



THE CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS SYSTEM



ANNUAL REPORT
1998-1999



April 1999

*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 fifteenth Annual Report on the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) for the fiscal year 1998-99.

Respectfully submitted,



Gordon Prouse
Chairperson
Canadian Heritage Rivers Board,
1998-99



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Chairperson's Report

Caring for the Waters that Connect Us

"Rivers connect us. They join us to our neighbours upstream and down. They link us to our past and to our future. Rivers are common bonds, even where they form borders. Rivers give our lives a common purpose, which, in its best manifestations, translates into environmental and historical stewardship, and into art, music and literature."

From the Mission Statement, the Third
Canada's River Heritage Conference

Rivers connect people and communities more than any other feature in the Canadian landscape. The Canadian Heritage Rivers System is a national conservation program which, like the rivers it protects, also connects people and communities. As people get involved at the community level to conserve and promote their river within the CHRS, they become joined in a common purpose. At first this support and interest may be a mere trickle. Stewardship often begins with the efforts of a few concerned individuals. However, momentum builds as others get involved – landowners, local businesses, community associations, Aboriginal peoples, historical societies and other interested members of the public, all begin working toward a vision for their river. Though there may be many twists and turns, the flow gradually reaches its full force.

The CHRS serves as a focus for all the contributors who decide to nominate their river, develop a management plan and eventually designate that river. There has been tremendous interest and increase in community support and growth for the CHRS during 1998-99. The four new rivers designated over the past year are the Fraser in British Columbia, the Margaree River in Nova Scotia and the Humber and Bloodvein rivers in Ontario. The section of the Tatshenshini River in Yukon was also nominated this past year. In total, thirty-three rivers are currently in the system for a total length of 8295 kms.

I am very pleased to report that in September, 1998 all Ministers responsible for the CHRS program again affirmed their support for the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. This political support builds upon the commitment articulated in the 1997 CHRS Charter which endorsed the CHRS Strategic Plan initiatives through 2006. Federal/provincial/territorial charters are rare in conservation, and the tangible recommitment to the goals of Canada's rivers program will stand as a symbol for the next decade.

The year ahead looks like an exciting one with the inclusion in April, 1999 of a new territory, Nunavut, and a major CHRS exhibit being planned for the Pan Am Games in my home town of Winnipeg.

I would like to thank all the community organizations, volunteers, planners, CHRS Board members, and the Secretariat staff for their contributions to this year's achievements. It has been an honour to serve as Chairperson.



Gordon Prouse
Chairperson
Canadian Heritage Rivers Board
1998-99

Status of the CHRS

Thirty-three rivers have been nominated to the CHRS, totalling 8295 kms. Twenty-five 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.



Designated Rivers

River	Province/Territory (Park ¹)	Date of Designation	Length (in km)
French	Ontario (French River PP)	February 1986	110
Alsek	Yukon (Kluane NP)	February 1986	90
South Nahanni	Northwest Territories (Nahanni NP Reserve)	January 1987	300
Clearwater ²	Saskatchewan (Clearwater River PWP)	June 1987	187
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	Nunavut	July 1990	615
Thelon	Nunavut	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	Nunavut (Katannilik Territorial Park Reserve)	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
Bloodvein ³	Manitoba (Atikaki PP), Ontario (Woodland Caribou PP)	June 1998	200
Margaree ⁴	Nova Scotia	June 1998	120
Fraser ⁴	British Columbia	June 1998	1375
Humber	Ontario	February 1999	100
TOTAL			6540

- 1 PP denotes provincial parks; NP denotes national parks; PWP denotes provincial wilderness park.
- 2 Clearwater River has been nominated in two sections by Saskatchewan and Alberta.
- 3 Bloodvein River (Manitoba section) was designated in 1987.
- 4 Includes mainstream and major tributaries.

Nominated Rivers

River	Province/Territory (Park)	Anticipated Designation Date	Length (in km)
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
St. Mary's	Ontario	June 2000	125
Thames	Ontario	February 2001	273
Tatshenshini	Yukon	June 2001	45
Churchill	Saskatchewan	to be determined	487
TOTAL			1755
TOTAL km of NOMINATED & DESIGNATED RIVERS			8295

Status of the CHRS Strategic Plan

The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board continued over the past year to implement and evaluate the CHRS's Ten Year Strategic Plan. In total, 28 action items were identified for completion during 1998-99, the third 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 of discussion paper on optional approaches to the representation of river heritage in the CHRS.
- Development by nominating agencies of checklists to evaluate how heritage values presented in a nomination link back to the natural and cultural framework documents. It was agreed that this would be a voluntary step in the nomination process.
- Completion of a ten year monitoring report on the South Nahanni River.
- Nomination of several new rivers to the CHRS.

Communications

- Make presentation on the CHRS to federal, provincial and territorial Parks Ministers.
- Host second Canada's River Heritage Conference in Richmond, British Columbia in May, 1998.
- Highlight CHRS displays at major national and international events.
- Completion of website (www.chrs.ca) including new design and updated content.
- Work toward the establishment of a National Rivers Day.
- Develop prototype highway signage with CHRS logo.

Leadership

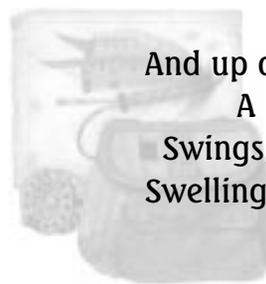
- Federal, provincial and territorial Ministers responsible for the CHRS unanimously reaffirmed their support and commitment for the program.
- Conduct second annual review and update of the strategic plan, including the review of current trends and issues of strategic significance for the CHRS.
- Adjust the strategic planning policy and procedures (calendar, reports and process) to optimize the use of the strategic plan as the key management document for the CHR Board.

Resourcing

- Finance Committee continues to deal with resourcing issues and budget items.
- Revise benefits brochure to include results of economic impact study.

Conclusion

The Strategic Plan continues to be a very useful tool for the Board in overseeing the CHRS program and developing a blueprint for the future. Public reaction to the plan has been 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.



And up on the hills against the sky
A fir tree rocking its lullabye
Swings, swings its emerald wings
Swelling the song my paddle sings

- E. Pauline Johnson,
"The Song My Paddle Sings"

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 three 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 government in national parks or on other federal lands and the federal and territorial governments jointly in the north.

Ministers Responsible for the CHRS (1998-99)

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

The Honourable Kevin MacAdam
Minister of Fisheries and Tourism
Government of Prince Edward Island

The Honourable Michel Samson
Minister of Environment
Government of Nova Scotia

The Honourable Doug Tyler
Minister of Natural Resources and Energy
Government of New Brunswick

L'honorable Guy Chevrette
Ministre de la Faune et des Parcs
Gouvernement du Québec

The Honourable John C. Snobelen
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 Yukon

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Government of the Northwest Territories

The Honourable Peter Kilabuk (April 1999)
Minister of Sustainable Development
Government of Nunavut

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, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) and the participating provincial and territorial governments. British Columbia and New Brunswick are represented on the Board by private citizens.

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 1999-2000 Chairperson will be Mark Angelo, Program Head, Renewable Resources Branch, British Columbia Institute of Technology.

1998-99 Board Members

Gordon Prouse, 1998-99 Chairperson
(Manitoba)

Juanita Keel-Ryan (Newfoundland and Labrador)

Doug Murray (Prince Edward Island)

Dale Smith (Nova Scotia)

Harry Collins (New Brunswick)

Michel Damphousse (Quebec)

Adair Ireland-Smith (Ontario)

Don MacAulay (Saskatchewan)

Fred Moffatt (Alberta)

Mark Angelo (British Columbia)

Jim McIntyre (Yukon)

Robin Reilly (Northwest Territories)

David Monteith (Nunavut)

Bruce Amos (Parks Canada)

Julie Chouinard (Indian Affairs and
Northern Development)

CHRS Staff

Don Gibson, National Manager

Max Finkelstein, Marketing and Publicity

Brian Grimsey, Senior Planner



Tunngasugitsi

River Nomination Process

Submissions and Public Involvement

The CHRS program begins with community-based initiatives to recognize and protect a local river. These initiatives come from a variety of sources such as landowners, recreational, historical or tourism associations, Aboriginal peoples, environmental groups, local businesses, and interested members of the public. The first step is to present a submission to the federal, provincial or territorial Board member for any river a group or individual feels is worthy. River nominations are then submitted to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board by participating government agencies working with these grassroots organizations. Public involvement is integral to the CHRS process.

Selection

The responsible government decides on which rivers 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 agency works cooperatively with stakeholder groups to prepare and submit 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 Board. The management plan sets out the policies and practices to be followed 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 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.



River Designations and Nominations in 1998-99

This past year was another one of fast growth for the CHRS with four new designations and one new nomination. The newly designated rivers are the Fraser River in British Columbia, the Margaree River in Nova Scotia, and the Humber and Bloodvein rivers in Ontario. The section of the Tatshenshini River in Yukon was also nominated this year.

Designations

The Fraser River, British Columbia

The Fraser River – the largest river in British Columbia, the longest river in the CHRS, the most productive salmon river in the world – is a river of superlatives. The river basin drains one-third of the entire province. The Fraser's journey of 1375 kms begins in Mount Robson Provincial Park, in the shadow of the highest mountain in the Rockies, and traces a large "S" across the province. It ends at Vancouver where it merges with the Pacific Ocean among vast wetlands, internationally recognized as an important staging and nesting area for shorebirds and waterfowl. Its rapids and canyons, once cursed by Simon Fraser, the first European to travel its tumultuous waters in 1808, are now favourites with whitewater enthusiasts.

For thousands of years, Aboriginal people have occupied specific areas along the river thriving on the rich salmon resource which was used both for food and trade. In the last 200 years, the river attracted explorers and settlers who also relied on the salmon fishery and the river itself as a water source for agriculture. Today 63% of the province's population lives in the river basin area resulting in significant use of the river for recreation as well as transportation.



Fraser River
British Columbia

The Fraser was nominated by the Province of British Columbia and the Fraser Basin Management Program (later the Fraser Basin Council) in 1995, since it represented the most significant contribution the province could make to the CHRS in terms of size, beauty, natural diversity, and recreation as well as historical significance. The Fraser Basin Council acts as a non-partisan facilitator bringing together diverse groups with interests in the sustainability of the river. The management plan was tabled at the June, 1998 CHR Board Meeting in Victoria, B.C. Entitled *Managing the Fraser as a Canadian Heritage River: A Living Strategy*, the plan outlines a vision for the Fraser – one where all interests work together toward conservation and protection of its natural and human heritage values, recreational opportunities, and river integrity.

The Margaree River, Nova Scotia

The Margaree-Lake Ainslie River System is the largest river system in Cape Breton and one of the largest in Nova Scotia. The area designated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System includes Lake Ainslie and the Southwest Margaree, Northeast Margaree and Margaree rivers. The Margaree system, in particular the Northeast branch, is renowned for its populations of Atlantic salmon which provide excellent angling opportunities. The Southwest Margaree has a provincially significant gaspereau run which supports a traditional commercial fishery. The rivers flow through a scenic mix of canyons and waterways, uplands and lowlands combined with natural and agricultural landscapes. Approximately 30% of the land along the river, primarily in the canyon complex and in the headwaters of the Northeast branch, is in public ownership as Crown land. Approximately 70% of the land along the river is in small private ownership with a dynamic mix of land use activities and community life.

The management plan for the Margaree is called a Partnership Strategy in recognition of all those people who are working together to help ensure the future health of the river system and the traditional uses it supports. The Partnership Strategy was developed with extensive public input from a local advisory committee and through a number of mail-outs, and information and public comment meetings throughout the area. In recognition of the concerns raised by the community, the Strategy stresses that the designation applies only to the main stems of the river and lake and that all private lands are included only with the voluntary participation of land owners. The Strategy goes on to identify several priority actions. These include background studies, fish habitat surveys, maintenance of the hatchery, a strategic tourism plan and marketing strategy, a water quality and quantity monitoring program, an erosion control plan, the protection of natural features on Crown land and the provision of information to private landowners on natural features and voluntary stewardship.

In December 1998, four Crown-owned areas within the Margaree-Lake Ainslie watershed were designated Wilderness Areas under the Wilderness Area Protection Act. This will help to ensure a high level of protection for these significant areas and thereby help to maintain the integrity of the Margaree-Lake Ainslie River System.

The Humber River, Ontario

The 100 km Humber River has its headwaters in the ancient rock of the Niagara Escarpment and the glacial hills of the Oak Ridges Moraine. It flows placidly through a rich mosaic of Carolinian forests and meadows, past farms and abandoned mills, before meandering through the largest urban area in Canada, Metropolitan Toronto. Here, the Humber is in the backyard of more than three million people, a unique river that flows through the most densely populated area of Canada but still retains many of its natural and cultural values. The river is being protected and restored as a vibrant ecosystem with the help of many individuals, groups and agencies who share a common vision of a healthy Humber. A unique system of greenways along its course maintains the spirit of the historic Toronto Carrying-Place trail, and provides an urban oasis. Brook trout still thrive in its clear headwaters. Its wetlands still ring with the choruses of birds and frogs. The Humber shows us that, with a caring attitude, we can have development, and a diverse, vibrant river.

The Bloodvein River, Ontario section (Woodland Caribou Provincial Park)

Named perhaps for the red granite through the bedrock, the Bloodvein slashes through the Canadian Shield on its journey to Lake Winnipeg. Endless forests of jack pine, bald eagles, walleye and northern pike all await the intrepid wilderness canoeist. Red ochre pictographs of bison, human figures, hands and power symbols grace overhanging rock faces.

The Ontario portion of the Bloodvein falls almost entirely within Woodland Caribou Provincial Park, a wilderness class park in the Ontario Parks System. The plan defines the management area, a 200-metre corridor along each river bank, as well as the lake shorelines along the main river channel. The objectives of the management plan are to conserve and protect the natural and cultural values of the Bloodvein, and to provide opportunities to experience the river and interpret its natural and cultural heritage values. The plan also promotes and encourages cooperation between the governments of Ontario and Manitoba in developing transboundary strategies for the management of this Canadian Heritage River. Specific strategies deal with resource management issues including wild rice harvesting, trapping, fisheries, and cultural heritage sites, as well as policies for recreation, aircraft access, commercial fishing and hunting operations and the development of access facilities.

Nominations

The Tatshenshini River, Yukon section

Exhilarating rapids, canyons, soaring mountains, and unequalled opportunities to view big game all combine to make the 45 km Yukon section of the Tatshenshini a river of dreams. The river supports an unusually large population of grizzly bears, both in number and size. Other big game includes mountain goats, Dall's sheep, woodland caribou and moose. Peregrine falcons, bald eagles, golden eagles, and goshawks are also a common sight. The Tatshenshini is an important salmon spawning river, providing food for grizzlies, and for people. The Champagne and Aishihik peoples traditionally harvested salmon along the Tatshenshini, and at the village of Klukshu, visitors can learn about the importance of salmon to their way of life. Today, the Tatshenshini is considered to be one of the top river trips in the world for rafters and kayakers.

State of the Rivers: Canadian Heritage Rivers in 1998-99

The rivers in this section are now listed alphabetically for easier reference.

Alsek River

Kluane National Park, Yukon (1986)

River of Rock and Ice

The past year saw the continuation of the Spruce Bark Beetle outbreak in Kluane National Park (KNP), centred in the Alsek River valley. This natural event, associated with a large beetle outbreak in Alaska, has resulted in extensive stands of dead white spruce in the upper Alsek valley. Another natural event evident to travellers on the Alsek River is a major surge of the Lowell Glacier. The passage through Lowell Lake was restricted and, for a time, choked with new icebergs. The face of the glacier is very active with icefalls and presents an active broken-up appearance.



**We must listen more carefully
to the whispering of our rivers, for
they are speaking of our future.**

- Mark Hume,
The Run of the River

The park has implemented a designated campsite policy on the Alsek River above Lowell Lake as a result of detailed campsite evaluation research. The research considers site impact potential, bear habitat suitability, and information supplied by the rafting community. The designated sites are designed to reduce the impact of river use on grizzly bears in the valley. The spacing of sites should allow for campsite-free corridors for bear movement and reduce the potential for human contact on preferred habitat sites. The campsites still provide enough opportunities for single-party wilderness camping along the river. The KNP six-year Grizzly Bear Research Project was completed and the report indicates that the Alsek valley is important to the park's stable grizzly population. The fact that a high bear population in the Alsek valley is an important factor limiting the area's suitability for recreational use is supported by the research results.

A second River Managers' Trip to focus on the Alsek River was undertaken in 1998. Senior managers with responsibility for the Alsek and Tatshenshini river system rafted from Haines Junction, Yukon to Dry Bay, Alaska. Representation included BC Parks, Yukon Renewable Resources, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and Parks Canada. These trips have contributed significantly to the goal of managing the entire river system for common objectives in spite of the numerous boundaries it crosses.

The review of the Park Management Plan continued through 1998 and a draft of an *Ecological Integrity Statement (EIS)* has been prepared.

Arctic Red River

Northwest Territories (1993)

River of the Gwich'ya Gwich'in

Specific work on the Arctic Red River slowed somewhat last year, as the attention of Gwich'in and government officials was focused on completing a N.W.T. Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) and the *Gwich'in Land Use Plan*. In the draft *Gwich'in Land Use Plan*, the land adjacent to the whole length of the Arctic Red has been identified as a Special Management Area.

This temporary resource shift has been a very positive development. Having a territorially and likely federally approved PAS adds another layer of potential protection to areas such as the Arctic Red River. The area's rich mixture of Dall's sheep, woodland caribou, grizzly bears, 700 year-old white spruce, to say nothing of its archeological and cultural significance may require the strongest forms of stewardship available.

Within the framework of the Heritage Rivers system and the PAS, additional protection of the Arctic Red River area will likely progress over the next several years.

Athabasca River

Jasper National Park, Alberta (1989)

Out of the Ancient Ice

The Athabasca River is a prominent and accessible feature of Jasper National Park. This is reflected in a high level of recreational and visitor activity on and along certain sections of the river. This year, Jasper Park started implementation of the National Park Guidelines for River Use Management that includes monitoring for ecological and social impacts.

With the closure of the Maligne River to all watercraft, greater pressure is expected on the Athabasca River. The mid-Athabasca River has had intensive river use and shore-line development for many years. As a result, this additional use may be unnoticeable. Monitoring of recreational values and experiences will be conducted to determine if crowding is an issue. Improvements were made to access and exit points for rafting and canoe operations over the past year.

The upper-Athabasca has not been previously used for commercial rafting but has been identified for this activity. During the environmental assessment for implementing the River Use Management Guideline, restrictive guidelines were set limiting commercial use to between 11 am and 3 pm. This was in an effort to control the number of disturbance events on the river.

The Athabasca Roadside Touring Guide, begun a few years ago, was brought back to life with the implementation of the River Use Management Guidelines. The new guide, in conjunction with CHRIS roadside signs, will lead to increased awareness of the Athabasca River and the system of heritage rivers. The guide will direct visitors to significant points along the river where they will learn about its ecological and cultural significance in Canada, both past and present.

The park is also working with the Jasper National Park Professional River Outfitters Association to enhance the interpretive value of their trips. No additional permits or river outfitting businesses will be considered for at least another two years as a result of present research.

Bloodvein River

Atikaki Provincial Park, Manitoba (1987)

Deep in the Heart of the Land

The high quality of the natural, cultural and recreational heritage values of the Bloodvein River remained unchanged after 10 years of heritage river designation. There continues to be much interest in the river for wilderness canoeing, fishing and hunting. Over 200 groups canoe the river each year.



Harlequin Duck

The Manitoba Department of Natural Resources has initiated a management planning process for Atikaki Provincial Park. This will include an update to the management plan for the Bloodvein Canadian Heritage River. The management plan is expected to be completed late in 1999.

With the designation of the Ontario section of the Bloodvein, Manitoba and Ontario have initiated discussions on cooperative management and promotion of this trans-boundary heritage river.

Bonnet Plume River

Yukon (1998)

River of Black Sands

Rising out of the Wernecke Mountains in the central Yukon, the Bonnet Plume cuts through mountain peaks and canyons, which were not glaciated during the Pleistocene, exposing veins of silver and zinc. This arctic landscape abounds with woodland caribou and grizzly bear dens, its habitat home to a host of rare plants. The valley of the Bonnet Plume was a traditional hunting and travel 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.) was nominated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. A subsequent management plan was produced in cooperation with the Mayo Renewable Resource Council, CPAWS, DIAND, and mineral industry representatives. The Board accepted the management plan in January 1998. The formal designation ceremony was held in July 1998 with a river overflight for the attending dignitaries. The Canadian Heritage River plaque was installed on a stone cairn in the town of Mayo.

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society conducted a bear habitat assessment on the Bonnet Plume River during the summer of 1998.

Boundary Waters/ Voyageur Waterway

**La Verendrye/Quetico/Middle Falls
Provincial Parks, Ontario (1996)**

The Singing Wilderness

In its second year as a designated Canadian Heritage River, the Boundary Waters/Voyageur Waterway (BWVW) saw no changes in the condition of its heritage values. Planning underway this year will help promote the BWVW's natural and cultural values within Quetico Park. The Quetico Provincial Park Fire Management Plan, approved in August 1998, is intended to allow fire to fulfill its ecological role, a specific natural resource management objective. The fire season of 1999 may provide the first opportunity for the implementation of a prescribed natural fire, the fundamental tool of this plan. Another element of the Fire Management Plan is the development of an Ecosystem Management Strategy to guide managers in the interim maintenance of natural variation within the fire-driven forest composition, until specific strategies can be developed. Additional goals to be addressed in 1999 include the initiation of management strategies for Fisheries and Cultural Resources. These initiatives proceed from the Lac La Croix Agreement of Co-Existence, and are intended to enhance the conservation of the resource for the benefit of the First Nation and of future generations. Finally, an interior visitor survey conducted in 1998 will provide updated knowledge of visitors using those portions of the BWVW in the park.

Clearwater River

**Clearwater River Provincial Wilderness
Park, Saskatchewan (1987)**

Link to the North

As a river nominated for its natural, cultural and recreational qualities, the Clearwater continues to offer a memorable whitewater experience for canoeists and rafters and a traditional lifestyle for First Nations people who trap and fish there. Excellent water quality, relatively low use and an undisturbed and scenic landscape contribute to a true wilderness experience. The historic Methye Portage between Lac La Loche in the Hudson Bay watershed and the deep valley of the Arctic bound Clearwater is still used by modern day voyageurs. One group does report, however, that the dramatic vista from the valley rim commented on by Alexander Mackenzie has changed somewhat because of maturing tree growth.

The Clearwater First Nation, located at La Loche, Saskatchewan, have indicated that they wish to establish an eco-tourism business in association with this Heritage River which was also designated as the first Wilderness Provincial Park in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Department of Environment and Resource Management continues to discuss this idea with the First Nation to determine how eco-tourism goals and provincial park policy can work together on such a venture.



Clearwater River

Clearwater River Provincial Wilderness Park, Saskatchewan

French River

French River Provincial Park, Ontario
(1986)

In the Footsteps of the Voyageurs

The designated portion of the French River flows within an area that is part of a new Land Use Strategy, Ontario's Living Legacy, that provides a far-reaching planning process for 45% of the provincial landbase. In the case of the French River, it outlines representative landforms and vegetation, east and west of the river mouth at Georgian Bay, and upstream widenings that provide more ecological integrity for the park. These additions will increase the size of the park by 22,405 ha to over 70,000 ha along the river's 110 km length.

This past year also marked the ten-year review of the status of the CHRS designation for the French. It was found that most of the changes to the river, since 1986, have aided in protecting its nominated values and waterway integrity.

Appreciation of the human heritage values has been enhanced at the historic Copananing village site and the native cemetery on Dead Island with policies to reduce human use of these sites as provided in the French River Provincial Park Management Plan. New projects include a map of the entire park with sufficient detail for river travel, and a plaque placed at Recollet Falls by the Friends of the French River Heritage Park commemorating historic accounts of the drowning of Jesuit priests nearby.

Efforts by residents, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and a partnership with Laurentian University are combining to sustain the sport fishery which was stressed by long-term habitat disturbance and fishing pressure. Part of this initiative includes better use of information to manage water levels in recognition of fish spawning downstream of the two impoundments on the upper French River. Under new CHRS guidelines, dams are known to reduce the significance of some original natural heritage values, such as downstream fisheries. Affected sections are "grandfathered" for the nominated values.

Canoeing has increased as a recreational activity in the past decade. Use by larger vessels for extended distances in most parts of the river occurs between natural bedrock restrictions. In the summer, high water levels on the upper French above the dams actually improve all forms of recreational water use and travel. Marking campsites and the placement of privies to manage this use has supported more recreational use of the river.



French River

French River Provincial Park, Ontario

Restoration of an historic 240m boardwalk for boaters at Recollet Falls, water quality sampling on the upper French and the activities of volunteers to hold off the encroachment of purple loosestrife shows that users are interested in and willing to help sustain both natural values and culturally significant park features.

Grand River

Ontario (1994)

In the Heartland of Southern Ontario

The designation of the Grand River and its major tributaries as a Canadian Heritage River has fostered greater awareness of the river's heritage assets, prompted residents to explore and enjoy its many natural and cultural resources, and raised the level of concern for the way it is treated. It has also resulted in many partnerships to improve river health and heritage conservation. This shared, action-oriented way of managing our watershed resources is called The Grand Strategy. Partners include municipalities, non-government organizations, universities, businesses, Six Nations and federal and provincial agencies. It is coordinated on behalf of the partners by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA).

In 1998, a major document entitled *The State of the Watershed Background Report on the Health of the Grand River Watershed* was prepared and distributed to schools and public libraries. It provides a detailed description regarding the status of watershed resources.

During 1998, two major initiatives were advanced – the Fisheries Management Plan and the Rural Water Quality Program. The Fisheries Management Plan is the product of a collaborative effort to address the impacts of increased recreational use, municipal growth, and changes in the land use on the Grand fishery. Compiled with extensive public input, the plan provides solid guidelines for fisheries management, rehabilitation projects and controlling pollution from many sources. The Rural Water Quality Program, is a three-year program funded by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the GRCA. The program provides financial assistance to farmers implementing projects to improve water quality within the Region.

In 1998, circulation of the *Grand Actions* newsletter increased to over 5,000. The newsletter keeps readers informed about the progress of The Grand Strategy and highlights community activities and events. The Grand Actions Registry, compiled annually, included 211 entries representing over 1,000 individual and collective efforts to improve the heritage and health of the Grand River watershed. Three well-attended workshops were organized to provide forums for discussion about heritage, recreation and rural issues.

During 1998, some changes occurred in the status of heritage features. The province transferred responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the West Montrose Covered Bridge (the Kissing Bridge) to the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. The Region hosted public meetings to explore options for maintaining the 1881 provincially plaqued historic bridge.

The single-lane heritage Bowstring Bridge in Eden Mills built in 1913, was demolished and replaced with a two-lane bridge. The bridge provided a central focus for the community. After considerable community debate, the new bridge was designed with decorative arches that resemble the old bowstrings.



Grand River
Ontario

In 1998, construction to create an authentic seventeenth century Iroquois Village in Brantford began. Known as Kanata, the village will include three longhouses surrounded by a wooden palisade, framed by cedar poles and enclosed with cedar bark. Opening in 1999, this project offers a wealth of opportunity to educate residents and visitors regarding the history and heritage of the native culture of the Grand.

Wellington County Museum and Archives in Centre Wellington (Fergus-Elora) and Ruthven Park near Cayuga hosted gala events in celebration of their new national status. Another national historic site, Chiefswood, the family home of world-famous poet E. Pauline Johnson, was reopened to the public after several years of restoration and dedicated work by volunteers from the Six Nations.

A unique and exciting project commenced in 1998. Renowned artist Linda Risacher Copp began a series of batik panels inspired by the grandeur of the Grand River in all its seasons from source to mouth. The batiks will be complemented by original musical compositions by Wayne Bridge. The project will culminate in a travelling exhibition throughout the watershed in 1999 called "A Year on the Grand".

In 1998, over 1.1 million visitors enjoyed camping, fishing and a variety of outdoor activities along the river at the twelve conservation areas managed by the GRCA, generating record revenues of over \$4.1 million.

Each year, the multi-use trail network within the watershed expands. New sections of trail have been developed within the urban areas, particularly in Guelph, Kitchener-Waterloo and Brantford. Several of these trails were formally registered in 1998 as part of the Trans Canada Trail. This included the Iron Horse Trail (3.1 km in Kitchener), the Iron Horse Trail and Laurel Trail (3.1 km in Waterloo) and the S.C. Johnson Trailway (11.5 km from Brantford to Paris).

In 1997, Grand River Country as a destination marketing brand was born. An award-winning, full-colour brochure was developed as a joint project. In 1998, the brochure was redesigned and a second edition was printed featuring a newly-designed Grand River Country logo. The brochure highlights attractions and outdoor recreation opportunities along the Grand River and was widely distributed through tourism organizations.

These efforts represent a small portion of the energy, enthusiasm and support for The Grand Strategy. Partner commitment and participation has been the mainstay of the Grand's success. 1999 marks the fifth anniversary of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River. This milestone will give residents of the Grand an opportunity to reflect on their shared achievements and renew their efforts to make the Grand River valley "an ever better place in which to live, work and play".

Hillsborough River

Prince Edward Island (1997)

Salt Water River

The placid waves of the Hillsborough belie an undercurrent of activity by the population on her shores. The Hillsborough is a working river and thus an integral part of the lives of the communities on both shores.

At the CHRS plaque unveiling in 1997, the Hillsborough River Association promised to make this ceremony an annual event. It became known as River Day in 1998. Ceremonies involved local communities, Mi'kmaq people from the Scotchford Reserve and the Wanapitei Canoe Group which was in the Maritimes to paddle three Canadian Heritage Rivers.



Hillsborough River

Prince Edward Island

The Association was active in making presentations during the year in support of provincial legislation for erosion control and buffer zones for all tributaries of the Hillsborough. Their projects included participation in a Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program and enhancement of the CHRS plaque site. A red oak, the provincial tree, was planted at the site as a symbol of renewal and dedication. The Association also supported the development of an extension of the Confederation Trail from Scotchford to Bedford, a route which will eventually connect Charlottetown to Mount Stewart.

The HRA achieved charitable organization status in 1998 but still struggles to find financial support every year for its programs. The dedication of the river's communities has provided the strength to keep the group active. Many of the issues surrounding the river are provincial in scope and involve overall land use. The Association is an important voice for change in the Hillsborough watershed.

Kazan River

Nunavut (1990)

River of the Living Barrens

The Kazan River rises from Kazba Lake near the border of Nunavut and Manitoba. From here, it flows north through the boreal forest to the treeline, where the hilly plateau-like relief is transformed into the treeless barrenlands of the Shield, and eventually to Baker Lake, the geographic centre of Canada.

Like the Thelon River, the Kazan has not seen any development. While there are no permanent structures, Fall Caribou Crossing National Historic Site along the river is rich in archaeological remains due to its importance to Inuit hunters as a caribou capture point. The river has historically acted as a natural barrier to the annual migration of the Kaminuriak caribou herd, which enabled large numbers to be killed by Inuit hunters lying in wait at preferred crossing sites. Fall Caribou Crossing provides opportunities to examine the cultural meaning of the Arctic landscape to Inuit whose knowledge and experience have ensured their survival in the area for centuries.

Kicking Horse River

Yoho National Park,
British Columbia (1989)

River of Time

Other than some historically high water levels through the fall period, 1998/1999 was a quiet year for the Kicking Horse River through Yoho National Park. Annual inventory and monitoring of water quality, tributary streams and associated wetlands continued from previous years with no significant environmental issues emerging from the data.

Most of the attention to the Kicking Horse was from a planning perspective as work proceeded on the re-write of the Yoho Park Management Plan. In contrast to previous planning processes, the current initiative is attempting to fully integrate ecological, social and economic considerations. To achieve this, the park has been divided into Landscape Management Units (LMU's). Within each of these units, ecological and social objectives have been established. Current status is then compared to the objectives, and where inconsistencies occur, management actions are proposed.

The Kicking Horse River falls within the Kicking Horse LMU. This unit is valued ecologically for its contributions to major north/south and east/west wildlife corridors and for the many sensitive sites (wetland complexes, riparian habitats, montane vegetation types) that it contains. The river continues to play a prominent role in the maintenance of many of these ecological values and, consequently, efforts continue to protect both its commemorative and ecological integrity.

Public use of the Kicking Horse within the park remains low. However, commercial and private use and development continues to expand on unprotected downstream stretches of the river adjacent to the park.

Progress is continuing on the mitigation of disturbed sites adjacent to the river. Canadian Pacific has rehabilitated sections of shoreline and aquatic habitats adjacent to its rail-yard in Field. This represents a major corporate initiative to address environmental issues from much earlier in the century and speaks highly of environmental co-operation for the next millennium. The next year will prove an interesting one for the Kicking Horse River, as it will be producing its ten-year monitoring report.

Mattawa River

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

The Spirit of the Voyageurs

Assessment of natural landscapes and provision of an additional undeveloped area have resulted in identification of a land base that will double the size of parkland now designated under the Mattawa River in the CHRS. This additional protection was proposed through the program Ontario's Living Legacy, which provides planning direction for 45% of the provincial landscape. With these changes, the waterway park will exceed 15,000 ha. The CHRS portion of the Mattawa River flows through the same Strategic Land Use planning area as described for the French River.

As well, Parks Canada, Ontario Parks and the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority have been spurred on by local interests to look at ways to include other lands in the designation. A supplementary CHRS Nomination of the La Vase Portage and lower Mattawa has been initiated. This will provide natural beginning and end points in the historic route of the Aboriginal people, explorers and fur traders. This extension will add 11 km on the west end and 15 km on the east end to provide a continuous designated corridor from Mattawa to North Bay.



Mattawa River

Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain Provincial Parks, Ontario

A ten-year review of the CHRS designation status was completed in 1999. Most changes to nomination values have been positive to enhance the quality of many values. Projects to combat a decline in the fish population from over fishing appear to be succeeding. Three dams now regulate the flow of the waterway at Turtle, Talon and Chant Plain lakes. While these impoundments have changed the Mattawa and altered some of its natural values, its natural heritage values are "grandfathered" as nomination values.

An increase in the number of canoeists on the river has resulted in replacement of privies at campsites and an annual trash cleanup by volunteers. This has improved the natural experience as has the closure of the Bouillon access road which reduced unplanned use, garbage and vandalism in the parks. Improvements to the MacPherson Drive facility increased access there where day activities are managed. The annual Mattawa River race continues to be held mid-summer for the entire length of the river. Since 1995, Voyageur Adventure Tours have provided visitors with a five hour tour led by costumed guides who interpret river lore and re-enact past activities while they journey along the river in a replica of a "canot du Nord".

The growing environmental awareness of the river is marked by the formation of a cooperative called "Friends of Mattawa River Heritage Park". The Friends work with park staff to further heritage appreciation of the river. A local initiative that has gained wider recognition is The Canadian Ecology Centre. This residential ecological training centre will develop programs and activities as educational, recreational and ecotourism attractions for all river users.

North Saskatchewan River

Banff National Park, Alberta (1989)

Rocky Mountain River

The Saskatchewan River Crossing warden station has reopened on a seasonal basis from May to October. Pending budget approval, it may be open year-round. This aids the park's efforts to monitor river use activities. Parks Canada and Environment Canada have a Memorandum of Agreement for water monitoring on the North Saskatchewan at Whirlpool Point. Physical, biological and chemical conditions are monitored monthly. Pollutants in the Saskatchewan glacier are a looming concern. Amounts entering the river are small but are magnified up aquatic food chains from algae to larger fish. Recent research shows that these pollutants may have cumulative effects on reproduction and other biological systems.

Two groups have joined to develop a network of North Saskatchewan River stakeholders to encourage cooperative efforts for watershed protection. Group objectives include determining attitudes, concerns and positions regarding watershed protection and developing communication strategies. Specific issues include industrial activities, water quality, agriculture and associated environmental effects, and cultural and aesthetic influences.

Seal River

Manitoba (1992)

Waves, Whales and Wolverines

The Seal River's natural, cultural and recreational conditions remained unchanged in 1998-1999. Recreational use continues to be low due to the river's isolation. This isolation is also the river's greatest asset in protecting its significant values.

The isolation and wilderness character of the Seal River are some of the main features highlighted in a new book by Hap Wilson and Stephanie Aykroyd, entitled *Wilderness Rivers of Manitoba*. The release of this book will increase awareness of the two Heritage Rivers in Manitoba and their potential for wilderness canoeing opportunities.

Concerns that additional commercial outfitting might impact the river's fragile environment has caused Manitoba Natural Resources to defer applications for commercial outfitting on the Seal, until the management plan is reviewed within the next two years. Existing outfitters will still be allowed to run trips on the river and non-commercial use will not be affected.

Shelburne River

Nova Scotia (1997)

Still Waters, Ancient Forests

More than half of the Shelburne River watershed lies within the Tobetic Wilderness Area which is one of thirty-one Crown-owned areas that have been formally designated under Nova Scotia's new Wilderness Areas Protection Act. Within designated wilderness areas, activities such as road building, mining, forestry and cottage development will be prohibited, while appropriate recreational and scientific use will be permitted. The Nova Scotia Department of Environment is responsible for preparing a management plan for each wilderness area. Such a plan for the Tobetic Wilderness Area will include appropriate references and necessary provisions to ensure that the portion of the Shelburne watershed within the wilderness area remains in a natural state, with a high level of ecological integrity. The management plan for the Tobetic Wilderness Area will also complement and conform to any provisions contained within The Shelburne Canadian Heritage River Management Plan. This will help ensure that the natural and recreational values of the river, along with its high level of integrity, are maintained for the future.

Collaboration between government agencies, Bowater Mersey Paper Company Limited and Nova Scotia Power Incorporated has resulted in the commencement of baseline water quality monitoring.



Shelburne River

Nova Scotia

Soper River

Katannilik Territorial Park Reserve,
Nunavut (1992)

An Arctic Oasis

The Soper River (locally known as the Kuujuaq) winds its way from the highlands of the Meta Incognita Peninsula to Soper Lake and then mixes with the salt waters of Pleasant Inlet along the south coast of Baffin Island, creating tides of over 10.6 m. The valley's microclimate has created a landscape rich with willow, sedges and heathers and berries not found elsewhere in the Arctic Islands, with a long history of Inuit heritage and a variety and unusual concentration of wildlife including caribou, fox, hare, and polar bear. The Soper runs through Katannilik Territorial Park Reserve, a 1,270 sq. km. destination park which ensures these qualities are not impacted while still providing for recreational use. Park and visitor statistics continue to increase, aided in 1998 by the Katannilik Park "Great Canadian Parks" program on the Discovery Channel, and a recent BBC dog-team journey along the Itijajiaq Trail, a 100km trail from Iqaluit to Kimmirut along the Soper Valley.

Outside of emergency shelters along the trail and a campground at Soper Falls, the physical condition of the Soper River has not changed. Access to related river features, such as the Reversing Falls and Katannilik Visitor Information Centre in Kimmirut, which highlights the "big river", has improved and provides for an increase in community and visitor awareness and promotions of the Heritage River.



Soper River

Katannilik Territorial Park Reserve, Nunavut

South Nahanni River

Nahanni National Park Reserve, Northwest
Territories (1987)

River of Legend and Lore

The past year was relatively quiet and uneventful along the South Nahanni River. For reasons that remain unclear, both overnight and day use visitations were down considerably from previous years. 1998 saw only 70% of the overnight use of 1997 and less than 50% of the day use. There were also slightly lower than normal water levels for much of the season. One noteworthy event was a wildfire that burned for almost three months in the vicinity of Mary River. The fire began on the south shore of the South Nahanni and burned slowly for two weeks before gaining momentum and jumping the river where it consumed more than 2,400 hectares of spruce forest. As a result of favourable prevailing winds pushing the fire away from the river corridor, heavy smoke was a problem along the South Nahanni for only a few days. Many visitors remarked on how interesting they found it to travel through an area where there was an active "let burn" policy. Park staff took no direct action, other than observation, with regards to this fire and it offered a good opportunity to explain to visitors the natural wildfire regime that exists at Nahanni National Park Reserve (NNPR).

The park had an exceptional year with the voluntary River Incident Survey in 1998. 100% of commercial groups, and more than 90% of private groups returned the survey. No serious incidents or injuries were reported in 1998. Park staff feel that they now have enough returned forms, since the survey was initiated in 1995, to begin some meaningful analysis of the data. It is hoped that the park will soon be able to provide valuable information to visitors regarding the likelihood of incidents, based on the correlation of visitor skill level, location and water level.

The past year witnessed the recruitment of a Senior Heritage Programs Officer for the park. This is the first time in the history of NNPR that there has been a professional on staff dedicated solely to issues of visitor education and interpretation. Not only will the park be able to provide more thorough information to visitors, but also there will be an increase in local and regional educational opportunities for students. A significant event to be expected in 1999 will be the creation of a website, which will greatly enhance the park's ability to make comprehensive information available to the public.



South Nahanni River

Nahanni National Park Reserve, Northwest Territories

The park produced two ten-year reports in 1998. A Decade in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System was prepared, as was Protecting the Aquatic Quality of Nahanni National Park Reserve. The latter report was prepared in conjunction with Environment Canada and provides a detailed look at baseline water, sediment and fish quality data. With this report, NNPR now has a comprehensive picture of the aquatic resources of the area, which should help considerably should the ever-present risk of mining activities upstream of the park boundary occur. The park will have to remain diligent, and ongoing water quality monitoring programs will continue.

The coming year will be an eventful one for the park. A Park Management Plan review is scheduled, as is the development of an Ecological Integrity Statement (EIS). The EIS will identify key components of the park's cultural and natural ecosystems that need to be researched, and from this, a comprehensive monitoring program will be developed.

St. Croix River

New Brunswick (1991)

Currents of History

Events during the year opened new horizons for future appreciation of the St. Croix's diverse and exceptional heritage. The most significant of these took place in March when New Brunswick reached agreement with Georgia-Pacific Resins Inc. to purchase all of the company's New Brunswick holdings. The acquisition will involve over 390,000 acres, including nearly two-thirds of the St. Croix watershed, and represents an area half the size of Prince Edward Island. The company had co-operated extensively with heritage river initiatives along the St. Croix corridor, and the change in land ownership will present even more opportunities for the province to advance both timber harvesting and CHRS goals.

The international committee preparing for the 400th anniversary of North America's first French settlement (St. Croix Island, 1604) welcomed a planning delegation from France, contracted a master plan for the celebrations and started fundraising for world events that will begin in 2004.

Five years of pollution assessment and abatement at the St. Croix's largest saltwater bay concluded in water clean enough to allow the re-classification of the area in 1999 for soft shell clam digging, after a fifty-year closure. Clam digging is an important part of the region's coastal economy and heritage. Its revival in Oak Bay will mark an environmental and cultural milestone.

Along the St. Croix corridor, other activities also supported the waterway's heritage goals. The Parks and Natural Areas Branch of the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy launched an ongoing St. Croix program which, in 1998, led to the upgrading of facilities at provincial parks, backcountry campsites and water accesses, and the dedication of field staff to the waterway. The Branch joined with other provincial and Maine agencies, the St. Croix International Waterway Commission and major landowners to set priorities for managing traditional recreation and protecting natural character in the undeveloped Spednic Lake/Upper River portion of the waterway. Extensive water testing on seven large lakes by the Waterway Commission and additional monitoring by volunteers demonstrated that water quality in the upper watershed remains excellent. Assessments in other parts of the watershed are planned for 1999.

The St. Croix's Atlantic salmon restoration program expanded to include riverside tanks to rear young native fish. Thanks to local restoration efforts, the St. Croix salmon run remains relatively stable while fish numbers in other nearby rivers continue to decline.

The waterway's two largest communities expanded their efforts to restore their river heritage. St. Stephen, N.B., opened Gateway Park at the international border crossing and began to implement its waterfront renewal plan. The facing community of Calais, Maine joined St. Stephen in adopting its own waterfront plan, which will include a regional heritage centre in a historic building on the banks of the river.

In these, and other ways, residents, communities, government agencies and interest groups continue to work together to realize their shared, and very unique, St. Croix heritage.

Thelon River

Nunavut (1990)

Where Time and Light Stand Still

The Thelon River, from its mouth at Baker Lake, through Schultz, Aberdeen and Beverly lakes, remains a true wilderness river with no development along its course. This pristine-ness brings an increasing number of recreationists seeking a true wilderness experience. While mineral exploration activity occurs in the adjacent Slave Geological Province, there has been no exploration activity in and around the Thelon.

Two hundred and seventy-five kilometres of the upper Thelon River pass through the Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary, a wildlife and bird oasis on the otherwise barren tundra. The Sanctuary and the river valley, are home to a Beverly Caribou herd over 400,000 strong, barrens grizzly, moose and muskoxen, an incredible diversity of bird life – from peregrine and gyrfalcon, bald and golden eagles, and a number of other raptors. Established in 1927, the 52,000 sq. km. sanctuary is one of the largest protected areas in Canada, and among the most remote. A management plan is being completed for the Sanctuary in keeping with the obligations under the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement. The plan has been developed by the community and local Inuit Associations and provides recommendations on the management and use of the Sanctuary. Approvals of the plan should take place in 1999.

Upper Restigouche River

New Brunswick (1998)

River of Enchantment

The Upper Restigouche River was formally declared a Canadian Heritage River on Canada Day, 1998 at a ceremony near its confluence with the Kedgwick River. The ceremony not only celebrated the rich cultural and natural heritage of the river but also recognized the efforts of the stakeholders who contributed to the planning process, which enabled the Upper Restigouche to become New Brunswick's second Heritage River. The ceremony was preceded by five days of celebrations in honour of the cultures associated with the river. First Nations, Irish, English, Scots, and Acadians all participated. Each celebration was hosted by a community with historic ties to the river.



Fishing on the Upper Restigouche River

These events were planned and co-ordinated by The Restigouche River Management Committee, which formed as a result of the Heritage River management planning process. The Committee was officially incorporated in 1998 with goals and objectives that support the implementation of the management plan in co-operation with the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy. Committee membership is representative of the various stakeholders, which include fishing camp managers, First Nations, Crown Timber Licensees, canoeists, naturalists, recreational outfitters, museums, fish and wildlife associations, local municipalities, and the general public.

A section of the International Appalachian Trail (IAT) was developed within the Restigouche River corridor. This hiking trail, when complete, will link the Appalachian Trail in the U.S.A. and Forillon National Park on the Gaspé Peninsula. In New Brunswick, the IAT will traverse the watersheds of the Restigouche and Tobique river systems.

Base line water quality sampling was conducted in 1997 and 1998. Sampling will continue in 1999 followed by a comprehensive analysis of all the data. To date, the results have all been within the national standards for water quality. The Province of New Brunswick is currently considering the implementation of a Water Classification System, which would define six classes for water quality management. This would complement the water standards of the CHRS.

The New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy continued the Restigouche River Recreation Management Project with its objectives to develop and maintain recreation facilities, provide public information, co-ordinate the voluntary registration of canoeists, and to provide assistance on the river. This project will continue in 1999/2000.

Yukon River

The Thirty-Mile Section, Yukon (1991) *River of Gold*

The conditions on the Thirty-Mile remain unchanged with relatively low impact throughout the 1998 Gold Rush Centennial Celebrations. The Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation continued to monitor river use, interacting with visitors and maintaining the campsites.

The major complaint of river users in the past has been the condition of the toilet facilities caused by over-winter freezing and delayed spring melting. To reduce the environmental impact of sustained river use, plans were finalized and facilities purchased to implement a holding-tank system on the river. The waste products will be transported off river to the Whitehorse sewage facilities for disposal. The new disposal method should eliminate the complaints and provide better environmental protection.



Plans, Studies, 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 have been included in the BC Heritage Rivers System. The first of these to be designated to the CHRS was the Fraser River in June 1998. Over the next 2-3 years, BC plans to seek formal inclusion of both the Cowichan and Stikine rivers in the CHRS. 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 phone: (250) 387-5002 fax: 387-5757. E-mail contact is bchrs@islandnet.com. web site 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.



While no system studies were undertaken in 1998-99, the system study of Manitoba's rivers completed the year before continues to serve as a useful reference for future studies of this type. The Manitoba 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 1998-99, background studies were completed for the Detroit River (Ontario), Red River (Manitoba), Athabasca River (Alberta), and Cowichan River (British Columbia).

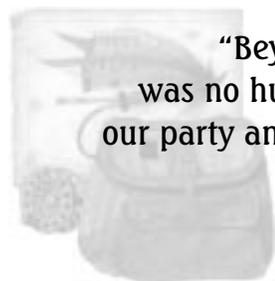
Nomination Documents

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 1998-99, nomination documents were completed for the Rideau Waterway, Detroit River and LaVase Portages-Mattawa River (Ontario), Tatshenshini River (Yukon) and Cowichan River (British Columbia). Work was also started on the nomination document for the Hayes River (Manitoba).

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 1998-99, management plans were tabled to the Board for the Fraser River (British Columbia), Margaree-Lake Ainslie River System (Nova Scotia) and the Bloodvein and Humber rivers (Ontario). Parks Canada continued to assist in ongoing management planning for four candidate Canadian Heritage Rivers: the Clearwater (Alberta), the Missinaibi (Ontario) and the Main and Bay du Nord (Newfoundland). Preparations were also made to begin management planning for the St. Marys and Thames rivers (Ontario) and the Tatshenshini River (Yukon).



“Beyond the white mist, there was no human soul who was not of our party and we were quieted by the silence on every hand.”

- Albert Bigelow Paine,
The Tent Dwellers, 1908

Research

National Frameworks As the Canadian Heritage Rivers System expands to include over thirty rivers, assessment methods grow with it. *A Cultural Framework for Canadian Heritage Rivers* (1997) and *A Framework for the Natural Values of Canadian Heritage Rivers* (1998) are being applied as the basis for a systematic approach to the inclusion and assessment of cultural and natural values in the CHRS. Application of the *Cultural Framework* has shown that it requires certain revisions. Finalization of the *Cultural Framework* is scheduled for next year. The nomination document for the Hayes River (Manitoba) will be used as a model for integrating the *Framework* into CHRS nomination documents. A report containing tabulations of cultural and natural themes represented by rivers in the CHRS has also been prepared.

Planning Template

A draft template has been prepared as a tool to enhance the planning and management of Canadian Heritage Rivers located outside protected areas. The template is intended to help CHRS management plans harmonize with existing programs and policies of managing agencies, and simultaneously to enable management of the rivers as components of a national system representing Canada's river heritage.



Public Promotion and Marketing

Print and Electronic Media

This past year was a productive one for CHRS communications as several new initiatives were begun or completed in addition to our annual projects and events. A major project was the building of the new web site. As well, substantial work was done on a new brochure profiling all the rivers in the system to replace the one done in 1995.

Electronic Media

A New Web Site - www.chrs.ca

Work began early in 1999 to update the web site originally built by volunteer Godwin Chan. A new site will be uploaded in September, 1999 at the same address as the old one. It will include up-to-date fact sheets, the current annual report and newsletter, and two new sections – a Photo Gallery and River Stories.



This bilingual, well-designed web site will allow the user to easily obtain information on specific rivers, as well as more general information on how the CHRS operates and is developing. The site is also linked to a wide range of existing river-related web sites throughout North America.

Print Media

New fact sheets were produced for the St. Marys River in Ontario and the Fraser River in British Columbia. A French language fact sheet was published for the Restigouche River in New Brunswick. An updated fact sheet was also produced for the Soper River in the new Territory of Nunavut.

The CHRS was the topic of a number of very positive media articles over the year including a feature article in the Winter 1998 edition of *Legion Magazine* which is a publication produced by the Royal Canadian Legion.

The *Discover Adventure on a Canadian Heritage River* brochure was re-designed to include new nominations and designations since 1995. A number of background reports and management plans were also reprinted.

The Spring *Heritage Riverscapes* newsletter continues to be a very popular information piece with the public as confirmed by a survey conducted in 1998. This newsletter is also now available via the CHRS web site.

Conferences and Exhibits

The CHRS participated in several national and international conferences over the past year.

One of the most significant events of the year was the second Canada's River Heritage Conference which was sponsored by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board in collaboration with the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia. The conference was attended by over 200 people including some of North America's most renowned river advocates, professional river managers, national ENGO's, representatives of all levels of government, First Nations, academics, scientists and the general public. A post-conference evaluation indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the conference. In total, 82% of the delegates rated this conference as very good to excellent. An additional 16% rated the conference as good to very good. The next Canada's River Heritage Conference will be held in Fredericton, New Brunswick in June, 2001.

In mid-November the CHRS exhibit went on display at the North American Lake Management Society Conference in Banff. In total, 7,500 delegates from all over North America viewed the exhibit during this conference. A CHRS exhibit was also displayed at the Fraser Basin Council Conference in Vancouver and at the North American Water Trails Conference held in Shepherdstown, West Virginia in October, 1998.

Smaller CHRS panel exhibits were also displayed at various venues across Canada during the year.

Cooperative Activities

Living by Water Project

A new national program, the Living by Water Project, is a non-governmental initiative targeted to waterfront residents across Canada. The goal of the project is to increase waterfront stewardship activities done by residents such as increasing wildlife habitat, improving wastewater management, and changing lifestyles to be more environmentally friendly.

The CHRS program supports the program objectives of the Living by Water Project and is working cooperatively with them on projects of mutual interest. For more information on the Living by Water Project visit their web site at www.livingbywater.bc.ca.

Heritage River Highway Signage

One of the actions identified in the CHRS Strategic Plan was the profiling of the CHRS on provincial highway signage. Ontario has taken a lead role in the development of such signage using the Grand River as a pilot. The Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk has developed a prototype of highway signs which integrates the CHRS logo on scenic parkway signs which have been erected in the Grand River Watershed. The Regional Municipality is using the CHRS designation to aggressively promote the communities within the Grand River Watershed as destination points for tourism.

Retracing the Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route

Over the summer of 1998, Max Finkelstein of the CHRS Secretariat continued his volunteer journey to retrace the Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route across Canada. During the previous year, Max paddled from his home in Ottawa to Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, a journey of 3,000 kms. In 1998, Max travelled from west to east, leaving Bella Coola on the Pacific Coast of British Columbia and hiking over the Coast Range to the headwaters of the Blackwater River. He then paddled down the Blackwater River and up the Fraser River which was designated in 1998. From here, he went over the continental divide, and down the Peace River to Lake Athabasca.

This trip generated regional and national media coverage which in turn helps promote the CHRS program. Since his return, Max has given slide shows on his trip to numerous groups. In the summer of 1999, he will be completing Mackenzie's route. 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.



**Run, river, run like blood in the bone
Deep in the heart of the land**

- Lynn Noel,
from the song "Veins in the Stone"



Canadian Heritage Rivers Calendar

The Board once again renewed its agreement with the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA) to produce the 1999 Heritage Rivers calendar. Sales of the 1999 calendar were very strong with 10,000 calendars being produced generating gross sales of almost \$27,000. Proceeds are used to support national river conservation projects sponsored by the CRCA, such as river clean-ups. The 2000 calendar (16 month) is now available for \$14.95 plus shipping and handling. For more information about the calendar, contact the CRCA at (613) 269-2910 or staff@crca.ca.

CHRS Commemorative Program

Three plaque unveiling ceremonies were held during the summer/fall of 1998. These events raise public awareness of the CHRS and act as a focus for special events planned by the local communities.

The Upper Restigouche River, one of the world's best known destinations for Atlantic salmon fishing, was officially welcomed into the CHRS with a plaque unveiling ceremony on Canada Day, 1998. The plaque was unveiled by New Brunswick's Minister of Regional Development, the Honourable Jean-Paul Savoie; Parks Canada Field Unit Superintendent Gilles Babin; and two elders from the Micmac Nation, Margaret LaBillois from Eel River Bar and Don Caplin from Listiguj. Over 300 people attended the ceremony which was a culmination of a week-long Restigouche River Festival held in Kedgwick River and surrounding communities.



Bonnet Plume plaque unveiling ceremony

The ceremony for the Bonnet Plume River took place at Mayo, Yukon on July 18, 1998. The ceremony was hosted by the Yukon government and DIAND, in conjunction with the Nacho Nyak Dun First Nation and the Mayo Renewable Resources Council. Dignitaries in attendance included the Yukon Minister of Renewable Resources, the Honourable Eric Fairclough; the Acting Chief of the Nacho Nyak Dun First Nation, Barb Buyck; the Chair of the Mayo Renewable Resources Council, Frank Patterson and Yukon's Director General of DIAND, Terry Sewell. Parks Canada was represented at the event by Shelly Gellatly, Acting Field Unit Superintendent for Yukon. Media coverage of the ceremony included CBC television and radio and *The Yukon News*. A six-minute feature on the Bonnet Plume was later broadcast on CBC television, Northern Service.

Over 300 people attended a CHRS plaque unveiling ceremony for the Fraser River which was held in New Westminster, British Columbia on September 27, 1998. The plaque was unveiled by B.C.'s Minister of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, the Honourable Ian Waddell, and by the federal M.P. for Port Moody-Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam, Lou Sekora. Other dignitaries in attendance were Gail Sparrow, Chief of the Musqueam First Nation; Helen Sparkes, Mayor of New Westminster and Darlene Marzari, Director of the Fraser Basin Council. The ceremony took place on B.C. Rivers Day, a province wide celebration of over 100 events involving 25,000 people and numerous communities across the province.

For more information:

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

Marketing and Communications
Canadian Heritage Rivers Secretariat
Parks Canada,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0M5
Phone: (819) 997-4930
Fax: (819) 997-0835
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 from the list on Page 8.