

The
Canadian
HERITAGE
Rivers System



Annual Report
1997-1998



April 1998

*To the federal, provincial and territorial
Ministers responsible for the Canadian
Heritage Rivers System*

I present herewith on behalf of the
members of the Canadian Heritage
Rivers Board, the fourteenth Annual
Report on the Canadian Heritage Rivers
System (CHRS) for the fiscal year
1997-98.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael W. Porter
Chairperson
Canadian Heritage Rivers Board
1997-98





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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ever have a river flow through your life? I have. I have always had. There's something fundamentally profound about living life on a river, something that becomes subconsciously a part of your psyche and influences how you think about the world.

— Bud Davidge, Bay du Nord River,
Newfoundland

The Board is proud to feature in this Annual Report a brochure version of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Charter, signed on Earth Day 1997. This key vision document affirms the support of every participating federal, provincial and territorial government in Canada for the CHRS strategic plan initiatives through 2006. Federal/provincial/territorial charters are rare in conservation, and this tangible recommitment to the vision and goals of Canada's rivers program will stand as a symbol for the next decade.

The CHRS reached 31 rivers this year, and a total of 8125 river km. New natural and cultural frameworks completed this year will guide local communities and participating jurisdictions in the System's next phase of growth. System and background studies continue to reaffirm community support as the driving force behind new Heritage Rivers. The first parallel provincial system, the BC Heritage Rivers System, reached eighteen rivers and enters its second three-year term. Important heritage initiatives like the Alexander Mackenzie

Voyageur Route (AMVR) create visible links in this national rivers network, especially through high-profile ventures like Max Finkelstein's volunteer voyage of almost 3000 km across four Heritage Rivers on the AMVR in 1997.

The CHRS is especially proud of the emerging stewardship of Aboriginal Peoples, local communities and industry in planning and acting for healthy, working rivers. Vision and leadership in every stage of the nomination, designation and monitoring process flowed from the grassroots throughout the CHRS in 1997-98.

Newfoundlander Bud Davidge asks, "Have you ever had a river flow through your life?" In over twenty-eight years with Parks Canada, I have had many. My involvement with the CHRS has been a highlight of over half of that career in many roles. Upon my retirement, I will continue to enjoy the rivers that flow through my life as I return to Newfoundland to build a house by the sea. I would like to thank all members of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board and the staff of the Secretariat for their support in this year's achievements. It has been an honour to have served as your Chairperson.

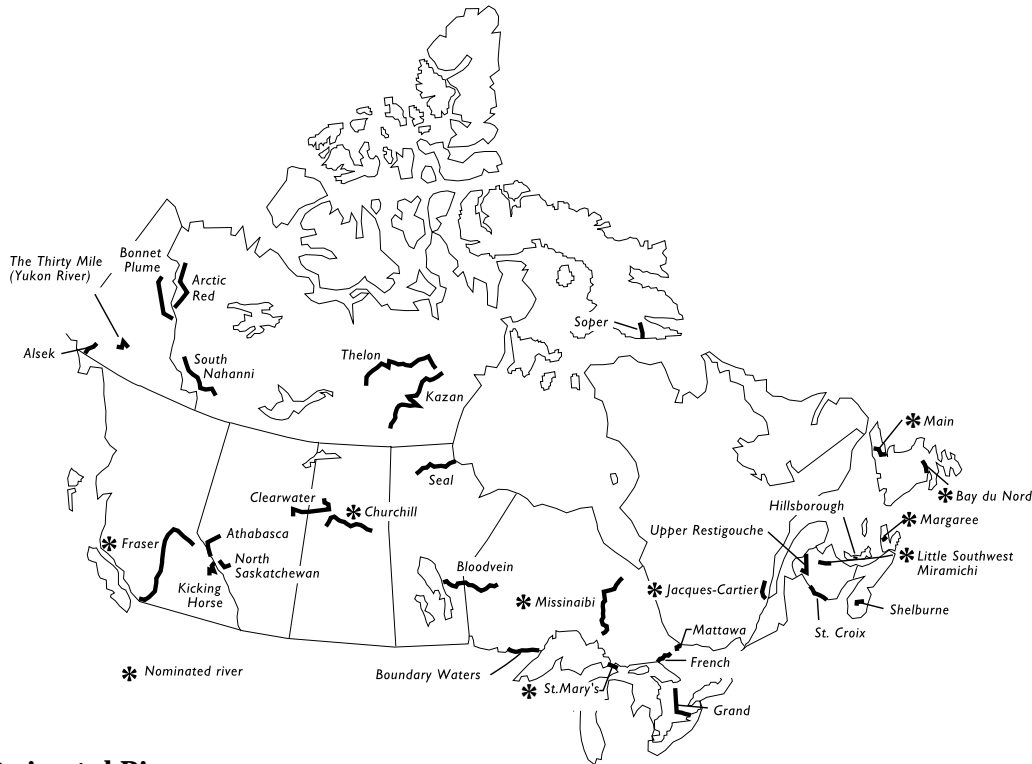
Michael W. Porter

Chairperson
Canadian Heritage Rivers Board
1997-98

STATUS OF THE CHRS



Thirty-one rivers have been nominated to the CHRS, totalling 8125 km. Twenty-two of these have been formally designated, meaning that the management plans detailing how their heritage values will be protected have been lodged with the CHR Board. (Of the eleven nominated rivers listed, two, the Clearwater in Alberta and Bloodvein in Ontario, will become extensions of rivers already designated to the System and are not counted separately.)



Designated Rivers

River	Province/Territory (Park ¹)	Date of Designation	Length (in km)
French	Ontario (French River PP)	February 1986	110
Aisek	Yukon (Kluane NP)	February 1986	90
South Nahanni	Northwest Territories (Nahanni NP Reserve)	January 1987	300
Clearwater ²	Saskatchewan (Clearwater PP)	June 1987	187
Bloodvein ³	Manitoba (Atikaki PP)	June 1987	200
Mattawa	Ontario (Mattawa PP and Samuel de Champlain PP)	January 1988	43
Athabasca	Alberta (Jasper NP)	January 1989	168
North Saskatchewan	Alberta (Banff NP)	January 1989	49
Kicking Horse	British Columbia (Yoho NP)	January 1989	67
Kazan	Northwest Territories	July 1990	615
Thelon	Northwest Territories	July 1990	545
St. Croix	New Brunswick	January 1991	185
Yukon – The Thirty Mile	Yukon	January 1991	48
Seal	Manitoba	June 1992	260
Soper ⁴	Northwest Territories (Kataniilik Territorial Park)	June 1992	248
Arctic Red	Northwest Territories	September 1993	450
Grand ⁴	Ontario	January 1994	627
Boundary Waters – Voyageur Waterway	Ontario (La Verendrye/Quetico/Middle Falls PPs)	September 1996	250
Hillsborough	Prince Edward Island	January 1997	45
Shelburne	Nova Scotia	June 1997	53
Bonnet Plume	Yukon	February 1998	350
Upper Restigouche	New Brunswick	February 1998	55
TOTAL			4945

Nominated Rivers

River	Province/Territory (Park)	Anticipated Designation Date	Length (in km)
Fraser ⁴	British Columbia	June 1998	1375
Margaree ⁴	Nova Scotia	June 1998	120
Bloodvein ³	Ontario (Woodland Caribou PP)	June 1998	106
Main	Newfoundland	February 1999	57
Bay du Nord	Newfoundland (Bay du Nord Wilderness Park Reserve)	February 1999	75
Jacques-Cartier	Quebec (Jacques-Cartier PP)	February 1999	128
Missinaibi	Ontario (Missinaibi PP)	February 1999	426
Clearwater ²	Alberta	February 1999	139
Little Southwest Miramichi ⁴	New Brunswick	June 2000	142
St. Mary's	Ontario	June 2000	125
Churchill	Saskatchewan	to be determined	487
TOTAL			3180

TOTAL km of NOMINATED & DESIGNATED RIVERS

8125

- 1 PP denotes provincial parks; NP denotes national parks
- 2 Clearwater River has been nominated in two sections by Saskatchewan and Alberta
- 3 Bloodvein River has been nominated in two sections by Manitoba and Ontario
- 4 Includes mainstream and major tributaries



STATUS OF THE CHRS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board continued over the past year to implement and evaluate the CHRS' ten year Strategic Plan. In total, 31 action items were identified for completion during 1997-98, the second year of the plan. All of the activities identified as priority items were completed on time and within the budget allocated by the Board. Some of the achievements contained in the Strategic Plan included the following:

Actively Managing and Completing the System

- Final review and adoption of national natural and cultural heritage frameworks to help classify river heritage values
- Completion of discussion paper on issues of representation of heritage values in the CHRS
- Completion of discussion papers on nomination of major rivers and of boundary and transboundary rivers
- Completion of discussion paper on nationally uniform management policies (signage, user code of ethics, enforcement of CCREM water quality guidelines, management planning guidelines)
- Completion of a draft ten year monitoring report for the South Nahanni River
- Nomination of several new rivers to the System

Communications

- Highlight CHRS displays at major international events
- Development of a resource manual for a National Rivers Day
- Ongoing development of educational materials: FISH teachers' manuals; Watershed Report Card series; Peace Gardens program
- Further development of CHRS website (www.chrs.ca), including provision of content to related sites
- Co-operative planning and co-ordination of CHRS conference (June 1998) with Outdoor Recreation Council of BC

Leadership

- Conduct first annual review and update of the strategic plan, including the review of current trends and issues of strategic significance for the CHRS
- Adjust the strategic planning policy and procedures (calendar, reports and process) to optimise the use of the strategic plan as the key management document for the CHR Board

Resourcing

- Economic Impact study results highlighted in newsletter and annual report

Conclusion

The strategic plan continues to be an extremely useful tool for the Board in overseeing the CHRS program and developing a blueprint for the future. Public reaction to the plan has been very positive. Results of the Strategic Plan will be reported in each annual report and copies of the plan can be obtained from the Secretariat or any participating agency on the Board.

THE CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS SYSTEM



The Canadian Heritage Rivers System is Canada's national program for freshwater heritage conservation. It is a co-operative program of the governments of Canada, all ten provinces and both territories. The objectives of the program are to give national recognition to Canada's outstanding rivers and to ensure long-term management that will conserve their natural, historical and recreational values for the benefit and enjoyment of Canadians, now and in the future.

One of the fundamental principles of the CHRS is that the nomination and management of Canadian Heritage Rivers remain with the responsible government. Generally, this is the provincial governments in the south, the federal governments in national parks or on other federal lands and the federal and territorial governments jointly in the north.

Ministers Responsible for the CHRS (1997-98)

The Honourable Sheila Copps

Minister of Canadian Heritage
Government of Canada

The Honourable Andy Mitchell

Secretary of State for Parks
Government of Canada

The Honourable Jane Stewart

Minister of Indian Affairs and
Northern Development
Government of Canada

The Honourable Sandra Kelly

Minister of Tourism, Culture
and Recreation
Government of Newfoundland
and Labrador

The Honourable J. Weston MacAleer

Minister of Economic Development
and Tourism
Government of Prince Edward Island

The Honourable Kennie MacAskill

Minister of Natural Resources
Government of Nova Scotia

The Honourable Alan Graham

Minister of Natural Resources
and Energy
Government of New Brunswick

L'honorable Paul Bégin

Ministre de l'Environnement
et de la Faune
Gouvernement du Québec

The Honourable John C. Snobolen

Minister of Natural Resources
Government of Ontario

The Honourable J. Glen Cummings

Minister of Natural Resources
Government of Manitoba

The Honourable Lorne Scott

Minister of Environment and
Resource Management
Government of Saskatchewan

The Honourable Ty Lund

Minister of Environmental Protection
Government of Alberta

The Honourable Cathy McGregor

Minister of Environment, Lands
and Parks
Government of British Columbia

The Honourable Eric Fairclough

Minister of Renewable Resources
Government of the Yukon

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi

Minister of Resources,
Wildlife and Economic Development
Government of the Northwest Territories



THE BOARD

The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board (the Board) reviews nominations and recommends whether a nominated river meets selection criteria to the federal Minister responsible for Parks Canada and to the provincial/territorial Minister of the nominating government.

The Board consists of one representative each from Parks Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and the participating provincial and territorial governments. Each board member, with the exception of the federal INAC member, has one vote.

A Chairperson is elected for each fiscal year from among the Board's members and is responsible for organizing and chairing Board meetings, directing the operation of the Secretariat and promoting public awareness of the CHRS. The 1998-99 Chairperson will be Gordon Prouse, Director of Parks and Natural Areas, Manitoba Department of Natural Resources.

1997-98 Board Members

Mike Porter, 1997-98 Chairperson
(Parks Canada)

Don Hustins (Newfoundland and Labrador)

Doug Murray (Prince Edward Island)

Barry Diamond (Nova Scotia)

Don Boudreau (New Brunswick)

Luc Berthiaume (Quebec)

Norm Richards (Ontario)

Gordon Prouse (Manitoba)

Don MacAulay (Saskatchewan)

Bruce Duffin (Alberta)

Mark Angelo (British Columbia)

Robin Reilly (Northwest Territories)

Jim McIntyre (Yukon)

Claude Bugslag (Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada)

CHRS Staff

John Lewis, Secretary

Don Gibson, National Manager

Max Finkelstein, Marketing & Publicity

Brian Grimsey, Co-operative Heritage
Planner

RIVER NOMINATION PROCESS



Submissions

River nominations may be submitted to the Board only by participating government agencies. Private citizens or groups are, however, invited to present submissions to their federal, provincial or territorial member for any river they feel is worthy.

Public Consultation

Public consultation normally takes place prior to the nomination. In this initial stage, the public provides input during province-wide or territorial-wide studies of rivers to determine their relative value as potential Canadian Heritage Rivers. Further public input occurs once a short-list of rivers is developed. Such consultation assists the government officials in selecting preferred river candidates in their jurisdiction.

Selection

The responsible government decides on a specific river to nominate to the System based on the river's natural, cultural and recreational values and on the level of public support for the nomination. Selection usually involves an analysis of the number and complexity of conflicting land uses and the costs that effective management of the river corridor would entail.

Nomination

Once the decision is made to nominate a river to the CHRS, the nominating government, working co-operatively with other groups and agencies concerned with or responsible for the future of the river, prepares and submits a nomination document to the Board. The document contains all information necessary to show that the river is of outstanding Canadian value, as defined by the CHRS guidelines, and that sufficient measures will be put in place to ensure that all those values will be maintained. The Board then reviews the nomination and makes its recommendation to the federal Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the appropriate Minister(s) of the nominating government(s).





RIVER DESIGNATION PROCESS

Submission of Management Plan

The river designation process begins when the Board member representing the nominating government submits a management plan to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board. The management plan sets out the policies and practices to be followed by the responsible agencies to ensure that the river's development, management and use are consistent with CHRS objectives and Board guidelines. Although extensions may be granted when necessary, the plan is normally tabled within three years of the Board's acceptance of the river nomination. This process ensures that an effective plan for the river area is put in place.

Designation

Once a management plan or heritage strategy is lodged with the Board, the Chairperson advises the federal Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the Minister(s) responsible for the nominating government agencies that the requirements for designation have been met. The Ministers will then formally designate the river by unveiling a plaque at a key location on the river and by signing a ceremonial text to be included in the official CHRS registry book.

Designation of a river to the CHRS ensures that the river will be managed in a way that will conserve the outstanding heritage resources for which the river was nominated, and that its recreational potential will be realized. Management responsibility remains entirely with the federal, provincial or territorial government agency with jurisdiction over the river.

RIVER NOMINATIONS AND DESIGNATIONS IN 1997-98



The last year was a busy one for the CHRS, with three new designated and two new nominated rivers added to the System. New designations include the Shelburne in Nova Scotia, the Bonnet Plume in the Yukon, and New Brunswick's Upper Restigouche River. The two new nominations are the Little Southwest Miramichi, again in New Brunswick, and Ontario's St. Mary's River.

Nominations

Little Southwest Miramichi River

New Brunswick

The Little Southwest Miramichi and its two main tributaries, North Pole Stream and Lower North Branch Little Southwest Miramichi, are renowned spawning streams for salmon and sea trout. Their 142 km of cool, clear water makes them equally attractive for canoeing, hiking, and nature appreciation. These waterways flow as they have for millennia, untouched by dams or developments, through typical Acadian forest of red spruce and balsam fir mixed with hardwoods. Ironically, the Great Miramichi Fire of 1825 preserved the regrowth of giant white pines after lumberjacks moved into areas untouched by the fire. Logging legends and lore celebrate a human heritage on the Miramichi that dates back 3000 years, to early Micmac settlements now designated National Historic Sites. New Brunswick's third Heritage River expands the national heritage of the CHRS with a rich river of Atlantic Canada.

St. Mary's River

Ontario

The St. Mary's River is strategically placed as a link between three Great Lakes. Abundant whitefish at the mouth of Lake Superior drew the Ojibwa to their cultural heartland. Fur traders navigated its 125 km transcontinental passage, and by 1798 the North West Company had constructed the first locks and dams for its canoes. Fort St. Joseph played a critical role in the War of 1812 which drew the international boundary along the St. Mary's. Copper and iron ores discovered in the Lake Superior hinterlands had to transit the river to reach eastern markets. Ship locks were expanded and completed between 1852 on the American side and 1895 in Canada. At the turn of the century the Canadian Sault Canal was the most advanced lock and canal system in the world. The first Canadian canal to be run by electricity was considered a brilliant engineering feat and has been declared a National Historic Site. It is being re-built today for pleasure craft.





Over 90% of the outflow from Lake Superior is diverted through shipping canals or to hydro plants. The channel is continually dredged for navigation. Dams with gates control water flow. Given these alterations from its natural state, the St. Mary's was not nominated for its natural heritage values. Despite this, the river does provide important habitat for salmon and many species of fish. The Great Lakes Water Agreement of 1978 aims to achieve a 90% restoration of the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the river by the year 2000. To this end, new sewage plants have been built, major industries have met agreed-upon deadlines towards zero discharge, and there are stringent rules against dumping bilge water and oil from ships. A dramatic improvement in water quality has taken place since the 1960s.

Designations

Shelburne River

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia's Shelburne River is a true wilderness river: one of the last in Nova Scotia. Its 53 km course to Lake Rossignol explores eight shallow lakes, ancient eskers, granite barrens, wetlands, and stands of ancient white pine and 400-year old hemlock, the oldest in the province. For the most part, the river moves slowly, except where rapids and small waterfalls cut bands of harder rock. Canoeing the Shelburne, perhaps retracing Albert Bigelow's 1908 "Tent Dwellers" circuit, is the best way to appreciate the beauty, wildlife and pristine waters of this river.

More than half of the Shelburne's watershed is within the Tobeatic Candidate Protected Area. Road building, mining, forestry, and cottage development will be prohibited here, in the largest remaining wilderness area in the Maritime Provinces. The adjoining third of the river has been owned by Bowater Mersey Paper Company and Nova Scotia Power Incorporated since the 1920s. Existing buffer strips will be incorporated into a special 150 metre management corridor for environmental protection and scenic value. No harvesting will be allowed in the first 30 metres, and logging will be limited in the rest of the corridor. Backcountry permits and restricted forestry road access will continue to promote a wilderness experience. New strategies will include establishing primitive campsites with basic facilities, and the production of a backcountry guide to wilderness ethics.



Bonnet Plume River

Yukon

Racing out of the Wernecke Mountains in the central Yukon, the Bonnet Plume cuts through mountain peaks and canyons unglaciated during the Pleistocene, exposing veins of silver and zinc. This arctic landscape abounds with woodland caribou and grizzly bear dens, its habitats home to a host of rare plants. The valley of the Bonnet Plume was a traditional hunting and travelling area for the Gwich'in people, and represents their heritage in its pristine state. The remote, little travelled Bonnet Plume provides one of the best wilderness adventures to be found in Canada.

In 1993, the entire watershed of the Bonnet Plume, an area of approximately 12,000 sq. km. (more than twice the size of Prince Edward Island) was nominated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System by the Government of the Yukon, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Nacho Nyak Dun First Nation. The management plan takes this ecosystem approach with a main goal of outlining the research actions needed for long range land use planning and future project assessment, to ensure that the Bonnet Plume's rich integrity remains uncompromised.

Upper Restigouche River

New Brunswick

The Restigouche has long been famous for the ever more elusive Atlantic salmon. The thick spruce and fir forests along the Restigouche are home for lynx, while osprey and bald eagles keep watch from riverside perches. For the Micmac, the river was a highway to the west and an important source of food. For the salmon anglers who have been coming here for more than a century, the river is a source of sport and adventure. For today's recreational paddler, the Upper Restigouche is an easily accessible source of wilderness and solitude. An international link in the famous Appalachian Trail will connect the new Heritage River to the New Brunswick Trail System and provide new recreational and ecotourism opportunities for this resource-dependent region of northern New Brunswick.

The Upper Restigouche management plan defines a corridor of undisturbed vegetation, where forestry must operate 150 metres from the high water mark. The management plan aims to implement stewardship and education programs, maintain and enhance water quality, manage and enhance the Atlantic salmon, determine acceptable recreation levels, research the river's natural and cultural heritage values, and study the Restigouche and its major tributaries to determine whether or not to extend the designation of the 55 km Upper Restigouche to downstream reaches as a Canadian Heritage River.





OVERLOOKING THE WATERSHEDS: MONITORING CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS IN 1997-98

The twenty-two rivers in this section are now listed alphabetically, rather than geographically or chronologically, for easier reference.

River of Rock and Ice

Alsek River

Kluane National Park, Yukon (1986)

A three year drought in the Aishihik watershed, and operations at the Faro Mine, have led to unprecedented drawdown and considerable local concern about negative ecological effects on Aishihik Lake and the Dezadeash wetlands in Kluane National Park. The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Yukon Conservation Society, and Friends of Aishihik sponsored the second annual Aishihik Awareness Weekend in June 1997 to raise awareness of reservoir drawdowns. The operating licence for the Aishihik hydro facility will be reviewed by the Yukon Water Board in 1998.

The review of the Kluane National Park Management Plan is underway as of December 1997. The largest single change since 1989 has been the amount of river rafting activity and aircraft access. The process offers the Kluane National Park Management Board an opportunity to raise awareness of co-operative management of the Alsek watershed with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.

During the summer of 1996 a mail-back survey of Kluane National Park visitors explored and characterized Park wilderness qualities and experiences. Pristine, undeveloped environment, no motorized use and low encounter levels in the park drew the highest levels of agreement.

A six-year study of the grizzly bear population of the Alsek valley is recommending changes to campsites along the upper Alsek. Consultation with rafters identified and grouped preferred campsites to allow grizzly movement across the valley, avoiding surprise human encounters. Changes to the Kluane National Park Management Plan and Alsek River Management Guidelines will reflect this study and its recommendations to ensure the Alsek's wilderness character.



Alsek River
(Kluane National Park, Yukon)



An extensive spruce bark beetle outbreak has affected mature spruce stands in the Alsek watershed for the past several years, primarily along the park boundary at the Dezadeash River. The spruce bark beetle is a natural agent of succession in mountain and boreal forests, but attempts to control this natural process outside the National Park may induce significant land use change. An advisory committee including Parks Canada explored forest management options in the affected area. Permits for salvage logging of damaged stands have been released and a fuel reduction

project was carried out near a rural subdivision in the area. Road access for logging or firewood salvage could lead to wildlife habitat fragmentation, increased vehicle access and stream damage within the Alsek watershed. Logging-related management issues have prompted public interest in the status of the Greater Kluane Regional Land Use Plan (1992), which covers most of the upper watershed of the Alsek River. Despite lack of formal approval by the federal and territorial governments, the plan serves as a guideline for land use in the region.

"...It's my world...
what it hasn't got is not
worth having and what
it doesn't know is not
worth knowing..."

Water Rat speaks on rivers
From: *The Wind in the Willows*
by: Kenneth Grahame

River of the Gwichya Gwich'in

Arctic Red River

Northwest Territories (1993)

Exceptionally high fall water levels affected travel this past year on the Arctic Red. Releases from the W.A.C. Bennett Dam on the Peace River in British Columbia affect flow rates of the Mackenzie River, which in turn influences the lower section of the Arctic Red. Both rivers froze at very high levels, creating very rough ice conditions: the worst in memory for winter traveling.

Air photos of the lower river and vegetation mapping in the headwaters assisted the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board in grizzly bear and forestry management planning. The Arctic Red River watershed constitutes a large portion of the Gwich'in Settlement Area for which these resource management plans were developed.

The Gwich'in Interim Land Use Planning Board continued to work

with the Community of Tsiigehtchic to identify candidate protected areas. There are a number of proposed protected areas in the Arctic Red River watershed, including those identified as special consideration areas in the Arctic Red River Heritage River Management Plan. One of these is Jackfish Creek, a tributary of the Arctic Red which shelters an unusually old stand of white spruce. Given their proximity to the treeline and the prevalence of fire disturbance in these forests, these trees are remarkably large: a portion of one 750-year old deadfall was salvaged for display at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife.

The largest of these proposed protected areas is the portion of the Arctic Red River watershed (15,000 sq. km.) in the Mackenzie Mountains. This area,



Arctic Red River
Northwest Territories

known locally as the Source Peaks, is the northernmost extension of the Rocky Mountains and provides habitat for grizzly bears, Dall's sheep and woodland caribou. Government staff from the Northwest Territories and Yukon, and Gwich'in representatives, visited the headwaters of the Arctic Red River to conduct an evaluation of this area as a potential trans-territorial protected area. This group hiked along the NWT/Yukon border into the headwaters of the Bonnet Plume River, thus crossing from one Canadian Heritage River in the NWT to one in the Yukon.

The film "Seasons of the Arctic Red River" played on the Discovery Channel in the fall of 1997. It profiles the seasonal cycle of the Arctic Red River based on filming conducted in 1996-97.

Out of the Ancient Ice

Athabasca River

Jasper National Park, Alberta (1989)

The Athabasca River Valley is the heart and soul of Jasper National Park (JNP). The montane border is critical habitat for many of the region's mammals and birds. Most of the park's rivers flow into the Athabasca, which dominates the visitor experience both visually and as the central corridor for park visitors, services and highway/railroad traffic. Not surprisingly, user conflicts on the Athabasca focus many park management initiatives.

The cumulative effects of development and human use in the Athabasca Valley continues to be a major concern in JNP. Proposals to expand outlying accommodations, and changes to the current

townsite boundary, are now under review. In response, JNP has launched a cumulative effects assessment to examine the potential impacts of these changes on ecology and visitor experience. Indicators include: wildlife-human conflicts; large carnivore movement corridors; vegetation condition; water quality; highway wildlife mortality; infrastructure needs, and the park experience of visitors and of residents.

Human use in the montane landscape is the topic of a new three-year study by JNP and the University of Alberta. The basic premise of this multi-disciplinary project is that to understand what is occurring now we need to look at what



has happened in the past. Studies in paleoecology, archaeology, historical reconnaissance and ecology, vegetation change, and oral history will all help develop ecological restoration goals and techniques.

Ongoing research into glacial processes and the effects of climate change has demonstrated that the Athabasca Glacier has receded over 1.5 km in the past 100 years; it is now losing 16 million cubic metres more ice than is being replaced each year by accumulating snow. Since the Rocky Mountain glaciers are major contributors to prairie rivers during the summer, the future implications of these findings are significant.


The Yellowhead Ecosystem Working Group is a multi-stakeholder group which integrates land use planning for JNP and its bordering jurisdictions into the regional ecosystem. A new 1:250,000 ecological land classification map now provides a common ecological database for the region. This project is the first phase of an overall biodiversity strategy to manage shared resources such as the regional habitat supply for grizzly bears and mountain caribou; old growth forests; and common issues such as access, fire, and insect/disease management. JNP contributes to this strategy with an assessment of the montane's special physical and biodiversity features. This information will be linked to the Conservation Data Centre (CDC) to provide information on species and natural communities of concern, and used to develop a monitoring program to track the long range health of montane biota.

The elk population in the valley core has doubled since 1982, and is starting to damage ecological integrity. Elk browsing could reduce biodiversity in

the near future. The past few years have also recorded more than 500 aggressive elk-human encounters, and 26 injuries to people. Increased highway and rail traffic is also increasing wildlife accidents. Speed zones, signage and driver education have reduced these for ungulates, but not for carnivores. An elk advisory board of local interests and park staff are considering complex long-term solutions.

Harlequin ducks and rafting on the Maligne River remain in conflict. The Maligne is home to one of Alberta's largest known Harlequin breeding populations and to three commercial raft companies. A study undertaken by Parks Canada found that boating displaced Harlequin ducks from preferred sites on the river. A recent Options Analysis for the mid-Maligne River seeks public input into the decision-making process; options range from no boating through various degrees of use. A decision is pending a court challenge.

Overall recreation in and along the Athabasca River is on the rise. JNP recently released its "Guidelines for River Use Management" outlining future approaches for Jasper's road-accessible rivers. Ecological constraints and visitor opportunities shaped specific guidelines for each river stretch. These identify opportunities for interpretation, education and restoration and allocate commercial and non-commercial use. Details are being negotiated for outfitters to require a licence of occupation, to be available through open competition. Benefits of this approach include: a fair financial return to the park; more consistent standards; a more secure business planning time period; and greater clarity between Parks Canada's and outfitters' expectations.



"...Where a river runs
through every rhyme..."

From: Robbie's Birthday Gift
by: Max Finkelstein



Deep in the Heart of the Land

Bloodvein River

Atikaki Provincial Park, Manitoba (1987)

The removal of an outcamp on Kautunigan Lake was completed in 1997 after lengthy discussions and negotiations with the operator. Discussions with other commercial outfitters continue in an effort to reduce the number of outcamps along the river. Removal of outcamps from the river corridor will be accomplished as opportunities allow. The removal of these camps and structures will enhance the river's wilderness recreation values and will lessen the potential impact on the natural integrity values of the river.

The integrity of the cultural and recreational values of the Bloodvein River remain unchanged and there continues to be interest in the river for its wilderness canoeing opportunities.

The Manitoba Department of Natural Resources continues periodic backcountry patrols throughout Atikaki with special emphasis on the Bloodvein River.

The designation of the Ontario section of the Bloodvein as a Heritage River opens possibilities for interprovincial co-operation on a transboundary river. Manitoba looks forward to working with Ontario on partnership initiatives.

A background study of the Red River in Manitoba was prepared to assess the values of the river against the CHRS natural and cultural frameworks. The work also included an assessment of some of the potential issues associated with managing the Red as a Heritage River.

The Singing Wilderness

Boundary Waters/Voyageur Waterway

La Vérendrye/Quetico/Pigeon River Provincial Parks, Ontario (1996)

In its first year as a designated Canadian Heritage River, the Boundary Waters/Voyageur Waterway (BWVW) saw no changes in the condition of its heritage values. A fire plan approved in 1998 is intended to allow fire to fulfil its ecological role, a specific natural resource management objective. Cultural resource planning is also expected to begin in 1998. Specific management goals centre on the conservation of the resource for the benefit of present and future generations, and on identifying the interest of the Lac La Croix First Nation in conserving vital aspects of Anishinabe history at a number of sites.

This planning will enhance the BWVW cultural values in Quetico Provincial Park.

A major amendment to consider aircraft access at Prairie Portage access zone is also expected in 1998. Planning will determine acceptability of aircraft landings to provide Canadian air access to this U.S. border zone, now currently inaccessible to Canadians except through the U.S. Finally, an interior visitor survey in 1998 will update and enhance knowledge of visitors using those portions of the BWVW within Quetico Provincial Park.

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Link to the North

Clearwater River

Clearwater Provincial Park, Saskatchewan (1986)

Managing the Clearwater River as a wilderness park has led the province to examine licensing and regulation of canoe and rafting outfitters and to assess the need for tighter controls or quotas on its use. User survey and carrying capacity studies indicate no need for use quotas at this time, and that various uses are still occurring in harmony with each other and the environment.

Two community-driven proposals have challenged the province: for a family group community on the site of a traditional-use trapping cabin along the river, and for an ecotourism lodge within the park. Although these locally driven initiatives could not be supported in the form proposed, close discussions with the proponents continue to seek mutually acceptable solutions.



In the Footsteps of the Voyageurs

French River

French River Provincial Park, Ontario (1986)

This past year saw a provincial re-evaluation of the completeness of Ontario's provincial parks system called Lands for Life. The French River is within the Lands for Life Great Lakes-St. Lawrence planning area, and the process has identified representative landforms and vegetation east and west of the river mouth at Georgian Bay (6 000 ha), and upstream on a bay in Lake Nipissing (1 000 ha). Lands for Life has proposed widening the park to include these features, and linking French River and Restoule Provincial Parks via a 17 km corridor along the Restoule River canoe route downstream of Chaudière Rapids. Such amendments to the park management plan could enhance protection of the French as a Canadian Heritage River, and increase awareness of the CHRS through an expanded French River Provincial Park and the province-wide Lands for Life process.



French River at Georgian Bay
French River Provincial Park, Ontario

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More information on the Lands for Life process and the progress of the Lands for Life Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Round Table is available at <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca> or c/o MNR Project Team, 4th Floor, South Tower, 300 Water Street, Peterborough, ON K9J 3C7.





In the Heartland of Southern Ontario

Grand River

Ontario (1994)

The Grand Actions Registry of Accomplishments and Commitments was a direct outcome of The Grand Strategy in 1994. Since 1995, the Registry has recognized and celebrated individual and collective efforts to improve the health of the Grand River watershed; promoted heritage awareness and appreciation; and developed recreation and tourism. Through almost 200 voluntary submissions each year, the Registry communicates to contributors a sense of accomplishment and recognition; credibility and profile; and most importantly, networking and partnership opportunities.

The January 1998 launch of the GRCA Conservation Action Centre further fosters community stewardship. Using staff expertise, the Centre provides one-on-one technical assistance to private landowners, community groups, schools, and municipalities through training workshops, volunteer events, information products, materials, and logistics. A core team of multi-disciplinary experts supports water quality improvements, stream rehabilitation, erosion control and bioengineering, conservation farming, tree planting, and habitat enhancement.

Since the CHRS nomination of the Grand in 1990, GRCA Conservation Areas along the river have seen visitation increase over 30%, to approximately 1,100,000 visitors last year. This has created many new jobs and economic benefits to Grand River communities. To keep pace with demand, the Conservation Authority has upgraded programs and facilities. A computerized system allows advance camping reservations, and over 100 km of rail trails will see increasing use as they are linked through the Trans-Canada Trail system.

River touring is on the rise, particularly from the Elora Gorge downstream to Paris. One of the most popular and thrilling new activities is tubing on the Grand River through Elora Gorge. In 1997, the Conservation Authority opened a tube rental concession there which also supplies life jackets and safety helmets. In recent years, six entrepreneurs have established canoe/kayak rentals, shuttle service and guided trips.

Local tackle shops and outfitters report an increase in sales and fishing licenses for the Grand River watershed. In fact, the last two years have seen an influx of "tourist" anglers, due in part to high profile national and international sports magazines featuring fishing along the Grand. A stretch of the river near Fergus is now considered a "world class" fly fishing area for brown trout, and CKCO-TV in Kitchener highlighted Grand River fly fishing in its August 1, 1997 edition of "Province Wide". Other television features included Bob Izumi's "Real Fishing" show and Jim and Kelli Watt's show, aired to U.S. audiences on ESPN in December 1997.

The Travel Trade Marketplace in Montreal boosted the concept of linking communities for tourism marketing. In 1996, watershed marketing representatives listened to travel writers and reporters describing experiences they found interesting to write about. A strong eco-tourism theme emerged, focusing on the river. In 1997, the marketing group returned to Montreal with a highly successful exhibit featuring community attractions and points of interest along the Grand.

"Peace I ask of thee,
O River"

– Camp Song



In response to the success of the concept of Grand River Country, several joint partners designed a new full-colour brochure to welcome visitors and highlight attractions and outdoor recreation opportunities along the Grand River. Over 50,000 copies have been distributed through tourism and information centres and the Grand River Conservation Authority. The brochure recently won the Economic Developers Council of Ontario Inc. (EDCO) "Special Purpose Publication" award.

In 1997, a new initiative for high quality ecotourism and soft adventure worked through five Conservation Authorities, including the GRCA. This Conservation Lands of Ontario project utilizes the Canadian Tourism Commission's Industry Enhancement Program to develop new alliances for enhanced tourism products, information and customer service. This exciting initiative is working! The first group tours will begin in early April and many more are planned throughout the 1998 season. Using an "Ecotalent Bank" of trained interpreters, the Conservation Lands of Ontario offer new programs and destinations, seamless service and expert guides. The goal of The Conservation Lands of Ontario is to become a model for co-operative marketing and sustainable tourism in an urban fringe area.

The Grand River Water Quality Model was updated in 1996 and refined in 1997 for the central Grand River. This dynamic model predicts the impact of sewage treatment plants, urban storm water runoff, and diffuse sources of pollution. Public fisheries presentations contributed to a draft

Fisheries Management Plan for the Grand River watershed. The first phase of a Regional Hydrology Study was also completed in 1997, consisting of a database management system for new and existing water well logs. Additional research began in 1997 to assess community capacity for heritage planning, management and decision-making.

The "Focus on Watershed Issues" report, completed in December 1997, is a concise summary of the current state of the Grand River watershed and of the vision, goals and management principles for The Grand Strategy. The report assesses population growth and development, water quantity and quality, fisheries, natural areas and biodiversity, outdoor recreation and human heritage. Copies of the report are available through the GRCA.

The Grand Actions newsletter had a 1997 circulation of over 3,000 and is now published 10 times a year. Since June 1996, the newsletter has provided effective communication about Grand River watershed management by highlighting community events and activities towards the progress of The Grand Strategy. A survey included in the October issue garnered positive reader feedback and over \$1,300 in financial support.

Designation of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River has provided a strong rallying point for key river issues. This has led to new alliances, joint partnerships and actions around watershed resource issues, heritage awareness, marketing and promotions, and information sharing.





Salt Water River

Hillsborough River

Prince Edward Island (1997)

PEI's gentle Hillsborough River, designated in January 1997, is a rich and diverse ecosystem that provides habitats for salmon, trout, striped bass and one-third of the Island's oyster harvest, as well as mink, red fox, bald eagle and osprey. From the beginning, the Hillsborough River Association's public events have immersed the community in the river's natural and cultural heritage. This process continued through the well-attended plaque unveiling, which set the stage for a week-long celebration of the arrival of the Glenaladale settlers 250 years ago. The success of these events has spawned plans for an annual "River Day" to commence in early summer 1998.

River access improved last year with the completion of a section of the Confederation Trail along the water's edge, from the Scotchfort monument site to Mount Stewart. Community meetings during the winter discussed extending the trail further along the river toward Charlottetown.

Agricultural erosion, siltation and pollution of Island rivers have had a good hearing in the Provincial Legislature and news media this past year. Outcomes of this larger debate will benefit the Hillsborough by involving the public in some very sensitive issues and strengthening the case for the Hillsborough management plan.

River of the Living Barrens

Kazan River

Northwest Territories (1990)

A Conservation and Presentation Report for Fall Caribou Crossing National Historic Site (NHS) on the Kazan River was released in November 1997. The Kazan is a natural barrier to the annual migration of the Kaminuriak caribou herd, enabling Inuit hunters lying in wait at preferred crossing sites to capture large numbers of caribou. The rich archaeological remains of Fall Caribou Crossing NHS provide opportunities to examine the cultural meaning of the Arctic landscape to the Inuit, whose knowledge and expertise have ensured their survival in the area for centuries.

Harvaqtuuq Historic Site Committee of Baker Lake and Parks Canada prepared the report, which guides the protection, presentation and operation of the site for the next decade. Site management is the responsibility of the community of Baker Lake, and will respect the continued Inuit use of the area while providing for monitoring of the river and important archaeological sites. While no permanent structures will be permitted on site, an exhibition interpreting the area will be installed in the new Baker Lake Inuit Heritage Centre set to open June 3, 1998.



River of Time

Kicking Horse River

Yoho National Park, British Columbia (1989)

Parks Canada continues to monitor environmental conditions on the Kicking Horse River. The most formal components of this monitoring program include stream inventory, wetland monitoring and water quality sampling. Co-op students, park staff and volunteers inventoried biological, physical and chemical parameters of major tributaries of the Kicking Horse River (Amiskwi/Emerald/Otterhead rivers and Boulder/Porcupine creeks). A co-operative wetland monitoring program with the Canadian Wildlife Service tracks waterfowl use and productivity, and basic water chemistry and water levels for many wetlands within the Kicking Horse Valley. Several of these sites are within the floodplain, tying their hydrology directly to the Kicking Horse. Water quality sampling includes monthly and bi-monthly water sampling for chemical analysis by Environment Canada; water quality (potability) analysis by Parks Canada; and rain water sampling for water quality and airborne hydrocarbons. Parks Canada also continues to assess and monitor contaminated sites within the Kicking Horse Valley; site remediation costs make this a long-term project. The monitoring assessment showed no significant negative trends or changes, apart from delays in waterfowl and vegetation due to a late spring.

On December 2, 1997, a sixty-eight-car grain train derailed at two locations, one in the Upper Spiral Tunnel and one in the town of Field near the Kicking Horse River. Spilled grain did not reach the river itself, despite extensive damage. Spill cleanup and equipment removal required temporary span bridges and haul roads across the Kicking Horse;

all structures were monitored continuously and fully deactivated after cleanup. Ongoing monitoring and mitigation will prevent the site from becoming a wildlife attractant, avoiding habituation or direct mortality.

Commercial rafting continues to be a popular use of the non-designated section of the river outside of Yoho National Park. River use within the



Overlooking the Kicking Horse River Watershed
Yoho National Park, British Columbia



park continues to be restricted to private boaters and to date has been minimal. The Park continues to review commercial use on the Kicking Horse and will likely address the issue more formally during park management planning.

Elsewhere in the watershed, research continues to enhance understanding of both human and ecological relationships of the Kicking Horse to its environs. The Friends of Yoho continued restoration and interpretation of the Deerledge Warden

Cabin, and Jeannette Ruth Mangies' thesis examined historical resources in the Park through a study of the internment camp at Otter Creek. On the natural side, an ecological land classification was completed and printed; biodiversity inventory continued at the Smithsonian/Man and the Biosphere forest biodiversity plots; and a science advisory committee held its first meeting on draft guidelines for research concerning the Burgess Shales.

The Spirit of the Voyageurs

Mattawa River

Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain Provincial Parks, Ontario (1988)



Morning Mist on Pine Lake
Mattawa River Provincial Park, Ontario

Like the French River, the Mattawa was reviewed this year by the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Round Table of the Lands For Life provincial park planning process. Widening the park near Lake Talon will capture representative and scenic features. Also, Ontario continues since last year to work with the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority and Parks Canada to extend the CHRS designation of the Mattawa upstream to include the historic La Vase Portage. This 11 km section will link the Mattawa to Lake Nipissing and hence to the French River, restoring this key portage to its historic condition. Widening and lengthening protection of the Mattawa will make Eric Morse's "little gem of history" gleam a little brighter along the Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route.

Rocky Mountain River

North Saskatchewan River

Banff National Park, Alberta (1989)



River use on the North Saskatchewan within Banff National Park remains low. The CHRS program is still profiled at the nearby Glacier Gallery Columbia Icefields exhibit, which receives some 400,000 visitors between May 1 and October 15. The closing of the Saskatchewan Crossing Park Warden station has reduced the Park's ability to monitor river use activities, and curtailed river interpretation opportunities. There are reports of jet boats entering the Park using the North Saskatchewan River. However, the recently approved Banff National Park management plan does ensure that decisions about the North Saskatchewan River reflect its Canadian Heritage River status.

Discussions and public information meetings have been held to consider nomination of another stretch of the North Saskatchewan River outside Banff National Park in the Rocky Mountain House area. Nominating this reach to the CHRS has been suggested to coincide with the 1999 Bicentennial project at Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site or as a Year 2000 millennium project. There are significant historic linkages between Rocky Mountain House, the North Saskatchewan River and Howse Pass National Historic Site.

Waves, Whales and Wolverines

Seal River

Manitoba (1992)

Conditions of the natural and cultural features along the Seal River remained unchanged during 1997-1998. The river's isolation proves to be its greatest asset in protecting its significant values. At least a dozen parties paddled the river in 1997 and no polar bear problems were encountered. Should recreational use increase, strategies to control garbage and damage to sites used for camping may be needed.

The Manitoba Department of Natural Resources and several First Nations groups reached a memorandum of understanding for consultations on protected areas. Hopefully, this agreement will also help to re-establish consultation avenues with the Sayisi Dene First Nation with respect to the Seal River.





An Arctic Oasis

Soper River

Katannilik Territorial Park, Northwest Territories (1992)

The physical condition of the Soper River remained unchanged in 1997. No development affecting water quality or quantity has occurred in the basin in the past year; a report documenting the baseline water quality and quantity data collected between 1993 and 1995 is now available. While Indian and Northern Affairs Canada continues to collect hydrometric data at its monitoring station, no water quality information was collected in 1997. Funding is being sought to reinstate water quality monitoring in 1998.

The Soper River continued to attract travellers to the Baffin region of Nunavut. The river was featured in a segment of "Trailside – Make Your Own Adventure," an adventure tourism program co-produced by New Media Inc. and the Teaching Learning Network. The Katannilik edition of "Great Canadian Parks" will also film the Soper River in the summer of 1998; watch for it on the Discovery Channel.



Soper River
Katannilik Territorial Park, Northwest Territories

River of Legend and Lore

South Nahanni River

Nahanni National Park Reserve, Northwest Territories (1987)



Parks Canada completed a study of the South Nahanni woodland caribou herd in March 1998. Consultations and co-operation with the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories raised the profile of the South Nahanni herd and demonstrated important transboundary concerns. As a result, the Government of the Northwest Territories made a further three-year commitment to the project. A final report on the study's first three years should be available in July 1998.

An ecological monitoring program continues to link Nahanni National Park Reserve with other national parks in northern Canada. Work focuses on Rabbitkettle Lake, complemented by data from the water quality monitoring program along the South Nahanni River.

The ongoing voluntary River Incident Survey met with limited success in 1997. Of 122 groups which received forms, only 27 groups returned the form, for a return rate of 22%. No serious incidents or injuries were reported in 1997. As in 1996, groups reporting the most incidents on the South Nahanni River listed their experience as Level 2 (limited whitewater). As the data base develops, Parks Canada hopes to be able to correlate incident frequency with location, to the corresponding water levels, resulting in managers being able to provide a higher resolution of hazard information to river travellers.

An exciting event in 1997 was the rise and fall of two large lakes at the junction of Cathedral and Clearwater Creeks. A major slope failure resulted in a landslide during the winter of 1997. By early summer, the water of Clearwater Creek had backed up behind the new dam, forming a lake more than five kilometres long. In mid-July, the earthen dam blocking the valley partially failed, quickly releasing vast amounts of water.

Visitors reported that river levels rose more than four metres overnight as the huge pulse surged through the South Nahanni River valley. Groups camped at The Gate (Pulpit Rock) and in Second Canyon did not have time to seek high ground, and instead had to quickly load their canoes and get on the river to ride out the surge. Much of Deadmen Valley was also briefly under water. Environment Canada engineers visited the failed dam and observed that the water level of the new lake had apparently dropped more than 20 metres. The stability of the natural dam remains in question, although the lake is now draining through the dam's porous earth. Parks Canada will monitor the area closely in 1998 to assess possible risks to river users.



South Nahanni River
*Nahanni National Park Reserve,
Northwest Territories*



Currents of History

St. Croix River

New Brunswick (1991)

The St. Croix is both a Canadian Heritage River and an International Heritage Waterway. This summary highlights the year's activities on the Canadian side of the system.

History is an integral part of the St. Croix's identity. On the tidewaters, Parks Canada opened an interpretive outlook with a panoramic view of St. Croix Island, an international historic site shared by the United States and Canada. The province of New Brunswick formed plans to create a public park facing this island and local residents pledged efforts to remodel a 170-year-old farmhouse on the same property into a heritage centre. Upriver, people shared woodsmen's tales, old movies and mugs of hot tea in a Logging Heritage Evening that relived the not-so-long-ago river drives on the St. Croix (the last was in 1965).

On Canadian Heritage Day in February, the St. Croix International Waterway Commission inaugurated a St. Croix Heritage Honour Roll to recognize individuals and organizations who celebrate or preserve the waterway's natural and cultural heritage. The initial recipients included a fourth grade class, a chamber of commerce, a municipality and four individuals.

Consistent with its past, the St. Croix remains a working river. During the year, comprehensive environmental permits were developed for a granite quarry that will expand a regional port and environmental assessments neared completion for a natural gas pipeline that will cross the river in 1999. Safety programs were reviewed for the system's five international dams, and maintenance work was completed on two bridges.

The waterway's largest municipality, St. Stephen, unveiled a waterfront redevelopment plan with emphasis on greenspace, historic buildings and public activities. At the mouth of the St. Croix, fishermen and boaters welcomed the reopening of the St. Andrew's wharf, which had been destroyed by fire in 1995.

While New Brunswick's Department of Natural Resources & Energy considered how to proceed with a planned linear St. Croix River Provincial Park, it earmarked significant funding for improvements to recreational access and facilities along the waterway. Local interests and the Nature Trust of New Brunswick developed a proposal to establish a 300-acre nature area at Todd's Point, on the tidewaters.

Government agencies and local groups combined efforts to improve water quality and assess clam stocks in tidal Oak Bay, toward a reopening of a 1400-acre area to clam digging after nearly fifty years of closure. Local efforts to rebuild a native Atlantic salmon population showed early results with 40% of the year's spawning run coming from the redevelopment program. Fish Friends' projects in schools along the waterway hatched and released young fish to help these efforts. On inland waters, native landlocked salmon and smallmouth bass populations continued to rise.

A fall workshop on St. Croix water management highlighted the last decade's achievements in multiple-use planning, quality improvement and fisheries enhancement, and looked to the challenges of the future. In these activities, as in all others on the international St. Croix, residents and governments continue to work together to manage and protect a unique waterway heritage.

"To smell the air,
to hear a loon,
It sets my soul to
singing once again"

From: "Quefco" song
by: Claudia Schmidt



Where Time and Light Stand Still

Thelon River

Northwest Territories (1990)

The physical condition of the Thelon River remained unchanged over the last year. While this remote river receives relatively few visitors, increased mineral exploration activity is occurring in the adjacent Slave Geological Province. Two hundred and seventy-five kilometres of the upper Thelon River pass through the Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary. Established in 1927, the sanctuary is one of the largest protected areas in Canada at 52,000 km, with a western boundary 250 km from the Dene community of Lutsel K'e and an eastern boundary 200 km west of the nearest Inuit community of Baker Lake.

On April 1, 1999, the boundary between the new territory of Nunavut and the remnant western territory will bisect the sanctuary, creating Nunavut and non-Nunavut portions. However, in accord with terms of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and the wishes of the Dene of Lutsel K'e, a joint management plan applying to the entire sanctuary has been prepared. The plan is based on extensive community consultations and provides the foundation for the long-term protection and management of the sanctuary.

River of Gold

Yukon River

The Thirty Mile Section, Yukon (1991)

Plans for the 1998 Gold Rush Centennial Celebration continued on The Thirty Mile with the development of additional organized camping facilities. The Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation conducted monitoring and interpretation along the river, interacting with river users and maintaining campsites. Visitation was up between 8-30% in communities across the Yukon last year, and downstream surveys on the Yukon River estimated 2300 visitor contacts. Some 1500 of these probably arrived via The Thirty Mile. The Klondike Gold Rush Centennial is already increasing visitation, and The Thirty Mile is expected to be a popular Centennial destination for both day trippers and distance paddlers.



Yukon River
The Thirty Mile Section, Yukon



STUDIES, PLANS AND RESEARCH

As the lead federal agency in the CHRS, one of the roles of Parks Canada is to provide technical and financial assistance to participating jurisdictions for studies and plans that lead to including rivers in the System. This assistance is directed to specific projects on the advice of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board. Parks Canada staff co-operate in the preparation of system studies, background research studies, nomination documents and management plans. In addition, Parks Canada undertakes research studies of national scope on river heritage topics.

British Columbia has also taken a leadership role in broadening the concept of Heritage Rivers with the inauguration of the first provincial Heritage Rivers system. The British Columbia Heritage Rivers Board has developed objectives and operating principles for commemorative, rather than regulatory, recognition of provincially significant rivers as a community approach to land use planning. To date, eighteen rivers (the target goal) have been included in the BC Heritage Rivers System, and two more – the Cowichan and the Stikine – have been recommended for future nomination into the CHRS program. The BC Heritage Rivers Board's mandate, originally for three years ending in April 1998, has been extended by the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks for a further two years. Information on BC Heritage Rivers can be obtained from the BC Heritage Rivers Board, 2nd Floor, 800 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC V8V 1X4 via the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks ph: (250) 387-5002 fax: 387-5757. E-mail contact is bchrs@islandnet.com. WWW is <http://www.islandnet.com/bchrs>.

System Studies

System studies are comparative analyses of rivers within a province or territory and are undertaken to identify potential Canadian Heritage Rivers. They address, in a general fashion, the heritage and recreational values of a broad cross-section of a province's or territory's rivers and determine which ones appear to meet the CHRS selection guidelines and which can feasibly be managed as Canadian Heritage Rivers.

In 1997-98, Parks Canada and staff of the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources completed the systems study of 21 rivers in Manitoba begun in 1996-97. This study was the first to make use of the new national frameworks for natural and human heritage, and included an initial attempt to design a recreational framework that might, in the future, be used system-wide.

Background Studies

To provide more detailed information on the suitability of rivers, or sections of rivers, for inclusion in the CHRS, governments may undertake background research studies. These studies attempt to collect all available information, from secondary sources and through field verification, on a river's human and natural heritage, its recreational opportunities and on issues surrounding its possible management as a Canadian Heritage River. CHRS selection and integrity guidelines are used to assess the study river's heritage and recreational values in detail.

In 1997-98, work began on background studies of the Detroit River (Ontario), Red River (Manitoba) and Athabasca River (Alberta). Work continues on a study of the possible extension of the already designated section of the Mattawa River to include its entire length and possibly the La Vase Portage. Background



studies of the Thames and Humber Rivers (Ontario) were completed in 1997-98 and nomination documents were prepared (see below) for both rivers.

The draft background study of the Peace River was completed in 1997-98, encompassing the main stem from Hudson's Hope, BC to the confluence with the Slave River in northeastern Alberta. Strong municipal support is a CHRS requirement in Alberta, and during the study process, several municipalities requested that the study not proceed further. As a result, work on the Peace River has halted for the present.

Nomination Documents

For the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to consider recommending a river for inclusion in the CHRS, nominating governments must complete a nomination document and submit it for formal review by the Board. In 1997-98, nomination documents were completed for the St. Mary's, Humber and Thames Rivers (Ontario) and for the Little Southwest Miramichi (New Brunswick). As of March 31, 1998, nomination of a Yukon section of the Tatshenshini was in progress and is expected to be tabled in June 1998.

Management Plans

Before recommending a river for formal designation, the Board must be assured that the appropriate jurisdictions have committed to manage the candidate river as a Canadian Heritage River. The vehicle for this is a management plan which not only includes evidence of commitment, in the form of appropriate signatures, but also describes a management area around the nominated river or river section and the policies and practices that will be put in place to fulfil CHRS objectives. The Board reviews documents submitted by member jurisdictions to ensure that they contain these basic components.

In 1997-98, three management plans were tabled to the Board for the Shelburne (Nova Scotia), Bonnet Plume (Yukon) and Upper Restigouche (New Brunswick) Rivers. A draft heritage strategy for the Bloodvein River in Woodland Caribou Provincial Park was completed in 1998. A final document is expected next year.

Parks Canada continued to assist in ongoing management planning for five candidate Canadian Heritage Rivers: the Clearwater (Alberta), the Fraser (British Columbia), the Margaree (Nova Scotia), and the Main and Bay du Nord (Newfoundland).

Research

National Frameworks As the Canadian Heritage Rivers System matures into its fifteenth year to include more than thirty rivers, assessment methods grow with it. *A Framework for the Natural Values of Canadian Heritage Rivers* (1998) was completed in February, complementing its companion *A Cultural Framework for Canadian Heritage Rivers* (1997). Both frameworks are proposed to help guide the CHR Board in overseeing the future inclusion and management of rivers in the System. The process was furthered by a study completed in March 1998 by Jim Murphy of Geoheritage Planning, *Validation and Application of a Framework for the Natural Values of Canadian Heritage Rivers* (1998). This study assigns and rates the natural heritage values of existing nominated and designated Canadian Heritage Rivers to the themes, subthemes, and elements of the natural heritage framework. This resulted in a thematic overview of natural heritage values now represented in the System, thus testing the framework itself. Copies of all three studies are available through the Secretariat.





PUBLIC PROMOTION AND MARKETING

Print and Electronic Media

A key new document was produced by the CHR Board and Secretariat in 1997-98. The CHRS Charter, this report's featured theme, reaffirms the commitment by Ministers of all member jurisdictions to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System through its Strategic Plan. The original poster-format Charter, in both official languages, was distributed nation-wide to Ministers and senior officials from all jurisdictions. The Charter and Strategic Plan will guide the future development and growth of the CHRS over the next decade, and we are pleased to include a brochure version of the Charter as an insert to this report.

New fact sheets were produced for the Clearwater River, integrating information on the Alberta section with an update of Saskatchewan material. A draft fact sheet was also prepared for the Fraser River in British Columbia. The *What are the Benefits of Canadian Heritage River Designation?* brochure and information kit folders were updated and revised, and a number of background reports, nomination documents and management plans and fact sheets were reprinted as stocks of these documents were very low. Work began in 1997-98 to make fact sheets and annual reports available via the Internet (see below).

An expanded mailing of the Spring 1998 *Heritage Riverscapes* newsletter included the addresses of the hundreds who wrote in following Jim Fox's national Canadian Press article featured in newspapers across Canada in the

spring of 1997. A survey mailed with this issue will gauge readers' level of interest in distributing future newsletters electronically, either via e-mail or the WorldWide Web. Website development continued with the support of volunteers and NGO partners in 1997-98, and as of this writing the CHRS has registered its own domain at www.chrs.ca. This site now includes basic CHRS information, photographs and fact sheets, and will continue to grow and develop in 1998-99.

Conferences and Exhibits

The newly renovated CHRS travelling exhibit went on display at several national conferences in 1997-98. "Ecosystem Management in a Watershed Context" was the theme of this year's Conference of the North American Soil and Water Conservation Society, held in Toronto, July 22-25, 1997. The conference drew over 1,000 delegates from a membership of 10,000, including active chapters in most Canadian provinces. The Rivers and Lakes Foundation of Canada provided volunteers to help the Secretariat staff the display, as they had done for the 1996 World Conservation Congress in Montreal. The CHRS travelling exhibit was also on display at several other events including: the Ottawa Boat, Sportsmen's and Cottage Show; the Heritage Canoe Festival in Peterborough; and the Grand Opening of the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association's Ron Johnstone Paddling Centre in Merrickville, Ontario.



The CHRS worked closely with the hosts of the Second Canada's River Heritage Conference (May 1998) in Richmond (Vancouver), BC. "Rivers Conference 1998: Conserving and Restoring our River Heritage" leveraged outside funds at a ratio of almost 3:1. A complete report on this conference will be included in the next *Heritage Riverscapes* newsletter and in next year's Annual Report.

Co-operative Activities and Partnerships

Retracing the Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route Over the summer of 1997, Max Finkelstein of the CHRS Secretariat continued to promote the program during personal leave as an unpaid volunteer. In early May, Max put his solo canoe into the Ottawa River and began to paddle upstream. His goal was to retrace the Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route to Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, and to complete the journey to Bella Coola, British Columbia the following year. Combined with Max's earlier "Clean Water Dream" paddles, this trip becomes a singular river journey from Atlantic to Pacific in the steps of those who built the nation.

On July 30, Max arrived in Cumberland House to complete the first 3000 km of his canoe pilgrimage across Canada. His route included travel on the Mattawa, French, St. Mary's and Boundary Waters, four rivers currently nominated or designated as Canadian Heritage Rivers. The trip attracted extensive media attention: CBC Newsworld television broadcast a national interview, and CBC Ottawa

produced a provincially-broadcast TV documentary. CBC Radio also covered the story on the Morning Show, and newspapers across the country featured the trip. Volunteers and supporters set up a website (www.voyageur.carleton.ca) for trip journals and photographs, and Max also gave numerous presentations along the way to students and other groups of interested Canadians. A one-hour documentary of the entire journey is currently in production.

Thousands of individuals were made aware of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System as a personal experience and a national resource over the summer of 1997. The Secretariat has seen a large increase in requests for information and received calls from individuals planning similar trips for the Millennium. By following Max's example, either on their own voyages or as "armchair explorers" via the website, many Canadians will be inspired to enact their dreams on Canada's Heritage Rivers. The nationally proclaimed Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route is a lifeline to our Canadian heritage, perhaps best rediscovered anew with each generation by paddlers like Max. Many of the rivers Mackenzie travelled have been linked in a national network by their inclusion in the CHRS. These are the rivers that built our country. When Max completes his journey in 1998, this awareness can only increase "from sea to sea."

Information on the Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route is available from the Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route Association at 1-888-484-7035 or at www.amvr.org.





Canadian Heritage Rivers Calendar

The Board once again renewed its agreement with the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA) to produce the 1998 Heritage Rivers Calendar. The 1998 calendar was considered a big success with 11,000 calendars printed generating almost \$28,000 in gross sales. Calendar proceeds are used to support national river conservation projects sponsored by the CRCA, such as river clean-ups. The 1999 calendar is available for \$12.95 plus shipping and handling. More information about the calendar may be obtained by writing to the CRCA at their new Ron Johnstone Paddling Centre in Merrickville, Ontario (PO Box 398, 446 Main St. W., Merrickville, ON K0G 1N0) or at www.crca.ca.

CHRS Commemorative Program

Three plaque unveiling ceremonies were held during the summer of 1997. These events are an integral part of public awareness for the CHRS and are increasingly serving as the focus for community-driven special events programming.

The ceremony for the Hillsborough River took place on July 12, 1997 at Scotchfort, Prince Edward Island. The plaque was unveiled by Federal Labour Minister Lawrence MacAulay, provincial Health and Social Services Minister Mildred Dover, and Chair of the Hillsborough River Association Maurice Fitzpatrick. The 250-person audience included the Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island, Gilbert Clements, Mayor of Charlottetown Ian MacDonald, and many federal, provincial and municipal officials.

The plaque for the Boundary Waters-Voyageur Waterway was unveiled on July 5, 1997 by Norm Richards, Managing Director of Ontario Parks, and by Mr. Robert Atasis, Chief of the Lac La Croix First Nation, at Pigeon River Provincial Park. The ceremony was well attended given its remote location.

The Shelburne River ceremony was held September 19, 1997 near Pollards Falls, Nova Scotia. Plaque unveiling was shared by three representatives: Kennie MacAskill, provincial Minister for Natural Resources; Mart Johanson, Parks Canada Field Unit Superintendent for mainland Nova Scotia; and Jon Porter, Vice President of Bowater-Mersey Forest Products. Over 100 people joined these dignitaries for the ceremony, the first CHR designation in Nova Scotia.

For More Information

Questions and requests for general information on the CHRS should be addressed to:

Marketing and Communications
Canadian Heritage Rivers Secretariat
Department of Canadian Heritage
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0M5
fax: (819) 994-5140
www.chrs.ca

Requests for detailed information on specific Canadian Heritage Rivers, or community inquiries regarding new nominations and designations, should be addressed to the appropriate federal, provincial or territorial Board member. (See list on p. 8).