurt Vanclief of Willowlee Sod farm. He has been experimenting with switch

grass since 2006 to determine yields and growing conditions and gave an update on his findings.

This workshop is the first in a series and was suitably held in Tamworth. There are a number of farmers in the area who have started switch grass fields to determine the viability of the product for the pelletized biomass market.



We are all  
connected!

*For further  
information on their  
speaking events—go  
to:  
[www.elorin.ca](http://www.elorin.ca)*

## Snapping Turtles: Of Special Concern by Gray Merriam

The Committee on Endangered Wildlife in Canada, COSEWIC, has listed the snapping turtle as a species "of special concern". Until now, there was an open season advertised in the game regulations, and in some areas, U.S. tourists came to trap and harvest snappers!

Female snappers aren't sexually mature until they are nearly a decade old. Late maturation plus the very high mortality from hatchling to sexual maturity, means that female snapping turtles need to live at least 25 years for the population to

merely stay constant.

Many of our snappers are killed on the roads— crossing them or using the gravelly edges as a nest site to deposit their eggs. The ponds created by road construction plus gravelly-sandy material used in road beds, fooled the snappers and cost them both reproductive females and many of the hatchlings.

The unacceptable behaviour of actively steering to hit snappers on roads, added to the losses. Maintaining an outdated open season made it worse. The

COSEWIC recommendation still needs approval by the Environment Minister to bring the snapper under SARA, but closure of the open season in Ontario has been recommended formally to the Minister of Natural Resources.

The Salmon River Watershed is prime habitat for snapping turtles. We must change the irrational perception of the "frightening reptilian character" to one of respect for an animal that has persisted for geological time. The snapping turtle is an irreplaceable part of our heritage



Our next newsletter will  
be in April 2009

# The Salmon in Winter

By Gray Merriam

For more on the Salmon in Winter, see our website, [friendsofsalmonriver.ca](http://friendsofsalmonriver.ca)

Where I live, near the head of the main river, the high water of Oct.-Nov. is now pouring mightily over August's beaver dam.

Air is common under ice. Sometimes one can watch muskrats swimming just under the ice from air bubble to air bubble, using nature's scuba system, to go between 'pushups' where they can get a good long breath.

Beavers are moving under the ice, too. Their dams assure a critical depth of water under the ice so that they don't need to expose themselves to

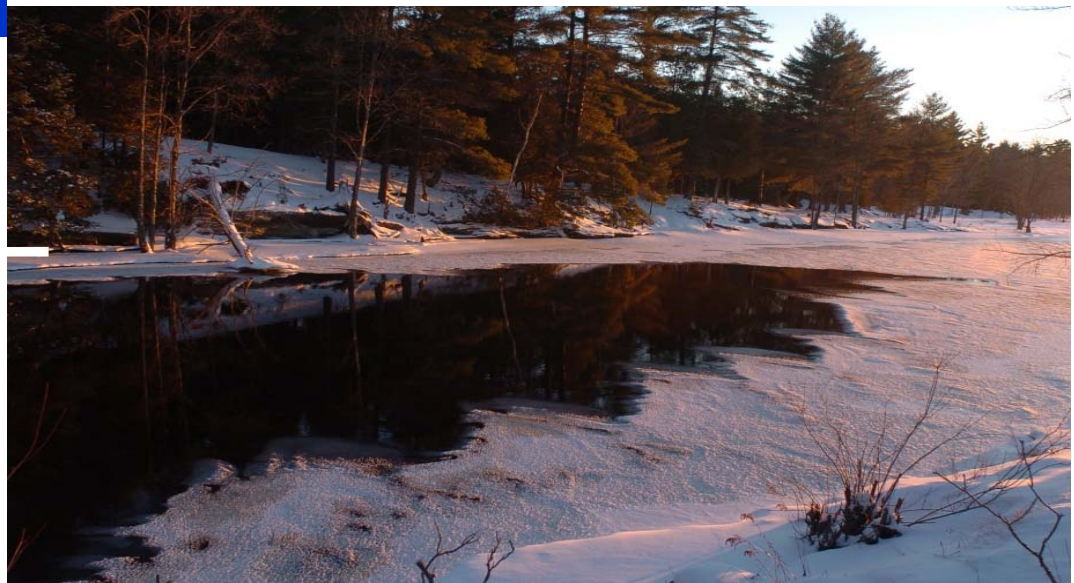
coyotes on the ice surface. By anchoring their food pile into the bottom and having a sufficient depth of water, the beavers can commute to the food supply safely under the ice and breathe comfortably back in the lodge.

Mink are still patrolling the shore and in patches of open water all winter long.

My favourite Winter mustelids are the otters. They forage along the edge of the ice where they will sit and observe you. They may dive for dormant green frogs from the muddy bottom or actively pursue fish, leaving a trail of fine bubbles as they go. Otters are completely at home in or out

of the water and finding their slides or their cross-country trails from the Salmon to a nearby lake feeds the imagination and the spirit completely.

*Rosy River in  
Winter—Gray  
Merriam.*



## Two Public Talks

### Coyotes & Wolves in Ontario

#### **Wednesday, March 11**

7 pm. at the Wesleyan Church- (Rd.41 Roblin)  
**Brent Patterson,**  
Field Research Scientist  
at MNR & Professor at  
Trent University.

Brent's current re-  
search deals with under-  
standing the dynamics  
of wolf and moose

populations in various  
parts of Ontario. As a  
wildlife biologist, he has  
studied the life history of  
coyotes. Join us for a  
glimpse into the intrigu-  
ing ecology of wolves  
and coyotes.



Some people like  
snakes—especially the  
harmless, non-venomous  
kind!

*Both these talks are  
sponsored by The  
Friends of the  
Salmon, the  
Frontenac  
Stewardship Council  
and the Lennox and  
Addington  
Stewardship Council.  
They are usually very  
well attended and  
interesting for all  
members of the family.*

### **Black Rat Snakes & Snapping Turtles**

#### **Wednesday, April 1**

7 pm. at Lions Hall  
4504 Sand Road  
Verona

**Shaun Thompson,**  
Ecologist with  
Kemptville MNR  
Presents:

#### **Black Rat Snakes**

Come and enjoy tales  
and details of our black  
rat snake. Perhaps even  
a real one in the flesh!  
Shaun has done exten-

sive work on black rat  
snakes in this part of  
Ontario. Did you know  
the largest black rat  
snake ever measured  
would stretch from the  
front wheel to the back  
wheel of a compact car?  
**Snapping Turtles**  
Shaun will also entertain  
and educate us on  
snapping turtles. The  
Salmon River watershed  
is a prime habitat for

snapping turtles. Learn more  
about this fascinating  
“reptilian character” who  
needs protection on our  
roads and  
trails. Did  
you know  
that snap-  
ping turtles  
are good  
snorkelers?



Inquiries to: Co-President Gray Merriam,  
Email:  
merriam@xplornet.com

We're on the Web!  
friendsofsalmonriver.ca

*The Friends of the Salmon River (FSR) is a volunteer group formed in 2004 to care for the Salmon watershed by gathering, producing, and dispensing knowledge in educational projects for users of the watershed. Currently, there is no major crisis. We hope that by informing users, their attachment to the land will be strengthened, their stewardship will be more effective and crises will be avoided.*

*Our challenge is to get everyone keenly interested in looking after a basically healthy watershed.*

## Our supporters and Partners

Frontenac Stewardship Council/ Chris Raphael Coordinator  
Hastings Stewardship Council / Jim Pedersen, Coordinator  
Lennox & Addington Stewardship Council/ Steve Pitt,  
Coordinator



## Becoming a member of the Friends of the Salmon River

The Friends of the Salmon River welcomes new members. At present our membership stands at 134. The annual membership fee is \$20.00 for an individual and \$30.00 for a family (two votes). Memberships extend from August 15<sup>th</sup> to August 14<sup>th</sup> of the following calendar year. If bought after February 1, membership extends one full year from the following AGM, held in August.

To join simply fill in the information requested (right) and send it with a cheque or money order payable to:  
Friends of the Salmon River and return to:  
Nathalie Sorensen, 201 Westdale Avenue,  
Kingston, Ontario K7L 4S4.

## Membership Application

Name:

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Address:

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_