

MSA Campaign 60

MIRAMICHI FOREVER FUNDS

‘Preserving the Miramichi Salmon, in perpetuity’



*“Salmon conservation is not just a concern for our time,
but rather a mission that has no end,
from one generation to the next,
literally forever”*

THE MIRAMICHI SALMON – the watershed and its Atlantic salmon ... eternal resources

From time immemorial, the Miramichi River and its salmon resource have existed as wonders of nature, and their protection and preservation is an everlasting challenge to all who value our natural environment, of which the river and the fish are symbols. Like the canary in the coal mine, the state of the Miramichi Salmon will always be a harbinger for sustaining the environmental quality of our lives in New Brunswick and beyond.



The salmon has been a symbol throughout history. Etchings of this fish appeared among the 20,000-year-old artifacts of Cro-Magnon man. It was prized by the Gauls, then by the Romans, was an abundant commercial fish in the British Isles, mentioned in the Magna Carta, and today is at the crest of the New Brunswick coat of arms. Revered by conservationists and sportsmen, and esteemed by gourmets, the salmon's importance to man is truly unique and unmatched by almost any other species.

The Miramichi watershed, located in the east central part of the Province of New Brunswick, has an overall meander length of almost 250 km., and drains approximately 25% or nearly 14,000 sq.km. of the province. Comprised of two primary branches, the Southwest and the Northwest, they collectively have 37 major tributaries and 7,700 individual small streams. Little wonder that the 'mighty Miramichi' is considered one of Canada's most critical watersheds, as it sustains by far the largest run of wild Atlantic salmon in North America. In fact, in provincial socio-economic terms, according to a study published for the Atlantic Salmon Federation in 2010, the Miramichi Salmon annually contributes \$20 million and 637 full time equivalent jobs to the New Brunswick economy.

THE CHALLENGE FOR MIRAMICHI SALMON – protection, conservation, preservation ... forever

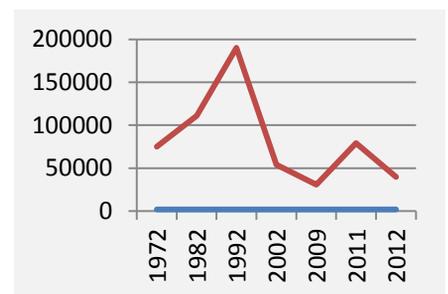
It has been estimated that over the past three centuries salmon populations in the North Atlantic Ocean have decreased incredibly by almost 90%. In the past 40 years alone, there has been a decline in North America from 1.8 million salmon and grilse in 1973 down to little more than 400,000 by 2010.

In the Miramichi watershed, these salmon numbers have dropped accordingly and remain volatile; for example, according to Department of Fisheries and Oceans estimates, almost 200,000 fish returned to the Miramichi in 1992 but fewer than 35,000 returned in 2009, less than 2 decades later.

Through strong efforts by both governments and conservation organizations such as the MSA in recent years, local salmon stocks have commenced to recover from their low points, but with no assurance of sustainability. The mystery of salmon mortality at sea continues to be unresolved, despite major scientific research by all salmon countries, and the almost complete disappearance of salmon from regions such as the Bay of Fundy and many New England rivers, intensifies the reality of the salmon's long term vulnerability.

Thus, the single most powerful overriding challenge is the protection and preservation of the wild Atlantic salmon in the Miramichi watershed, in perpetuity. There remain many unsolved mysteries about the salmon's life at sea, but we do know that it is born and raised in our rivers before beginning its journey to the ocean, and we also know that those spawning survivors from that journey return to our same rivers to lay their eggs for the next generation of the species. Therefore, the common mission of all who love the Miramichi Salmon must be to take the management action that is *within* our grasp and *within* our means, and to ensure that *within* the Miramichi watershed our Atlantic salmon resource is protected and perpetuated in every lasting way possible.

Salmon returns to the Miramichi River

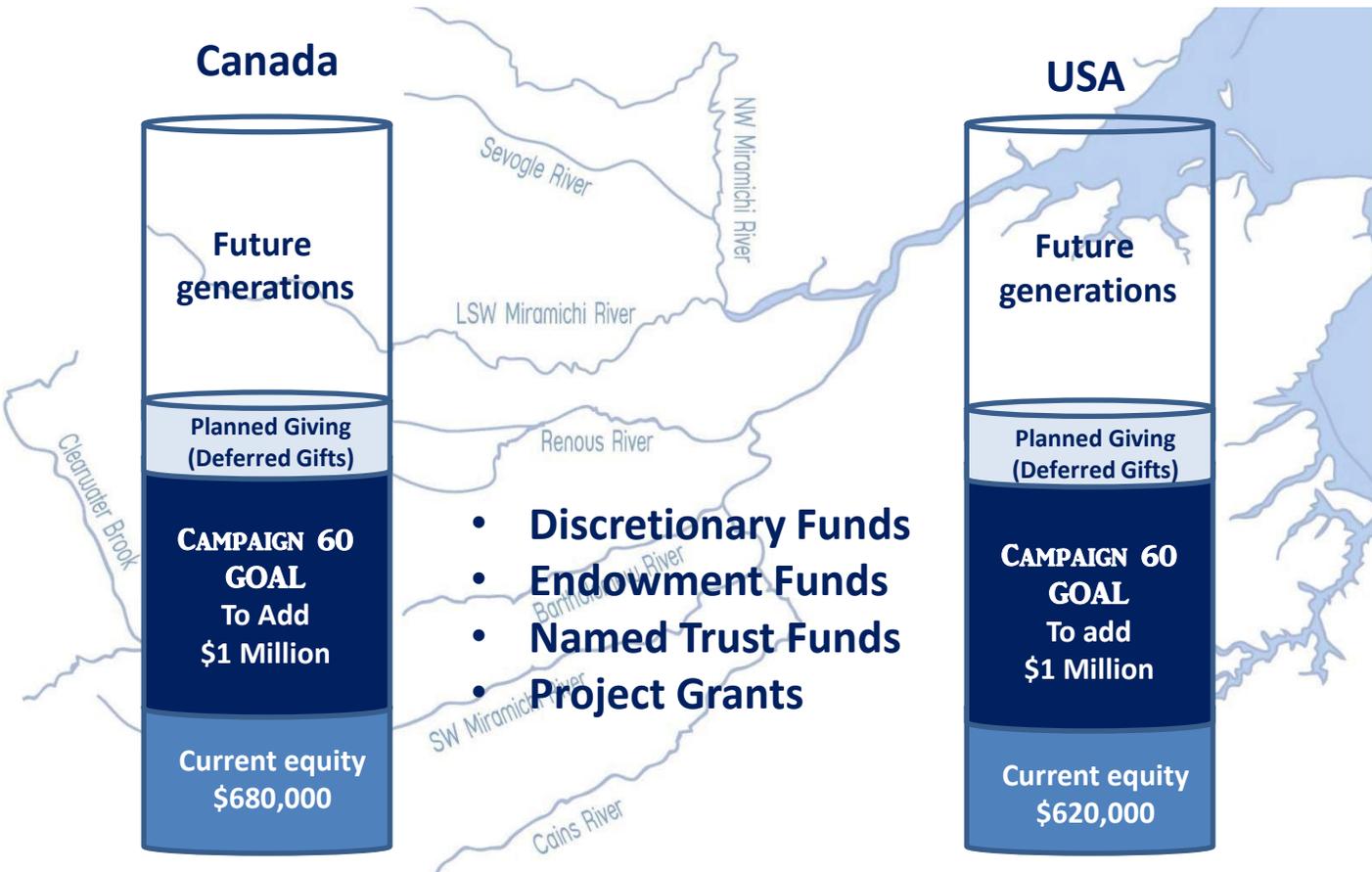




MSA Campaign 60 MIRAMICHI FOREVER FUNDS



'Preserving the Miramichi Salmon, in perpetuity'



It is to further respect and build upon the previous invested contributions by MSA members and supporters that the Miramichi Salmon Association, during its 60th anniversary year, is strengthening the foundations of two financial pillars – one in Canada and the other in the USA – to receive and hold donated financial resources over coming years so that the means and capabilities will be available to meet the challenges of protecting and preserving the Miramichi Salmon, in perpetuity. These Miramichi Forever Funds will receive and allocate discretionary donations, endowment contributions, long term trust commitments and bequests from individuals, families, companies and institutions who desire to make Miramichi Salmon conservation a lasting part of their own legacies.

Reflecting the international spirit of collaboration with which the MSA was originally founded 60 years ago, this first Miramichi Forever Funds campaign will be conducted jointly and equally by MSA teams in Canada and the United States. The goals for two Forever Funds are also equal, \$1 million each in new committed contributions to provide the financial base with which current conservation programs can be expanded and sustained, and upon which the financial support of future generations can be inspired.

A separate long term initiative, THE MSA TRUST FOR PLANNED GIVING, has been introduced to members in recent months. Deferred gifts such as will bequests, insurance policies or investment grants will be received as intended within the MSA Trust, and proceeds will be added to the Miramichi Forever Funds as they become available.

LASTING CONSERVATION ACTIONS - *within our grasp ... within our means ... within our river*

ADULT STOCK ASSESSMENTS – Currently, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans plays the lead role in adult salmon stock assessment and tries to provide accurate estimates for both the Northwest and Southwest branches of the Miramichi. Over the years this system has experienced some statistical vulnerability, a critical problem because most salmon management decisions are based on these estimates. Thus, the MSA feels a strong need to install an additional trap net in the lower Miramichi River to augment and support the DFO system.



MEASURING SMOLT RUNS – One of the most important measures of the MSA's conservation work and success is the abundance of smolts (young salmon) that migrate to the ocean each year. Thus, the MSA will continue revolving counts and estimates of the smolt population leaving the Miramichi watershed for the ocean each spring. As a long held principle, it is vital to measure if you wish to manage any resource.

COLD WATER REFUGE – The MSA has been involved in a number of projects to determine the effect of warm water on salmon behavior, and to create conditions for improved salmon survival during warm water circumstances. Much of this work was completed in 2012, using thermal recorders in known salmon holding pools. The MSA believes that enhanced cold water refuge areas in the Miramichi are important requirements for both young and adult salmon, and hopes to be able to plan for one major restoration of a cold water public pool each year, while also encouraging similar private action by owners of riparian waters.



REMOVING SPAWNING OBSTRUCTIONS – Each fall the MSA increases the spawning habitat available to adult salmon by breaching beaver dams on tributary streams. Current fiscal resources allow MSA to remove only a very small percentage of the beaver obstructions in the Miramichi watershed. Major expansion of this program is crucial to increasing Miramichi Salmon spawning habitat.

BARRIER PROTECTION POOLS – For more than 25 years, the provincial government in New Brunswick has helped to maintain barrier pools at selected headwater locations, where the salmon have essentially been corralled during summer months and released to small upstream tributaries for spawning in the fall. In addition to the protection concept, these barrier pools have also provided accurate counting stations for assessment purposes, and occasionally have been used to conduct in-river research experiments such as stress factors from hook and release fishing. The MSA believes these barrier pools have been important elements in salmon management infrastructure, and yet declining government budgets clearly place their continuing existence at risk. The time will soon come when private action by the MSA will be required to keep these Miramichi barriers in place and operational.

ELECTROFISHING – The MSA works co-operatively with the DFO on annual electrofishing surveys that monitor 60 historical sites in the Miramichi watershed to assess the relative abundance of juvenile salmon. This work also identifies areas that may require stocking of juvenile salmon or other enhancement action. The MSA believes that electrofishing activity should be enhanced to measure and ensure success of management policies in these critical areas of regeneration.



CATASTROPHIC EVENTS – During the 60 year history of the MSA, there have been at least two environmental emergencies in the Miramichi watershed of almost disastrous proportions: the first comprised two cases of leakage of effluent into the Northwest Miramichi from mining operations at Heath Steele in the 1960's and again in the early 1990's; the second was the discovery of smallmouth bass in Miramichi Lake in recent years. In both of those cases, the MSA played a vital role by sounding public alarm about the calamities, and in leading remedial action to confront the emergencies. Hopefully, these kinds of catastrophes will not occur in the future, but obviously the environmental role of the MSA will remain vital to ensure that such major incidents are always identified promptly and managed effectively.

LASTING CONSERVATION ACTIONS - *within our grasp ... within our means ... within our river*

AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT – The Miramichi estuary and bay have never been subject to open pen salmon or trout aquaculture and hopefully such development will never take place in these waters. The MSA will continue to support the development of land based re-circulation aquaculture as the best way to minimize impacts on the environment and wild fisheries. In fact, there is a current need for the MSA to implement such new technologies as soon as possible in its hatchery facilities at the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Center.

TRACKING ADULT KELTS – The MSA has been collaborating with the Atlantic Salmon Federation to place acoustic transmitters on repeat spawning adult salmon (kelts) as they migrate to the ocean. This program provides valuable information on the timing of adults leaving the river, travelling through the Strait of Belle Isle to ocean feeding grounds and then returning to the river to spawn again. In 2012, expensive new satellite transmitters were placed on some kelts for the first time, which retain data about the migration route, temperature and, if the fish dies, the location where mortality occurred. These annual tracking projects, especially using satellite transmitters, have great potential to help solve the mysteries of salmon mortality at sea, and is an area of research within the river estuary and bay that MSA feels should definitely be expanded.



PUBLIC FISHING, CROWN WATERS – Recognizing the important demand for public fishing opportunities within New Brunswick, the MSA vision includes a responsibility for helping to identify and care for sites that exist on Crown waters or other areas of accessible open ownership. As well, of course, through its annual contract arrangements with the Province of New Brunswick for brook trout production at its hatchery, MSA indirectly contributes to public fishing for that species. There is a significant opportunity for MSA to play a larger public service role in these respects.



PREDATOR CONTROL – There is significant evidence that Miramichi Salmon returns are being obstructed by predation. For example, it is estimated that 50% of the young salmon (smolts) leaving the river are killed as they move through the tidal portion towards Miramichi Bay. Whether or not these adverse results are caused by growing seal and/or striped bass populations remains a serious question, and MSA feels it will be essential over future years to augment ASF's smolt tracking programs with parallel studies of predation and consequential control actions in the Miramichi estuary and bay.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY – As a result of its experienced tenure and leadership position in salmon conservation affairs, the MSA is consistently requested to participate in forums and to make presentations about environmentally responsible resource development, sustainable land use policy and regulatory discipline of commercial and recreational fisheries. As well, the MSA has an inherent responsibility to its members and its partners to speak out strongly about new and existing policies or practices that will have an impact on the lifecycle of the Miramichi Salmon. The MSA already has a pressing need for increased professional staff and consulting assistance to fulfil its advocacy and communications roles.

MSA EDUCATION PROGRAMS – Throughout most of its existence, the MSA has conducted and will continue to provide a variety of training and educational programs intended to promote salmon conservation and to engage the whole community in the values which are inherent in the context of the Miramichi Salmon. These programs include education of children at Miramichi schools through writing and poster contests, and by helping deliver to local classrooms the Fish Friends program originally conceived by the Atlantic Salmon Federation. Another popular current program is First Cast MSA, an initiative designed to introduce and mentor new anglers to fly fishing on the Miramichi. At the more adult level in past years, the MSA conducted a Certified Guide program which was well received and attended by professional guides from throughout the Miramichi watershed.

CONSERVATION RESEARCH – Through the facilities of MSA's Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre, assistance continues to be offered to government agencies and universities in the conduct of salmon research studies. These efforts are also frequently supported by MSA technical staff. As well, the MSA annually awards the "Jack T. H. Fenety Conservation Scholarship" to a deserving university student who is conducting meaningful research with relevance to the Miramichi Salmon.

THE MIRAMICHI SALMON ASSOCIATION – history 60 years, vision endless

Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre



On October 8, 1953, a small group of conservation pioneers from New Brunswick and New England, who shared a common love for the Miramichi Salmon and who feared for its future, created a fledgling new organization called the Miramichi Salmon Association, Inc. (MSA). Made up of anglers, guides, camp owners, commercial outfitters and sporting good merchants, this group drafted a simple yet optimistic statement that declared as its mission “*the propagation, protection and perpetuation of the Atlantic Salmon in the Miramichi River system*”.

Sixty years later, that fundamental goal still directs the programs and activities of the MSA, and in fact inspires a renewed vision, one which recognizes the enduring principles of conservation as a cause that can never end.

The MSA has accomplished much over the past sixty years. Through the vigorous efforts and strong voice of Jack Fenety, MSA President for more than 35 of those years, catch limits were dramatically reduced, fly fishing was exclusively confirmed, angling was banned from bridges, closed spawning sanctuaries were established, and the beginning of the end for commercial net fishing was initiated. Later in the 1990s, the MSA took over operations of the federal salmon hatchery at South Esk, NB which has now become well established as the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre, a highly respected and visible community symbol of the MSA and its mission. By the year 2000, biologist Mark Hambrook had become engaged to manage the hatchery facilities and to lead the MSA as its first full time employed president.

In calendar year 2011, the MSA operating budget was \$835,486, of which approximately 92% was spent on core conservation programs and activities, as follows – hatchery operations 48%, river work projects 15%, fisheries management 12%, education and communications 11%, research 6%, with administration costs of 8%. The historic policy of MSA continues to be for a balanced budget, which has consistently been reconciled from one year to the next. Through a number of fundraising initiatives and tremendous assistance from MSA members and supporters, current operations remain reasonably secure.

The MSA has also made significant long term conservation progress through public awareness programs to promote salmon conservation, with an emphasis on educating children as the future custodians of our environment. Relationships with local First Nations were advanced to help manage the Miramichi Salmon together, and the MSA Conservation Corps was established to employ young native people on seasonal MSA projects. A continuing dialogue with both the provincial and federal governments has resulted in formation of the Miramichi Watershed Management Committee and a formal Miramichi Salmon Accord, the first of its kind on any salmon river in Canada.

Therefore the Miramichi Salmon Association has embraced an enduring vision that identifies the everlasting requirement for comprehensive stewardship of this precious resource. The MSA recognizes that its primary conservation role must be directed to activities that have influence and impact upon the salmon’s lifecycle while within the river, and to ensure that there will always be a bountiful supply of smolts going to sea year after year. In launching MSA Campaign 60 and the Miramichi Forever Funds, the MSA is moving its own vision to a new level that will not only continue to serve the conservation needs of the present day, but will also point and lead to the compelling challenge of sustaining that conservation mission through future generations – that is to say, in perpetuity.

MSA CAMPAIGN 60 – a legacy opportunity for each one of us

MSA Campaign 60 needs and seeks support from all who value the Miramichi Salmon. This is an opportunity to commit a portion of our own legacies to the enduring preservation of a resource that we respect and cherish. A contribution to the Miramichi Forever Funds will be a unique and tangible way for each of us to help leave our natural world as good or better than we found it.

Contributions to the Miramichi Forever Funds may be made as one-time donations or as pledges to be fulfilled over a period of up to five (5) years. All contributions will be received in a spirit of trust and responsibility, and any expenditures of these funds will always require specific or budget approval by a majority vote of the MSA Board of Directors. The Miramichi Forever Funds will be administered and accounted for in accordance with donors' instructions, designated generally in the following alternative ways:

Discretionary Funds – Such donations will be available for Board approved spending on budgeted operations or contingency requirements.

Endowment Funds – These amounts will be added to existing MSA Endowment Funds, with expenditures limited to annual approved rates of return.

Named Trust Funds – These will be segregated and administered in strict accordance with the donor's instructions; such trusts will be listed annually in MSA audited financial statements as a lasting measure of recognition.

Project Grants – These will be designated amounts for specific purposes, and MSA will administer them strictly in collaboration with the donors.

MSA Campaign 60 is being conducted by volunteer teams of members and supporters who will strive for direct contact with prospective donors. Each volunteer will have made a personal financial commitment to the campaign in advance of their requests to other donors, and the MSA believes that this process of leadership will prove contagious to successful achievement of the Miramichi Forever Funds objectives.

The names of all contributors to the Miramichi Forever Funds will be publicly acknowledged in the Miramichi Salmon Letter, and in due course will be permanently recorded for historical purposes on a wall of honour in the lobby of the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre. Donation amounts will be included in public acknowledgements unless confidentiality is requested by the donor, and all amounts will be included for MSA Lifetime Sponsors awards. Special tributes will be placed in the Conservation Centre for individual donations in excess of \$25,000. For those establishing Named Trust Funds in excess of \$25,000, they will also be regularly listed in annual MSA financial statements.

Commitment – The Miramichi Salmon Association covenants to all donors that the Miramichi Forever Funds will be used strictly for the purposes intended, and no budgets or expenditures will be implemented without the express approval of a majority vote of the MSA Board of Directors.



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MSA Campaign 60 – Leadership

Frank McKenna – Deputy Chair, TD Bank Group

Since the beginning of time, the nature of our environment on earth has primarily been characterized by its waterways – glaciers, oceans and major rivers. The earth has been identified by the creatures that have inhabited it – fish in the rivers, beasts in the forests and birds in the air.

As we seek to trace our environmental heritage and to find security for our environmental future, there are some uniquely rare creatures that have endured as long as our memories can recall, and none is more symbolic of the quality of our lives and the health of our rivers than is the wild Atlantic salmon which has existed seemingly forever in the Miramichi watershed of New Brunswick.

On their own, the river and the salmon are uniquely special but taken together as the Miramichi Salmon, they present a single image of two natural treasures that are world renowned. As with all such cherished resources, each one of us bears responsibility to pass them on to future generations in as good or better condition as we found them. For example, perhaps one of our near term goals should be to rebuild returns to the Miramichi of almost 200,000 salmon and grilse, a level last achieved in 1992 but only that once in more than 40 years.

As a native New Brunswicker, I have both a personal and professional understanding and respect for the irreplaceable value of the Miramichi Salmon to the environmental, cultural and socio-economic fabric of the entire Province, the Atlantic Region and Canada as a whole. That is why I personally support the vision and the mission of the Miramichi Salmon Association, and its MSA Campaign 60, which will strive to perpetuate conservation of the Miramichi Salmon not just for our generation, but for all future generations to come. The Miramichi Forever Funds will raise the standards for environmental preservation to an inspiring new level through implementation of the conservation actions set out in MSA's long term vision for the future of the Miramichi Salmon.

I encourage you, indeed urge you, to support MSA Campaign 60 in the most meaningful way that you can.

With sincere appreciation,

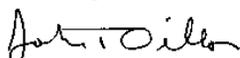


Honorary Campaign Chairman



From its beginning, one of the distinctive dimensions of the MSA has been the close international relationships which exist among its members and supporters from both Canada and the United States, all who share a deep appreciation and respect for the natural virtues of the Miramichi Salmon.

The lasting MSA bonds which have been formed between residents of both nations through the common cause of conservation go far to exemplify the reality that our environmental world is truly without boundaries, and its ultimate salvation will depend upon our ability to work together as citizens of one planet in protecting against degradation, while nurturing conservation and sustainability.



John Dillon,
Campaign Director, USA



J.W. Bud Bird
Campaign Director, Canada