

FRIENDS OF THE SALMON RIVER

President's Report 2014-2015



Un-incorporation

As previously reported, Friends of the Salmon River was dissolved as a corporate entity and all associated filings completed with the provincial and federal governments. As of Jan. 2014, the process was finished, including the final report and signed dissolution order. Legally we are now a not-for-profit organization.

Living Watersheds Workshop

Held September 12 on the Salmon River in Roblin

Goal: to teach attendees about the watershed as a system and how to form a Friends of River group for their area. Interested people from the Moira, Black, Skootamatta, and Napanee watersheds were invited.

Dr. Cindy Chu, the keynote speaker, illustrated the role of the watershed as a unit of study and highlighted how the biodiversity within rivers varies from the headwaters to the outlets, and how watershed conditions shape these patterns. Stewardship actions at the watershed level can help conserve freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity. Friends of the Salmon River presented their *Salmon River Habitat Strategy* and provided *The History of the Friends of the Salmon River: One Model that has Worked for Over a Decade* as a template for new organizations.

29 participants attended the presentations and worked on small group activities. FSR and Quinte Conservation provided resources and maps to support new stewardship groups. The participants explored and defined their ideas and needs for their watershed. Follow-up will be provided to the watershed groups.

North Addington Education Center project

The Tree planting project at the Cloyne school is a partnership between the school, the Land O'Lakes Garden Club and has the support of Friends of the Salmon River. The Garden Club provided a grant of \$400 used to purchase trees for planting through the Centre for Sustainable Watersheds. In early June, 14 deciduous trees were planted along the edge of a creek running through the school grounds, which forms part of the headwaters of the Salmon River. Additionally, ~150 native shrubs were planted throughout the creek bed. More than 100 school kids participated in the planting, including grades 6 to 12. Students also made signs to protect the area. The trees appear to be surviving well.

Family Nature Day

Quinte Conservation held a Family Nature Day for the second year on July 11 at the Beaver Lake Park. FSR co-hosted the event, which coincides with the Lion Club's fishing derby for children. Approximately 150 kids attended with their parents, which provided a good opportunity for FSR to increase its profile in the community.

Salmon Shoreline Preservation

In April, in the Salmon River, branches and trees were seen floating in the water. This prompted our education article, the *Salmon River Neighbours letter* about protection and stewardship of shorelines in the Salmon River Watershed. It was included in our Spring Newsletter and issued as a news release to local media.

Seedlings & Turtle Care Units

Tree and shrub seedlings and Turtle Incubation Care Units (ICUs) were offered to the public by Quinte Conservation. About 200 shoreline seedlings and 6 ICUs were ordered by FSR members having property in the Salmon River Watershed. The turtle units are used to protect turtle eggs from predation and are available from Quinte Field Naturalists.

Solar Projects

Susan Moore attended meetings of Stone Mills Township council about the Loyalist Solar Project and the Centreville Solar Project. Regarding habitat/environmental protection, road use, community involvement, etc. FSR

sent a letter to both companies highlighting ecological concerns. Susan will serve as a central interface between project proponents and FSR and other community groups during consultation.

Stone Mills Shoreline By-Law

Stone Mills Township is currently working on the creation of a by-law to protect the shoreline, to prevent residents from clear-cutting trees and give them advice on managing the shoreline vegetation. Regarding public notification, we (FSR) offered to help with the public education process. The decision on the by-law is still pending.

Beaver Lake Preservation Association (BLPA)

Last year BLPA paid for the cost of membership for all of its former members, but kept some money back for contingencies. In September 2015, they gave the remainder of their funds (\$700) to FSR to cover another year of membership, even though the funding did not cover the full cost of the memberships.

Forest Mill's Micro-Hydro Project

Susan Moore and Dave Johnson attended the tour of a new micro-hydro development on the Salmon River at Forest Mills on the Switzer Dam. This project, proposed under the IESO FIT program to generate 200 kW, is in early stages of planning and is just starting to undergo Environmental Assessment review. The project has the potential to supply a proportion of the community's power using low-flow technology on the original slipstream. The landowner, Peter Hecimovic, has committed to maintaining good flow in the river and goodwill in the community. He will keep FSR updated as the project proceeds.

Napanee Plains partner meeting

Board members Amy Chabot, Herb Pilles and Susan Moore attended the Napanee Limestone Plain Partner Meeting on December 3 2014.

The event was co-led by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests (MNRF), Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC), Wildlife Preservation Canada (WPC) and Bird Studies Canada (BSC).

MNRF provided an overview of the ecological importance of the Napanee Plain, in which a large proportion of the remaining alvar communities in Ontario are found. MNRF has drafted a Multi Species Recovery Plan for the Napanee Plain alvars. The partners at this meeting will work collaboratively to educate the public and try to protect the alvar and grassland habitat of this important area.

Land acquisitions within Salmon River watershed

Recent protection of two properties within the watershed by the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington. An easement on the Merriam property that will limit development and afford protection on a large acreage in the northern portion of the watershed, on the Salmon River just north of Hwy 7.

The Lee Nature Reserve (12.5 ha with 914 m of shoreline) has been established on the Salmon River, near Tamworth and adjacent to the Mellon Lake Conservation Reserve.

Ontario Nature Membership & Insurance

FSR now has membership in Ontario Nature (formerly The Federation of Ontario Naturalists). Membership in Ontario Nature will provide opportunities for FSR to network and form partnerships with like-minded groups. It is considered to be a better fit than FSR's former membership with the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA).

Under Ontario Nature, we are insured at an annual cost of approx. \$990.00. We have Commercial General Liability and Directors and Officers coverage.

Arden Road/Highway 7 bridge improvement

In August, FSR wrote a letter to the engineering firm hired to design the replacement bridge on Highway 7 at the Arden Road intersection. Request to include a flood plain of 2-3 m width on the east side of the river as part of the bridge design. The flood plain would have two main benefits: 1) if it was paved with finer material it would create wildlife underpass, and 2) it would allow for variance in river levels due to weather events. The reply to the letter suggested that the bridge has not been designed to include a flood plain but that it will have a large span and that riprap would be used to prevent erosion on sides.