

The
Canadian
Heritage Rivers
System



ANNUAL REPORT
2010-2011

December, 2011

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
twenty-sixth Annual Report on the Canadian
Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) for the fiscal
year 2010-2011.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Ireland-Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Adair Ireland-Smith
Chairperson
Canadian Heritage Rivers Board 2010-2011

© Minister of Public Works and Government Services
Canada, 2012

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Environment, on behalf of the provincial and territorial
Ministers responsible for parks and tourism.

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*Cover Art: "Snaking River" by Yukon
artist Stephanie Ryan*

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OWL Rafting

Ottawa River, Ontario

Minister's Message

Canadian rivers touch the heart and soul of our country. For hundreds of years, these rivers have been vital transportation channels, sources of food and water, essential trade routes, recreational sites, and a key part of our cultural identity.

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) is Canada's national river conservation program. Through the CHRS, federal, provincial and territorial governments work together with local communities, Aboriginal peoples and stewardship groups to conserve our diverse and spectacular waterways, to tell the fascinating history of our country, and to facilitate adventure, learning and discovery for all Canadians.

In 1986, the first two rivers were designated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System: the French River, in Ontario, and the Alsek River, in the Yukon. Twenty-five years later, we have much to celebrate. The CHRS, which now includes 37 designated rivers, is the largest river conservation program in the world. Its commemorative program recognizes and promotes the importance of Canada's waterways in shaping our nation, and makes a substantial and widespread



Peter Kent

contribution to the Canadian economy through adventure-tourism job creation and income generated for local businesses.

This program is an outstanding example of shared leadership in action. As the federal Minister responsible for the CHRS, I extend my thanks to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board, to the provincial and territorial Ministers who lead the program across the country and to the many Canadians who work with us to conserve and celebrate Canada's natural, cultural and recreational river heritage.

I look forward to building on this impressive conservation legacy as we work together to complete the System. Canada's world-class river heritage is truly a treasure for all Canadians to experience and enjoy. 🍁

Original signed by

The Honourable Peter Kent
Canada's Environment Minister and
Minister responsible for Parks Canada



Chairperson's Report

As the Ontario member of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board since 1998, it has been my privilege to sit on the Board of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System for almost half of my career in the public service. In the thirteen years that I have been a Board member, 19 rivers from across the country have been added to the System, including rivers from Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Yukon, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba. I am particularly proud of the six Ontario rivers included in that list: the Humber, Rideau, Thames, St. Mary's, Detroit and Missinaibi. The success of all river designations is the result of sustained hard work and dedication from an array of partners who coalesce around a passion for "their" river. I would like to formally acknowledge their efforts.

As I look back on the 2010-2011 fiscal year, I am proud to see the CHRS is expanding to include more of our country's iconic rivers. This year, the St. John River Society has worked with a wide range of partners to finalize the Heritage Strategy for the St. John River, as the process to have this New Brunswick waterway designated to the System nears completion. Work also continued this year on the nomination documents for the Upper Saint Lawrence River (Ontario), and the Saskatchewan and South Saskatchewan Rivers, as well as on a background study of the Back River (Nunavut). This work moves us closer to having a complete and representative System by 2018, as outlined in *The 2008-2018 CHRS Strategic Plan*.

Another exciting achievement this year was the July 2010 plaque unveiling ceremony for the Ontario portion of the Bloodvein River. At the ceremony, which was held in the community of Red Lake, elders from the Pikangikum and Lac Seul First Nations shared their stories of life on the river before unveiling a commemorative plaque written in Ojibway, English and French. The plaque text, which was written by the elders, speaks of the deep relationship Anishinaabek families have with the land, and the ongoing importance of the Bloodvein River in these two First Nations communities today.



Adair Ireland-Smith

Another example of this past year's successful intergovernmental, community and aboriginal partnerships is the work of the organizing committee for the 7th Canadian River Heritage Conference, which will be held in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, June 15-19, 2013. Over the next two years, the Hillsborough River Association will work with Parks Canada, the Government of Prince Edward Island, the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island, the Three Rivers Heritage Association and the University of Prince Edward Island to build a conference around the theme *Rivers: Building Nations...Sustaining Peoples*. The conference will delve into topics of river governance, river economies, the science of rivers, islands and rivers, and river culture. Like the previous conferences in this series, it promises to be an important forum for discussion of Canada's rivers.

As I look over this year's list of accomplishments, I am reminded of the CHRS program's unique ability to bring together federal, provincial and municipal governments, community members, Aboriginal peoples, industry, and river stewardship organizations in the common goal of conserving and promoting Canada's rivers. Twenty-five years after the designation of the first rivers to the System (the 1986 designation of Ontario's French River and the Alsek River, in the Yukon), I am proud to see the CHRS has grown to include 37 designated rivers supported by a nation-wide network of stewards. 🌿

Adair Ireland-Smith
Chairperson

Canadian Heritage Rivers Board 2010-2011

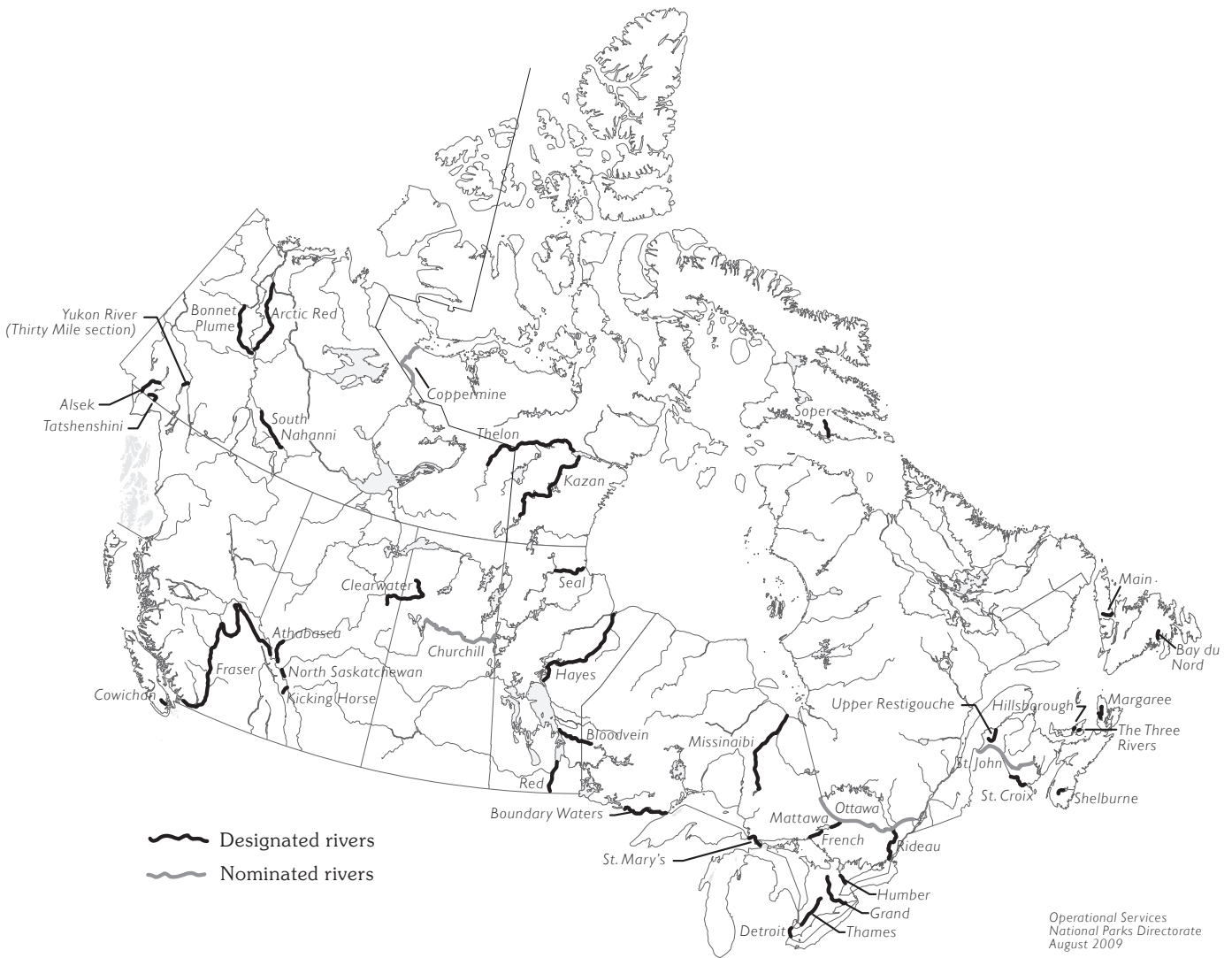
Status of the CHRS

Mandate

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) is Canada's national program for freshwater heritage conservation. It is a cooperative program of the federal, provincial and territorial governments of Canada. 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, cultural and recreational values for the benefit and enjoyment of Canadians, now and in the future.

Status

Forty-one rivers have been nominated to the CHRS, totalling almost 11,000 kilometres. Thirty-seven of these have been designated, meaning that management plans detailing how their heritage values will be protected have been lodged with the CHRS Board.





Designated Rivers

River	Location Province/Territory (Park ¹)	Date of Designation	Length (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
Mattawa ³	Ontario (Mattawa PP and Samuel de Champlain PP)	January 1988	76
Athabasca ⁷	Alberta (Jasper NP)	January 1989	168
North Saskatchewan ⁷	Alberta (Banff NP)	January 1989	49
Kicking Horse ⁷	British Columbia (Yoho NP)	January 1990	67
Kazan	Nunavut	July 1990	615
Thelon	Nunavut	July 1990	545
St. Croix	New Brunswick	January 1991	185
Yukon – The Thirty Mile ⁷	Yukon	January 1992	48
Seal	Manitoba	June 1992	260
Soper ⁵	Nunavut (Katannilik Territorial Park Reserve)	June 1992	248
Arctic Red	Northwest Territories	September 1993	450
Grand ⁶	Ontario	January 1994	627
Boundary Waters/Voyageur Waterway	Ontario (La Verendrye/Quetico/Pigeon River PPs)	September 1996	250
Hillsborough	Prince Edward Island	January 1997	45
Shelburne	Nova Scotia	June 1997	53
Bonnet Plume ⁶	Yukon	February 1998	350
Upper Restigouche	New Brunswick	February 1998	55
Bloodvein ⁴	Manitoba (Atikaki PP), Ontario (Woodland Caribou PP)	June 1998	306
Margaree ⁵	Nova Scotia	June 1998	120
Fraser ⁴	British Columbia	June 1998	1375
Humber ⁶	Ontario	February 1999	100
Rideau	Ontario (Rideau Waterway – Parks Canada)	February 2000	202
Thames ⁶	Ontario	February 2000	273
St. Mary's	Ontario	February 2000	125
Detroit ⁶	Ontario	February 2001	51
Main	Newfoundland and Labrador (Main River Waterway PP)	February 2001	57
Clearwater ²	Alberta, Saskatchewan (Clearwater River PP)	October 2003	326
Cowichan	British Columbia	October 2003	47
Missinaibi	Ontario (Missinaibi PP)	May 2004	501
Tatshenshini	Yukon	May 2004	45
The Three Rivers	Prince Edward Island	May 2004	73
Bay du Nord	Newfoundland and Labrador (Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve)	August 2005	75
Hayes	Manitoba	August 2005	590
Red River	Manitoba	May 2007	175
Total km of designated rivers			9032

Nominated Rivers

River	Location Province/Territory	Length (km)
Coppermine	Nunavut	450
Ottawa	Ontario	590
St. John	New Brunswick	400
Churchill	Saskatchewan	487
Total km of nominated rivers		1927

TOTAL km of NOMINATED and DESIGNATED RIVERS 10959

1. PP denotes provincial park; NP denotes national park.
2. Clearwater River was nominated in two sections by Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Saskatchewan Section was designated in 1987; the Alberta section was designated in 2003.
3. Extensions to the Mattawa were added in 2001, including the 11 km historic La Vase Portages connecting the headwaters to Lake Nipissing, as well as a downstream extension to its confluence with the Ottawa River.
4. Bloodvein River (Manitoba section) was designated in 1987.
5. Includes mainstream and major tributaries.
6. Includes entire watershed.
7. Includes a segment of the river.



The 2008-2018 CHRS Strategic Plan: Our Commitment to Canada's River Heritage

Vision

We envision a system of Canadian Heritage Rivers that serves as a model of stewardship; one that engages society in valuing the heritage of rivers and river communities as essential to identity, health and quality of life.

On September 11, 2007, in Winnipeg, the 10-year Strategic Plan was approved at the Canadian Parks Council meeting of Ministers. This 10-year plan was implemented on April 1, 2008, and will be in place until March 31, 2018.

The new plan put forth four key priorities:

1. Build a comprehensive and representative system that recognizes Canada's river heritage.
2. Conserve the natural, cultural and recreational values and integrity of designated Canadian Heritage Rivers.
3. Engage communities and partners to maximize the full range of benefits associated with the Canadian Heritage Rivers Program.
4. Foster excellence in river management.

For each of the four priorities, a major goal has been identified that is to be completed by 2018:

1. There will be a comprehensive system of Canadian Heritage Rivers representing the full range of natural, cultural and recreational values of importance to Canadians.
2. All designated rivers will be monitored and managed in an active and effective manner.
3. The Canadian Heritage Rivers System will be supported by a range of formal and informal partnerships that advance the CHRS program and deliver broad environmental and societal benefits associated with responsible river management.
4. The CHRS will be playing a significant role in promoting and supporting the effective management of all rivers as an essential component of sustainable living.



Major Accomplishments for 2010-2011

Priority 1 Achievements

The following achievements were made towards the strategic plan's first key priority: Building a Comprehensive and Representative System:

- Work continued on the renewal of the CHRS Charter by all participating agencies.
- Work continued on the management plan for the St. John River, New Brunswick.
- The background studies for the Upper St. Lawrence River, Ontario, and the Saskatchewan and South Saskatchewan Rivers, Saskatchewan, were both completed, and nomination documents were prepared for both of these rivers.
- A background study was undertaken for the Back River, Nunavut, to define its natural, cultural and recreational values and potential for inclusion in the CHRS.

Priority 2 Achievements

The following achievements were made towards the strategic plan's second key priority: Conserving Natural, Cultural and Recreational Values and Integrity:

- Ten-Year Monitoring Reports were presented at the 2010 Canadian Heritage Rivers Board meeting for the Fraser River (British Columbia), the Humber and Mattawa rivers (Ontario), and the Clearwater River (Saskatchewan portion). The findings in each case indicated that the integrity of the values for which each river was nominated continues to be intact, and that the rivers are worthy of their status as Canadian Heritage Rivers.



- Ten-Year Monitoring Reports were completed for the following rivers: the Athabasca River, the North Saskatchewan River, the Kicking Horse River (all Parks Canada), and the Upper Restigouche River (New Brunswick). These reports will be presented at the May 2011 Board meeting.
- A series of templates were presented to the Board at the 2010 meeting outlining a six-step process to follow for ten-year reports. Each jurisdiction will use the six tables listed below to draft their reports.
 1. Chronology of Events since Designation (significant events, actions, research or studies)
 2. Significant Actions, Research or Studies Changes or Threats to Natural Heritage Nomination Value(s) since Designation
 3. Significant Actions, Research or Studies Changes or Threats to Cultural Heritage Nomination Value(s) since Designation
 4. Significant Actions, Research or Studies Changes or Threats to Recreational Heritage Nomination Value(s) since Designation
 5. Changes or Threats to Integrity Value(s) since Nomination
 6. Management Plan Recommendations, Achievements and Current Status since Designation

- Jurisdictions submitted annual reports on designated Canadian Heritage Rivers to Parks Canada's CHRS Board Secretariat, describing changes, threats and improvements to the natural, cultural and recreational values for each river (see River News).

Priority 3 Achievements

The following achievements were made towards the strategic plan's third key priority: Engaging Communities and Partners to Maximize Benefits.

- The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board Secretariat developed a photo contest concept to be launched in the summer 2011, in partnership with Rapid Media's *Family Camping & Canoeroots* magazine.
- A commemorative CHRS plaque for the Ontario portion of the Bloodvein River was unveiled in Red Lake, Ontario, in partnership with Woodland Caribou Provincial Park and with the support of the Pikangikum and Lac Seul First Nations.
- The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board Secretariat redesigned the CHRS website to better present the program and to capture the new brand look: Experience Nature, Experience Culture, Experience Adventure. The online photo gallery was updated to include spectacular images of each Canadian Heritage River, with key messages as captions for each photo.



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Fishing is just one of the many recreational activities that take place on Canadian Heritage Rivers.

- The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board Secretariat provided support and advice for the Hillsborough River Association, which is hosting the next Canadian River Heritage Conference, scheduled for June 2013, in Charlottetown, PEI. Partners in the organizing committee include the Three Rivers Heritage Association, the University of PEI, the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI and the Government of PEI.
- Planning continued for the 7th Canadian River Heritage Conference, which will be held in Charlottetown, PEI, in June 2013.
- Board members, TPC members and the CHRS Board Secretariat responded to public enquiries on CHRS rivers, and worked with river managers, environmental organizations, community volunteers and heritage associations to conserve and promote the rivers in the System. ❁

Priority 4 Achievements

The following achievements were made towards the strategic plan's fourth key priority: Fostering Excellence in River Management.

- The CHRS Technical Planning Committee (TPC), which is composed of planners from each jurisdiction, reviewed studies and nomination documents and prepared reports on the rivers. This planning committee also worked together to update the Policies, Procedures and Operational Guidelines document for the CHRS. This very detailed document is key to the operation and governance of the CHRS program.



Government of Yukon

Tatshenshini River, Yukon



Ministers Responsible for the CHRS 2010-2011

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. The ministers responsible for the CHRS during fiscal year 2010-2011 are listed below. ❁



Ministers Responsible for the CHRS (2010-2011)

The Honourable Peter Kent
Minister of Environment
Government of Canada

The Honourable John Duncan
Minister of Indian Affairs
and Northern Development
Government of Canada

The Honourable Ross Wiseman
Minister of Environment and Conservation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

The Honourable Sterling Belliveau
Minister of Environment
Government of Nova Scotia

The Honourable Bruce Northrup
Minister of Natural Resources
Government of New Brunswick

The Honourable Richard Brown
Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry
Government of Prince Edward Island

The Honourable Linda Jeffrey
Minister of Natural Resources
Government of Ontario

The Honourable Bill Blaikie
Minister of Manitoba Conservation
Government of Manitoba

The Honourable Bill Hutchinson
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
Government of Saskatchewan

The Honourable Cindy Ady
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture
Government of Alberta

The Honourable Terry Lake
Minister of Environment
Government of British Columbia

The Honourable John Edzerza
Minister of Environment
Government of Yukon

The Honourable Bob McLeod
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment
Government of the Northwest Territories

The Honourable Daniel Shewchuk
Minister of Environment
Government of Nunavut

The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board

The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board (CHRB) 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 CHRB is composed of one representative from Parks Canada and from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), and a representative from each of the participating provincial and territorial governments, with the exception of New Brunswick, which is represented on the Board by a government-appointed private citizen.

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 2011-2012 Chairperson is Brian Bawtinheimer of British Columbia. ❁

2010-2011 CHRS Board of Directors

2010-2011 Chairperson:
Adair Ireland-Smith (Ontario)

Sian French (Newfoundland and Labrador)

Jim Young (Prince Edward Island)

Peter Labor (Nova Scotia)

Harry Collins (New Brunswick)

Barry Bentham (Manitoba)

Cindy MacDonald (Saskatchewan)

Archie Landals (Alberta)

Brian Bawtinheimer (British Columbia)

David Monteith (Nunavut)

Richard Zieba (Northwest Territories)

Eric Val (Yukon)

Ron Hallman (Parks Canada)

Matt Bender (INAC)

CHRS Secretariat Staff (Parks Canada)

Don Gibson: National Manager

Andrea McNeil: Communications

Jim Johnston: Senior Planner



Canadian Heritage Rivers provide habitat to countless species of mammals, birds, and fish.

The 2013 Canadian River Heritage Conference



Government of Prince Edward Island

Hillsborough River, Prince Edward Island

Planning for the 7th Canadian River Heritage Conference is well underway. The Hillsborough River Association and the Government of Prince Edward Island will host the conference in Charlottetown, PEI, in June 2013, in a newly built convention centre overlooking the Hillsborough Canadian Heritage River estuary.

Held every three years, the conference brings together academics, graduate students, river and watershed managers, scientists, Aboriginal organizations, government and industry representatives, consultants, non-government organizations and others interested in the natural, cultural and socio-economic values arising from rivers and their watersheds. Delegates

will explore the importance of rivers in Canadian life through the 2013 conference theme, *Rivers: Building Nations...Sustaining Peoples*.

Participants will investigate this conference theme through workshops and presentations organized around the following sub-themes: The Science of Estuaries: Understanding our Rivers; Watershed Governance and Self-Governance – Motivating Stewardship; The Economies of Rivers; Islands, Rivers and Sense of Place; and River Cultures across Time. A call for papers inviting proposals for posters and presentations on each of these sub-themes will go out in 2012. 🍁

River News

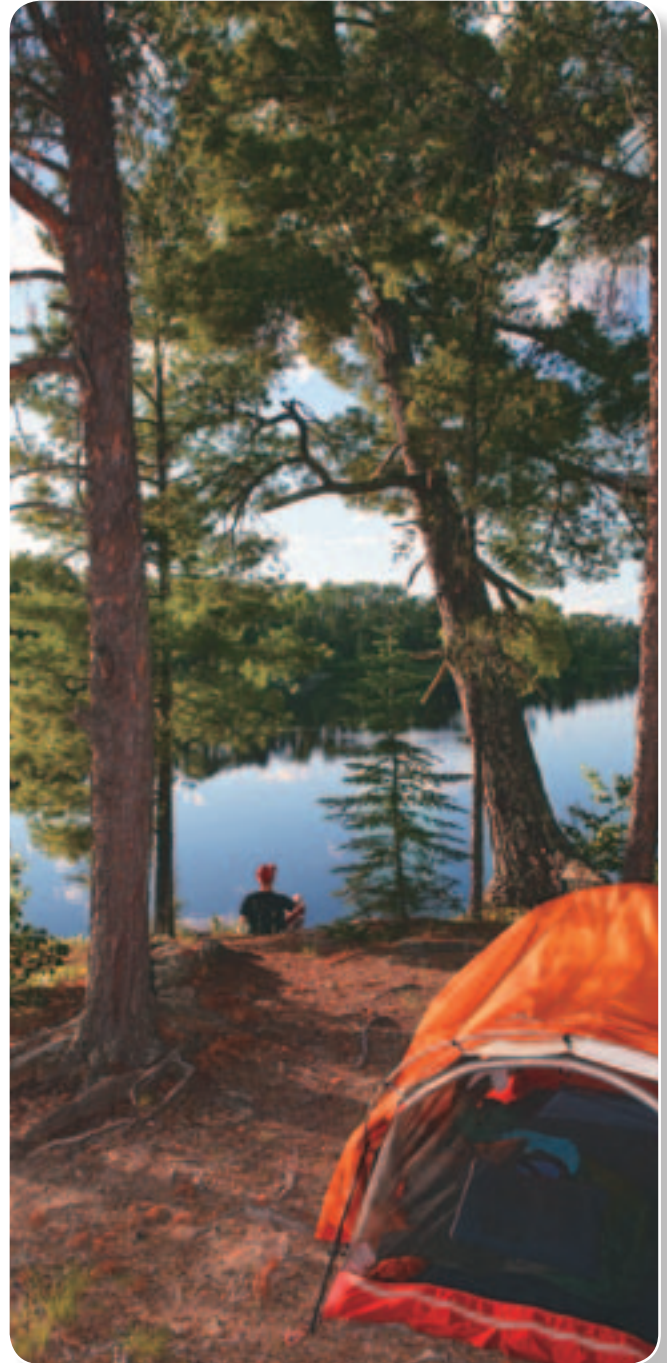
New Brunswick

St. Croix River

The St. Croix Water Forum, hosted by the St. Croix International Waterway Commission, continued to give managers and users a means to collaborate on water issues in 2010-2011. A proposed fisheries management plan for St. Croix alewives was released by the International Joint Commission (IJC) as a step toward resolving a longstanding fisheries dispute. Two campsites were converted to provincial parks, and other campsites were improved to better support “one country” St. Croix canoe trips in the absence of a U.S./Canada remote-entry permit system. A new St. Croix recreation map was issued. Planning began for the War of 1812 bicentennial commemoration (2012-2014). One U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal is still proposed for the Maine side of the St. Croix estuary, in spite of strong Canadian concern. The IJC’s Health Professionals Task Force studied the potential effects of aquatic ecosystem issues on human health in the watershed. Additional impervious surface (water runoff) mapping was completed for portions of New Brunswick around the St. Croix watershed. Maine began the development of a resource and recreation management plan for its portion of the semi-wilderness Spednic Lake/Upper St. Croix River section of the waterway, and a major land conservation initiative was launched on the Maine side of East Grand Lake.

Upper Restigouche River

The Restigouche River Watershed Management Council (RRWMC), in conjunction with the Charlo Salmonid Enhancement Centre, hosted the inaugural Restigouche Salmon Convention, from April 30 to May 1, to explore the state of the local salmon and recognize the work of those involved in maintaining this resource and its habitat. Throughout the summer, the RRWMC continued its work to educate and register canoeists, as well as to maintain campsites and access sites, and offer education to schools on the importance of the river. Overuse of campsites



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Boundary Waters/Voyageur Waterway, Ontario



continues to be a threat in the lower part of the Restigouche, causing ground deterioration and tree mortality. Monitoring activities included a smolts survey using specialized equipment known as a “smolt wheel,” a juvenile salmon survey, and a snorkel spawners count, all by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The RRWMC conducted aerial surveys after heavy rains to locate sources of sediment input to guide restoration work, while the New Brunswick Department of Environment conducted its annual water quality sampling program to assess the concentration of pollutants. The watershed was stocked with 180,000 fall fingerling salmon. In September, the Canadian Canoe Foundation, in partnership with the RRWMC and Arpin Canoe Restigouche, led an environmental education canoe trip program down the river. A project developed with RBC Blue Project funding and forest industry partners is helping to harmonize forestry management and watershed protection. A Ten-Year Monitoring Report was completed for the Upper Restigouche this fiscal year.

Ontario

Bloodvein River (Ontario portion)

Elders from Pikangikum and Lac Seul, along with other First Nations with a connection to the Bloodvein River, joined Parks Canada and Ontario Parks staff on July 20, 2010, in the unveiling of the Bloodvein Heritage River plaque commemorating the river’s outstanding natural and cultural values. Also in 2010-2011, vegetation/fire management planning began for the Woodland Caribou Signature Site, which protects the headwaters of the Bloodvein and four other river systems. Partnering in this project are the First Nation communities of Pikangikum, Little Grand Rapids, Grassy Narrows, Lac Seul and Wabaseemoong, along with Manitoba Conservation and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The development of a vegetation/fire management plan will maintain the ecological integrity of the area and will encourage the return of Anishinabe Fire on the landscape, further preserving ecological and cultural integrity. Work continued on creating a system of designated campsites in Woodland Caribou Provincial Park, which will protect significant features in the park as well as on the Bloodvein River.

Detroit River

The Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) continued its efforts to promote the importance of the Detroit River’s values and to support and stimulate further local and international environmental clean-up and enhancement efforts for the river and its watersheds. In 2010-2011, 550m of shoreline restoration were completed in partnership with the City of Windsor and others. Restoration used a soft shoreline engineering technique that incorporates fish habitat enhancements. In addition, a comprehensive shoreline assessment was completed of approximately 1,000 properties along the entire length of the river to determine structural and biological enhancement opportunities. Twenty water quality improvement projects, including buffer strips, rock chutes and septic system upgrades, were undertaken in partnership with private landowners. And more than 100 volunteers participated in 13 tree planting and four clean-up events in the Detroit River watershed, with close to 700 trees and 2,000 wildflower and grass plugs planted. In addition, the survival of seedling trees planted in this watershed in 2009-2010 was monitored. There were no changes or threats to the river in 2010-2011.

French River

On July 2-3, 2010, the French River Provincial Park Visitor Centre’s First Nation and Aboriginal Advisory Committee hosted the fourth Festival of Peoples, a celebration of Aboriginal and First Nation culture, which this year included an arts show and sale. In August 2010, the Visitor Centre hosted a special event including a traditional women’s drum welcome for the David Thompson Brigade, a group of paddlers who spent the summer travelling the Ontario waterways traversed by the fur traders and explorers. During this event, the Visitor Centre received a 21-foot birch bark canoe on loan from the Dokis First Nation. Backcountry operations of the park continued in 2010, with 20 additional backcountry toilets built. The Recollett Falls boat tramway, which was in a state of disrepair, was permanently removed. Two hydroelectric projects pose a potential risk to the French River. The Dokis First Nation, in partnership with Hydromega Services Inc, is planning the construction of a 10-MW dam just outside the park boundary. This will require some adjustments to



flows in the park, and a transmission line will cross approximately 100m of the park. In addition, Xeneca Power is in the early stages of consultation on construction of a 2-MW dam just outside the park boundary in the Wanapitei River (a tributary of the French). This dam is proposed in an area that has a high density of species at risk, is moderately dense with cultural sites, and is just above an area important for fish spawning and nursery stages. Without appropriate mitigation, this project has the potential to be detrimental to the French River. In addition, the widening of Highway 69 from two lanes to four where it crosses the French, Pickerel and Key rivers will likely be a barrier to some wildlife crossing, although some crossing provisions will be made under overpasses. Biological surveys for hydroelectric research were conducted in the park on the Wanapitei River, near its confluence with the French, which is an important area for sturgeon spawning and species at risk.

Grand River

In June 2010, the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) celebrated the 50th anniversary of Byng Island, one of the busiest of the 11 GRCA conservation areas. On September 17, 2010, 300 people attended the annual GRCA-hosted Water Forum to explore what needs to be done to maintain a healthy and resilient watershed. In 2010-2011, the GRCA worked with municipal water managers on an Optimization Pilot Project to improve operations and maintenance and reduce operating costs at 30 wastewater treatment plants throughout the watershed. At the end of 2010, the GRCA purchased a 48ha parcel of wetland and forest next to Luther Marsh Management Area. The increase in size of this natural area will help maintain biodiversity conservation and watershed health. The GRCA completed an environmental study on the rehabilitation of the nearly 100-year-old Drimmie Dam on the Grand River in downtown Elora. The study recommended building a new, but lower, dam in the same location at an estimated cost of \$1.25 million – an option considered the most cost-effective way of reducing flood risks in the town while maintaining the heritage and economic benefits of the existing dam. The updating of the 1982 Grand River Basin Water Management Plan continued, with work in

2010-2011 focused on compiling information and data on the state of the river, defining goals and objectives for water management in consultation with partners and the public, and compiling information on the collective studies and management programs and activities carried out in the Grand. The GRCA also signed agreements with Wilfrid Laurier University, University of Guelph and Conestoga College that promote research and education aimed at improving watershed health, planning and management. A new Waterfront Master Plan for the City of Brantford was completed in 2010. Also this year, the GRCA released an updated version of its popular *Fishing Ontario's Grand River Country*, which contains detailed information on fishing in all parts of the Grand and its major tributaries. This year also saw the release of an award-winning Grand River County brochure, *Trails Take Flight*, which contains detailed trail maps and information about birding opportunities in the Grand River watershed.

Humber River

It was an event-filled year in the Humber River watershed, including tree plantings, a kids' watershed awareness activity day, celebrations of Humber River Day and Canadian Rivers Day, community clean-ups, the Toronto Urban Farm Food Festival, and the re-opening of Claireville Conservation Area. Projects undertaken in the Oak Ridges Corridor Park included wetland creation, shoreline naturalization, partnership development with the local municipality for the finalization of the management plan and secondary trail development, and community outreach with local schools. Six community groups funded by the Community Program for Stormwater Management undertook projects such as construction of rain gardens and greenroofs, tree and shrub plantings, and educational workshops. In 2010, 19 farmers established operations at the McVean Incubator Farm in the City of Brampton (a partnership between the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority [TRCA] and FarmStart) to grow a diversity of crops that were often sold directly to customers. The Humber Watershed Alliance continued its work to achieve the guiding principles outlined in the Humber River Watershed Plan. TRCA staff established an online social networking community on Facebook under



“The Humber River, Ontario” page to increase the profile of the watershed and the CHRIS, as well as the work of Alliance members. Issues identified in the Humber River Watershed Report Card (2008) include the many harmful effects of urbanization on water balance, water quality, natural cover, aquatic and terrestrial communities, cultural heritage and air quality. These effects include increased surface runoff, water pollution, annual flow volumes in rivers and streams, erosion and sedimentation, channel instability, smog, and losses of cultural heritage and biodiversity. All upland forest connections have been severed in the cities of Toronto and Brampton and the southern portions of both Vaughan and Caledon, and more natural vegetation is scheduled for destruction, according to current urban development plans. Only 25% of the urban area in the watershed has some level of stormwater management. The quality of fish habitat is deteriorating in many of the watershed’s rivers and streams.

Mattawa River

The North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority hosted the 34th edition of the historic Mattawa River Canoe Race on July 24. Through July and August, a partnership with the Lake Talon Cottagers Association funded clean-up activities on portages and campsites adjacent to Talon Lake, while Ontario Parks Resource Stewardship crews performed regular checks and maintenance on the river throughout the summer months, removing garbage and replacing portage pit privies as necessary. Refurbishment of the Mattawa River Visitor Centre (formerly the Voyageur Heritage Centre) in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park took place in winter 2010-2011. Continuing negative human-use activities included unauthorized boat launching on Pine Lake and illegal ATV access at various points along the river. Local stakeholders have started a petition to formalize a boat launching facility.



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Six of Canada’s Heritage Rivers are within Canada’s National Parks or Historic Sites.



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Fraser River, British Columbia

Missinaibi River

The number of canoeists coming to Missinaibi River Provincial Park in 2010-2011 was consistent with previous years. Activities this year included continuation of a Backcountry Stewardship program to monitor access to the park, unauthorized caches on the river, condition of portages and campsites, and interior camping permit compliance. The park also provided input into and direction for the Gordon Cosens Forest Management Plan, as well as the Hearst Forest Management Plan, to address viewscape, spray buffers, timing for when canoeists are on the river, and road construction to prevent new river access. The park participated in a broad-scale monitoring component of Ontario's Ecological Framework for Fisheries Management, as well as in monitoring activities of the Ministry of Natural Resource's *Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan*, and provided caribou information in support of project planning activities in the Far North. The park also partnered with the Municipality of Mattice to design and develop an information kiosk at the Missinaibi River access on Highway 11.

St. Mary's River

On March 26, 2011, the St. Mary's River Binational Public Advisory Council (the stakeholders' voice for the St. Mary's River Area of Concern), along with Lake Superior State University, hosted the 10th annual Environmental Summit, entitled "Celebrating St. Mary's River." The summit included a panel discussion outlining the history, culture, recreational opportunities and ecology of the river, as well as an update on efforts to restore environmental quality. New to the summit this year were interactive activities to encourage stewardship among younger generations. In 2011, Environment Canada initiated a four-year study (2011-2014) to assess baseline wildlife habitat condition within the Ontario portion of the river and to evaluate the degree of impairment within breeding marsh bird and amphibian communities. With help from the local office of the Ministry of Natural Resources, the first phase involved the acquisition and review of existing imagery and documentation on baseline conditions and habitat availability.



Manitoba

Thames River

The Thames River celebrated its 10th year as a Canadian Heritage River in 2010. The 11th Annual Thames River Clean-up was held in April, with thousands of volunteers cleaning up hundreds of kilometres along the river. In May, the City of London hosted the Thames Clear Water Revival, a workshop that drew 30 watershed stakeholders and representatives from municipalities, First Nations and governments to create a strategy for lessening communities' environmental footprint through infrastructure improvements (e.g., sewage) and improved rural land management programs. The Thames Talbot Land Trust secured two new properties in 2010-2011: the Black Creek Heronry in the upper portion of the Thames watershed (in Perth County) and the Tanager Tract, a 100-acre tract of Carolinian swamp/forest just south of the Thames in the Municipality of West Elgin. The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) continues to administer grants to rural landowners under the Clean Water Project for projects that improve water quality (e.g., farm run-off). Urban growth in cities such as London and Woodstock continues to put stresses on the landscape. Both the UTRCA and the Lower Thames River Conservation Authority (LTRCA) plant about 100,000 trees each year on both private and public land to counteract the effects of deforestation. The spread of the Emerald Ash Borer into parts of the Thames watershed is a concern, given that ash represents 10% of the area's trees. Water-quality monitoring by the UTRCA showed an overall slight improvement in phosphorus and *E. coli* bacteria concentrations, while benthic scores remained steady. The UTRCA completed detailed mapping of forests, wetlands, meadows and other natural habitats on orthoimagery, which is critical to things like responding to development inquiries and monitoring change. Led by the UTRCA, fish species monitoring work continued in the watershed, with some 73 fish species recorded. A freshwater mussel larval host survey project was undertaken to generate baseline species population data.

Bloodvein River (Manitoba portion)

Throughout the 2010-2011 year, Manitoba Conservation assisted Bloodvein First Nation in developing its land use plan (LUP). The planning area, which encompasses the First Nation's Registered Trapline Area, includes the Bloodvein River corridor. The Bloodvein First Nation LUP will incorporate the river's current management plan and is being developed in conjunction with the Pimachiowin Aki World Heritage Site Initiative. The LUP reaffirms the protected status of the river corridor by acknowledging that the river will be protected from development in accordance with the *Atikaki Provincial Park and Bloodvein Canadian Heritage River Management Plan*. Planning and development of an all-weather road for First Nations communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg has been underway for several years. This road will require the construction of a bridge across the Bloodvein River. In order to accommodate the construction of this bridge, the boundary of Atikaki Provincial Park and the Bloodvein Heritage River corridor was adjusted. As a result, the designated river corridor was shortened by 64m in 2011. This small adjustment did not significantly affect any of the values for which the river was designated. Water levels on the Bloodvein River were quite high through the summer and fall of 2010. In the fall, Manitoba Conservation continued the implementation of management strategies that were identified in the 2008 *Atikaki Provincial Park and Bloodvein Canadian Heritage River Management Plan*. These are intended to help provide high-quality fishing and wilderness canoeing experiences in Atikaki Provincial Park, which encompasses the Bloodvein River corridor. Park staff began to enforce a prohibition on private boat caches within the park. Outfitters, air carriers and other commercial operators with an interest in the park were also informed that aircraft landings and take-offs, as well as powerboating, will no longer be permitted in the river corridor from June 1 to September 15, with a few exceptions. Aircraft access to Kautunigan and Artery lakes will continue



to be permitted, in order to provide the necessary access for canoeing. These measures will help to ensure that the Bloodvein River continues to be one of Canada's premier wilderness canoeing rivers and that the recreational values for which it was designated a Canadian Heritage River are maintained.

Hayes River

Water levels on the Hayes River were reported to be quite low throughout the summer of 2010. With the low water levels, river travel in the Knee Lake area was hindered by a high number of beaver dams. Manitoba Conservation's river stewards were busy on the Hayes over the course of the summer. Based out of Norway House, the river stewards conducted multiple patrols along the river, cleaning up garbage and clearing portages of debris along the way. The river stewards worked to clear trees downed by heavy winds from portages and rapids, work that is expected to continue over the summer of 2011. Other work near the river's mouth at York Factory was carried out by Manitoba Hydro, which began conducting erosion monitoring along the Hayes in 2010. This work is not expected to have an impact on the river. 2010 was a big year in number of visitors to York Factory, the National Historic Site located on the Hayes River near Hudson Bay. This high attendance – 337 visitors – was partly attributable to two events held with the Fox Lake First Nation and the York Factory First Nation. It is estimated that approximately 10-15% of these visitors arrived by canoe after travelling down the river.

Red River

The 2010-2011 year was a busy time for events and management activities along the Red River. Much of this was due to the work of Rivers West, a not-for-profit organization that works with the provincial and regional governments, as well as with First Nations and all other key stakeholders of the Red River, to encourage a cooperative and integrated approach to managing the river and conserving and promoting all its values. A variety of events, festivals and initiatives took place in communities along the Red River corridor, as well as at the Forks National Historic Site of Canada. As one example, the "Find Gold on the Red" contest encouraged people to discover

the cultural, heritage and recreational values of these communities. September 2010 saw the launch of the French version of the Historic Places of the Red River Supplementary Curriculum Guide. This translation will help to bring information about Red River heritage to more Manitoba children. Work was undertaken this year on preparing the Duff Roblin Provincial Park site (located at the Red River Floodway Inlet Control Structure) for future developments that will serve to enhance promotion of the Red River's natural and cultural heritage values. In May 2010, the Friends of Upper Fort Garry, a volunteer, charitable organization, unveiled plans for the Upper Fort Garry Park and Interpretive Centre, and *The Upper Fort Garry Provincial Park Act* was passed in June 2010. The park will be located at the site of Upper Fort Garry, which was a Hudson's Bay Company trading post located near the convergence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Development of the park will serve to promote an important cultural heritage attraction along the Red River. The 2010-2011 year also saw riverbank clean-up, as well as stabilization of the riverbank through the planting of trees and native plants, along with installation of rip rap. Research involving various aspects of the Red River Valley, including the river's water flows, was ongoing.

Seal River

Recreational use continued on the Seal River through the summer of 2010, with approximately 40 canoeists picked up at the mouth of the river to be transported by air to Churchill. River levels were reported to be high, with good paddling conditions. Many bear sightings, but no encounters, were reported. The Manitoba Geological Survey and the Geological Survey of Canada are currently involved in projects in the Seal River area. One such project, the Far North Geomapping Initiative, initiated in 2008, involves bedrock geological mapping in the Seal River area, which has improved understanding of the region's geology. Information obtained through this and other projects may be used to guide future land-use planning and mineral exploration in the area, although this is not expected to compromise the values for which the river was designated a Canadian Heritage River.



Saskatchewan

Clearwater River (Saskatchewan portion)

A CHRS Ten-Year Monitoring Report that assessed the outstanding natural, cultural and recreational heritage values of the Clearwater River, along with its integrity values, was completed in June 2010 (see p. 23).



British Columbia

Cowichan River

Cowichan Tribes collaborated with Living Rivers (Georgia Basin/Vancouver Island) on technical capacity-building projects directed at freshwater and estuarine ecosystem restoration and assessment. Projects included biological assessment at the Five Fingers side channel, ecological outreach/education programming for elementary school students, and a workshop on the Cowichan Estuary. These projects

provided training and employment for young First Nations members. In addition, volunteers from the Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society helped with shoreline revegetation at Busy Place Creek and conducted forage fish surveys each month on Kilpahalas Beach, Cowichan Bay, as well as seine surveys of juvenile chinook salmon in Cowichan Bay. Research continued into the condition of fish habitats in response to the major Stoltz Bluff stabilization project of 2006-2007. Variables investigated included water quality (total suspended solids and turbidity), permeability of spawning gravel, incubation of fall chinook eyed eggs, and hydraulic sampling results at salmon spawning locations. In addition, the 70.2 mile trestle side channel constructed in 2008 continues to be monitored for effectiveness in meeting design flows through the enhanced salmon and trout-rearing channel facility. May 15, 2010, was Low Tide Day in Cowichan Bay, an annual education and outreach event that includes interpretation of intertidal life.



iStockphoto

St. John River, New Brunswick



Fraser River

Several celebrations of B.C. Rivers Day were held on the Fraser River, including the opening of a Fraser River Discovery Centre exhibit featuring photos from the public. This year there was a higher than predicted return of Fraser sockeye salmon, estimated at more than 25 million fish, although concern for overall Fraser salmon stocks persists. Water temperature increases due to climate change may affect future salmon survival. Urban development, agriculture, forest harvesting and the effects of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic continue to contribute to habitat loss along the banks of the Fraser. There was reportedly a strong return of steelhead fry spawners in the winter/spring of 2010-2011.



Parks Canada

Athabasca River

The new *Jasper National Park Management Plan* was approved and tabled in Parliament in June 2010. The new plan contains direction to raise the profile of the Athabasca as a Canadian Heritage River, and strengthens monitoring and reporting. Fish passage at the Talbot Lake outlet was improved through the installation of a weir to a backwater culvert. (Steep or hanging culverts hinder the passage of fish and other aquatic species and fragment aquatic ecosystems. More work on culverts at other locations is planned for future years.) A trail and viewing platform for Jasper House National Historic Site, once the site of a fur trading post, were completed with the installation of interpretive panels to describe the site's national significance and Aboriginal and European history. The new trail leads from a highway pull-out to the banks of the Athabasca River, where visitors can climb a platform to observe the site of the former trading post across the river. A section of abandoned gas line was removed from the east bank of the river by ATCO Electric. As part of a larger study examining the discharge of contaminants from groundwater to urban rivers in Canada, Environment Canada conducted sampling to investigate the nature and extent of artificial sweeteners and pharmaceutical compounds in groundwater and groundwater discharging to surface water near the Jasper wastewater treatment

plant (on the banks of the Athabasca River). A survey of park water bodies for didymo, an invasive freshwater alga, uncovered the species at 17 of 19 sites surveyed by Parks Canada staff and a University of Calgary researcher. Parks Canada began participating in a multi-stakeholder recovery team led by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development to prepare a recovery plan for rainbow trout. A Ten-Year Monitoring Report was completed for the Athabasca River this fiscal year, the second monitoring report since the river's designation as a Canadian Heritage River in 1989.

Rideau River

Events celebrating the canal heritage in the 2010-2011 year included the third annual Rideau Canal Festival and the 33rd annual Winterlude Festival. Rideau Canal also provided two presentations, one on paddling and one on camping, for the Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show, February 25-27, 2011, which provided an opportunity for outreach to a large urban audience. Also in the 2010-2011 year, the Rideau Canal made steps forward in assessing six sites known to harbour concentrations of substances such as metals in one or more media (sediment, soil, groundwater, surface water). One site began the assessment process with a Phase I/II environmental site assessment, two sites had an ecological and human health risk assessment completed, and three sites had a detailed analysis completed in which site conditions were compared with regional reference sites. Depending on the site, the substances of concern are thought to be related to either historical industrial processes or regional deposition from the atmosphere. The Rideau Canal continued its seasonal survey of species at risk turtles in select wetland areas of the canal. It also expanded the survey to include least bittern (a threatened wetland bird species) and species at risk snakes. The expanding database of species at risk observations helps the Rideau Canal to better protect sensitive habitat areas. The resource conservation group of the Rideau Canal initiated a summer interpretive program at select lockstations and special events, giving visitors the opportunity to learn about the species at risk that inhabit the canal and what they can do to assist recovery. Work progressed well in 2010-2011 on the Rideau Corridor Landscape Survey, including a geo-data mapping project undertaken



with the City of Ottawa to develop base mapping of the entire corridor. Capital funds of approximately \$420,000 were invested to repair various heritage buildings along the Rideau corridor, including the Narrows Blockhouse, Chaffey's Lockmaster's House, Jones Falls defensible lockmaster's house (Sweeney House) and Wood's Mill (Smiths Falls), while \$2.4 million was invested to repair bridges at various locations on the Rideau Waterway, and \$1.3 million was invested to repair channel walls at four locations in Ottawa.

Nominations and Designations

The nomination documents for the South Saskatchewan River and the Upper Saint Lawrence River were completed and prepared for presentation to the Board at its Spring 2011 meeting.

Ten-Year Monitoring Reports

Every 10 years following the designation of a river as a Canadian Heritage River, the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board requires that the managing jurisdiction prepare a comprehensive report detailing the state of the river and the status of management plan or heritage strategy implementation. The report documents major events, management actions, research, monitoring and policy developments that have taken place in and around the river over the past decade. It assesses the natural heritage, cultural heritage, recreational and integrity values of the river using criteria developed by the CHRS, describes changes to those values, and determines whether a river will continue to merit designation.

In the 2010-2011 year, ten-year monitoring reports were completed on the following rivers:

- Athabasca River (Parks Canada; Jasper National Park)
- Clearwater River (Saskatchewan portion; Clearwater Provincial Park)
- Kicking Horse River (Parks Canada; Yoho National Park)
- North Saskatchewan River (Parks Canada; Banff National Park)
- Upper Restigouche River (New Brunswick)

In 1989, the 162-km section of the **Athabasca River** located within Jasper National Park was designated a Canadian Heritage River for its outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values. The ten-year monitoring report for this river (the second such report since its designation) concludes that there have been no significant changes to the values for which the river was designated. There have been slight improvements in several areas, notably water quality, aquatic connectivity, recreational facilities and their supporting infrastructure, and interpretation of the river's human history.

Designated in 1986, the 187-km Saskatchewan portion of the **Clearwater River** underwent a second 10-year monitoring review covering the period of May 1999 to June 2010. The report concluded that minimal or no changes were identified that would diminish the suitability of the river's inclusion in the CHRS. There is possible threat to the river from oil extraction by Oilsands Quest Inc. if full production moves forward. Currently, only exploratory work north of the Clearwater River has been completed.

The ten-year monitoring report for the 49-km section of the **Kicking Horse River** within Yoho National Park concludes that there have been no significant changes to the values for which the river was designated. There have been improvements in several areas, notably water quality and interpretation of the river's natural and human history. This was the second ten-year monitoring report on the Kicking Horse River since its designation as a Canadian Heritage River in 1989.

There have been no significant changes to the values for which the 48.5-km section of the **North Saskatchewan River**, located within Banff National Park, was designated. There have been slight improvements in several areas, notably the reintroduction of fire on the landscape and interpretation of the river's human history. Longstanding concerns involving introduced fish species and barriers to fish movement will require decades to address. Note that this is the second 10-year monitoring report carried out since the river's designation as a Canadian Heritage River in 1989.



The **Upper Restigouche River** in New Brunswick was designated in 1998. The ten-year monitoring report for this river concludes that, in general, the heritage values of the Upper Restigouche remain intact. Since its designation, stakeholder organizations have remained active in promoting dialogue and in harmonizing different activities to pursue habitat and fisheries survey programs, education and habitat improvement.

For all five rivers, appropriate tools are in place for managing recreational and other uses, and policy decisions taken in the past 10 years support the maintenance of the rivers' ecological and cultural integrity and the facilitation of exceptional visitor experiences.



For more information

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

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