

~ FUNDY TIDINGS ~

Quarterly Newsletter of the
Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership (BoFEP)
December 2020 Winter Issue

A. BoFEP and its activities:

1. BoFEP 2020 AGM reports

The 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership was held on October 16, 2020 either in person at Parrsboro, NS or virtually via Zoom (in keeping with provincial Covid-19 regulations). The following reports were presented at the meeting. These reports, as well as the Treasurer's report (which is not included below), were circulated to all Steering Committee members and other meeting registrants prior to the meeting.

- [Chair's 2020 AGM Report](#)
- [BoFEP Workshop Report](#)
- [Nominations Committee Report](#)
- [Membership Committee Report](#)
- [Communications Coordinator's Report](#)
- [Strategic Planning Committee Report](#)
- [Ocean Literacy Working Group Report](#)
- [Environmental Information Uses and Influence Working Group Report](#)

2. BoFEP website - a trove of Fundy information

Readers are reminded that secreted away in the darkest depths of the BoFEP website lies a trove of invaluable information about Fundy and the issues/opportunities confronting it, collected over a number of decades. Check out some of these informative archives:

- [Workshop Proceedings](#) - 12 documents summarizing the presentations from BoFEP's biennial workshops.
- [Fundy Issues](#) - Readable fact sheets about features of Fundy and some of the issues facing it.
- [Fundy Reports](#) - Miscellaneous reports of studies by BoFEP or its partners over the years.
- [Fundy Tidings](#) - All the past editions (since 2003!!) of BoFEP's newsletter.
- [In with the Tide](#) - An archive (since 2009) of the newsletter of the Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre.
- [BoFEP Links](#) - an archive of assorted books, videos and Fundy related organizations.

3. BoFEP seeks new treasurer

After many years of dedicated service to BoFEP by keeping its finances in impeccable order our treasurer Susan Rolston is finally stepping down. Thank you Susan on behalf of all of us in BoFEP for being a treasure as well as a treasurer! We are now seeking a new treasurer ready to accept a deft handover from Susan. According to our Constitution and By-Laws: *"The Treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing the financial affairs and records of the Partnership, including liaising with the external auditor and any fiscal agents on behalf of the Partnership, and shall perform such other duties as the Steering Committee or Management Committee may assign from time to time"*. If you are interested in this position, can suggest possible nominees, or have any questions about the position or duties, please send a note to seapencom@gmail.com .

4. BoFEP membership and renewals now due!

Members are the heart of our organization. We rely on your continuing financial support to aid us in promoting a healthy, diverse and productive Bay of Fundy ecosystem. Membership is open to any individual or group who shares its vision for protecting, conserving and sustainably using the Bay of Fundy. The membership fee for individuals is \$25 and for organizations \$100 . [BoFEP Membership form MS Word](#) [BoFEP Membership form PDF](#) Please take a moment to join/renew today while it is still fresh in your mind!

B. Partners and other organizations:

1. Future of Atlantic salmon - online discussion

The Explorers Club of New York hosted a live discussion on the future of wild salmon with leading conservationists and scientists, like Atlantic Salmon Federation's Bill Taylor and Jonathan Carr. [Watch the video](#) (2:57:34 mins)

2. Ottawa funds salmon research chair at UNB

The Federal Government recently announced the creation of the Parks Canada Research Chair in Aquatic Restoration at UNB. The Research Chair will build on the university's strong focus and significant expertise in marine, coastal and freshwater science, as well as help students get hands-on experience in conservation biology and species at risk recovery [Government of Canada invests in Atlantic salmon recovery](#) (Government of Canada & ASF)

3. NSEN links environmental groups in NS

The [Nova Scotia Environmental Network](#) (NSEN) was established in 1991 as a non-profit organization comprised of non-governmental environmental groups and individuals whose common purpose is the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and the pursuit of a sustainable future for Nova Scotia. There are approximately 30 organizations in the Network. NSEN also facilitates the forming of caucuses and working groups among its members.

4. Discovery Centre summer newsletter available.

The [Summer 2020 edition](#) of "In With The Tide" the Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association newsletter is now available for a stimulating read about goings on around Digby Neck and the Islands. This issue includes articles on hiking local trails, improving trails (and trail signage), sea turtles, local plants, beach garbage and news from the area's garden club. Colourful, artistically formatted and well worth the read. You might also support the group by joining: the application form is on the last page.

5. Fundy fossils far-feted!

Congratulations to the [Joggins Fossil Centre](#) on becoming the 2020 Travelers' Choice award-winner, based on a full year of reviews left by visitors on the Tripadvisor website. The awards are presented to sites and businesses that consistently receive positive feedback on the popular site, putting them in the top 10 per cent of hospitality and travel businesses worldwide. [Joggins Fossil Institute earns Tripadvisor's 2020 Travelers' Choice Award](#) (Chronicle Herald)

6. Cliffs of Fundy Geopark rocking!

The Cliffs of Fundy Geopark received a welcome boost when the provincial tourism website launched a [special landing page](#) for the Geopark. You can also keep up with the goings on at the Geopark by signing on to the [Geopark facebook page](#). if you use #cliffsoffundy when you post photos of your activities in the Geopark, there's a good chance that your photo may be drawn into this promotional page. In addition, The Cliffs of Fundy Geopark is also looking for support in its bid to host an international conference that could bring up to 1,000 people to the region. The 10th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks in September of 2023 will draw 800 to 1,000 delegates from across the world to the hosting geopark. If successful, the conference would bring great tourism potential to the Fundy region and the province. [Bid for 2023 international conference underway at Cliffs of Fundy](#) (Saltwire Network). It is also worth noting that BoFEP ([Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership](#)) has joined the Geopark organization and hopes to participate actively, particularly in the Education Committee.

7. 40 years of Right Whale research

Congratulations to the Right whale researchers with the [Kraus Marine Mammal Conservation Program](#) who have studied how North Atlantic right whales utilize the Bay of Fundy habitat with regular shipboard surveys since 1981 (and with a first aerial survey in 1980) and they're still going strong! Over the years, the survey has expanded into other habitats, such as Roseway Basin, south of Nova Scotia and the Gulf of St. Lawrence in response to changing habitat usage by the whales.

8. GOM Marine Environment Working Group update

Peter Wells, Chair of BoFEP and a member of the GOMC ([Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment](#)) Working Group, attended the Council and Working Group Meeting on December 1st, 2020 via ZOOM. There was [a full program](#), covering topics such as NOAA's North America Marine Debris program, best practices to empower coastal resilience, the climate change action plan and climate network, ecosystem science, Wabanaki science, the ecosystem indicator partnership, and coastal and marine spatial planning. Also of interest to BoFEP members may be the recent data report on GOM contaminants monitoring "[The Collection and Analysis of Bay of Fundy Sediment Under Contract between the Association of US Delegates to the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment and Eastern Charlotte Waterways for Contaminant Monitoring and Analysis](#)".

9. Cooke Aquaculture highlights sustainability/conservation efforts

Cooke Aquaculture is beginning to recognize that a rapidly growing number of consumers are driving the importance of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting, as they increasingly look to align themselves with products and companies they trust are transparent in their business practices and serve a greater social purpose. In view of this, Cooke has initiated work on a corporate-wide ESG project. [The Top 25: Cooke Q&A](#) (Seafood Source)

10. Fundy Runner promotes ocean literacy and community aquariums

In September, marine conservation biologist Bryden Bone completed a 50 Km trail run of the Bay of Fundy trail at Cape Chignecto in 12 hours. [Video of run](#) (5:48 mins; Global News). The run was to promote youth ocean literacy as well the [Back to the Sea Society](#) which facilitates the creation of community aquariums as marine education centres to promote marine education and conservation.

C. Fundy/GOM and other news:

1. Whale News: Positive, Negative and Downright Depressing

Once again whales, particularly Right Whales, were the focus of much press over the past few months. While much of the news was rather depressing there were some positive stories about ongoing efforts to protect whales from entanglement and ship strikes as well as develop new collaborations and new technologies for studying whales. A sampling of some of the key headlines:

- [Out at Sea with a Drone, Gina Lonati '12 Monitors the Health of an Elusive Whale](#) (Bowdoin News)
- [It's time to do the right thing for right whales](#) (Boston Herald)
- [In a Boothbay Harbor lab, scientists are tying lobstermen's ropes in knots to protect whales](#) (Bangor Daily News)
- [The work of 1,000 trees: N.S. scientist highlights the toll if whales become extinct](#) (CBC News)
- [No right whales found in the Bay of Fundy this year](#) (Bangor Daily News)
- [Right whales disappear from the Bay of Fundy](#) (Mount Desert Islander)
- [Canada, U.S. researchers gathering virtually to report on endangered right whales](#) (CBC News)
- [New population estimate suggests only 356 North Atlantic right whales left](#) (CBC News)
- [Only 366 Endangered Right Whales Are Alive: New NOAA Report](#) (EcoWatch)
- [Underwater acoustic glider hailed a 'success' for detecting right whales](#) (CBC News)
- [Researchers study how ocean noise affects endangered North Atlantic right whales](#) (CBC News)
- [At Sea and in Court, the Fight to Save Right Whales Intensifies](#) (Yale Environment 360)
- [Fisheries ordered to temporarily close as endangered right whales detected off Nova Scotia coast](#) (The Globe and mail)
- [Cargo ships to lobster boats a lethal threat to right whales, study shows](#) (SaltWire News)

2. Infrastructure updates from around the Bay

There have been a number of developments pertaining to coastal and watershed infrastructure, ranging from protecting lighthouses, to removing obstructions on rivers in order to restore their natural ecosystems. Some of the more interesting items include:

- [Groups look for money to save Musquash lighthouse](#) (CBC News)
- [A dead river brought back with hard work](#) (Telegraph Journal & ASF)
- [New Book on the Restoration of the Penobscot River](#) (ASF)

- [What the Petitcodiac River can teach us about Windsor's controversial causeway](#) (Chronicle Herald)
- [Avon Valley group worried that salinity levels on the rise in local river](#) (CBC News)
- [Small dam, big controversy: How the contentious aboiteau at the Windsor Causeway could generate a national conversation about fish passage.](#) (Halifax Examiner)

3. Lobsters aren't the only things on the boil

It is likely that 2020 will long be remembered as the year that lobster fishing rights in the southwestern Nova part of the Bay of Fundy became the flashpoint for an ugly string of sometimes violent confrontations. Traditional fishers who have long had to acquire expensive licenses and be subject to strict regulations aimed at conserving stocks were incensed that indigenous fishers were demanding (and exercising) the right to fish with little regard for existing regulations. First nations claimed that long standing treaties gave them the right to fish for "a moderate livelihood". The fact that this term had never been adequately defined exacerbated the already tense standoff. Press coverage of the ongoing situation was intensive and widespread; the following is just a small sampling of the coverage:

- [Discontent arrives at federal fisheries minister's doorstep](#) (Saltwire Network)
- [Lobster fishermen protest, looking for better stewardship of stock](#) (CTV News)
- [Mi'kmaq planning their own moderate livelihood fishery outside DFO seasons](#) (CBC News)
- [Protest over Indigenous lobster fishery turns confrontational at NS wharf](#) (CBC News)
- [Nova Scotia lobster fishermen protest 'out of control' First Nations fishery](#) (Turtle Island News)
- [Mi'kmaq harvesters confront protesters at wharf in southwestern Nova Scotia](#) (Kukukwes.com)
- [Fishing 'is our birthright,' says new regional chief](#) (Chronicle Herald)
- [Nova Scotia fishermen say a First Nation lobster harvest is being abused](#) (CBC News)
- [Commercial fishermen turn focus to alleged buyer in Mi'kmaq lobster dispute](#) (CBC News)
- [Tempers ignite in lobster fishery dispute between Indigenous, non-Indigenous fishers in Southwest Nova Scotia](#) (Cape Breton Post)
- [What's behind the violent dispute over a NS lobster fishery](#) (CBC News)
- [In Search of Common Ground: An interview with Arthur Bull about the lobster fishery crisis in St. Mary's Bay](#) (Halifax Examiner)
- [Landmark deal involving Mi'kmaq and Clearwater Seafoods risks inflaming fishery tensions](#) (Globe and Mail)
- [Lobster fishing must remain in season, says former fisheries chair](#) (CBC News)
- [The federal government has allowed a regulatory system with unconstitutional provisions'](#) (CBC News)
- [Troubled waters: Why a clash over crustaceans is roiling Canada](#) (Christian Science Monitor)

4. Climate change impacting St. John River salmon

Warm water and low river levels are a serious threat to Atlantic salmon says a local salmon biologist. He provides information on this year's return of salmon as well. [Climate Change could have long term impacts on Atlantic salmon says biologist](#) (Telegraph Journal & ASF)

5. Mary's Point Flyover

A [captivating video](#) (6:47 mins) taken from a drone flying around and over Mary's Point, a 12 square kilometres (4.6 sq mi) wetland in Albert County, New Brunswick, Canada at the head of the Bay of Fundy. The flight occurred in January 2017, so it's a rather wintery landscape!

6. NB'ers want more land protected! Nominations invited.

People in New Brunswick want more protected land according to a survey released by the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Conservation Council of New Brunswick and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. The survey of 500 New Brunswickers conducted between September 1st and 3rd shows overwhelming support for conserving forests and protecting critical habitat for fish and wildlife. [New Brunswickers Want More Protected Land](#) (ASF, CCNB, CPAWS) . The provincial government is following through on its election promise to double conserved/protected lands. Residents are invited to [submit their nominations for the next protected space](#) through an online hub. [New Brunswickers Invited To Nominate Next Conservation Areas](#). (Country 94)

7. Ottawa offers more funding for tidal power

The goal of generating large amounts of electricity from the powerful tides that sweep the Bay of Fundy has received a \$9.6-million boost from the federal government.

- [Ottawa pledges \\$9.6M to try to harness Bay of Fundy tidal energy again](#) (CBC News)
- [Nova Scotia project receives \\$4M from federal government to produce clean tidal energy](#) (Global News)
- [Nova lands \\$4-million investment for Petit Passage tidal energy project](#) (Electrical Business)

In related news, Sustainable Marine Energy Canada Ltd. efforts to test, improve and make commercially viable its in-stream tidal technology, received a boost when the federal government announced \$28.5 million in funding for the company. [Tidal energy: The quest to turn Nova Scotia's ocean tides into stable, renewable electricity — at a reasonable cost](#) (Financial Post)

8. Rare shark visits Annapolis Royal

A local fisherman reeled in a rare catch in September while fishing from the Annapolis Causeway. The 3.5 foot long shark was photographed and released. Based on the photos, DFO scientists identified it as juvenile sand tiger shark. There have been only a few previous sightings in the province. [Rare catch reeled in near Annapolis Royal identified as sand tiger shark](#) (Chronicle Herald)

9. New mackerel catch limits to protect stock

DFO is moving to regulate the recreational mackerel fishery by limiting catches to 20 per day instead of the present unlimited catch. There will also be a closed season and a increase in minimal size for recreational and commercial fishing. The most recent stock assessment in 2018 found the spawning population down 86 per cent from pre-2000 levels, and the number of mackerel surviving to breed at an all-time low. [Mackerel catch limits coming to recreational fishery in Atlantic Canada](#) (CBC News)

10. Land-based salmon aquaculture promises? Or promising?

Fish farming in waters off Canada's West Coast remains controversial as fishermen grapple with the drop in wild salmon stocks. The federal government promised, before the 2019 election, to phase out open-net pen salmon farms in British Columbia by 2025. However, it appears that Ottawa is taking a different tack in Atlantic Canada where open pen culture is actively promoted. Why the double standard? A federal scientist has accused the Department of Fisheries and Oceans of underplaying the threat of open-net fish farms to wild salmon and of being too beholden to the aquaculture industry. [Ocean geese meet ocean gander](#) (ASF & The Telegram). Meanwhile, closer to home, the NS government is again dragging its heels on releasing information about burgeoning aquaculture developments around the province and blatantly ignoring freedom of information rules. What are they trying to hide? [Aquaculture opponent says N.S. disregarding freedom-of-information rules](#) (CBC News). Clearly land-based aquaculture is the wave of the future. Here is a great podcast detailing the history and evolution of Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) in salmon farming (43:48 mins). [RAS Talk: Let's get technical.](#) (Annex Business Media). In addition, The Guardian, looks at the pros and cons of alternative technologies for finfish aquaculture. [Does it make sense to grow fish in indoor tanks?](#) (ASF & The Guardian)

11. Paper on migration of scoters and loons in Fundy

There is a new paper available about migration patterns in 5 species of scoters and loons; ["Modeling spring migration patterns of scoters and loons in the Bay of Fundy"](#) by James D. Kelley and Heather L. Major." (Journal of Field Ornithology August 2020). The migration of scoters and loons has been monitored at the Point Lepreau Bird Observatory (PLBO) in the Bay of Fundy every spring since 1996, but little peer-reviewed research based on the resultant database has been published. Using data collected over 18 years at the Bay of Fundy (2000–2017), the study objectives were to (1) determine the most accurate method of modeling hourly migration rates and (2) assess trends in hourly migration rates for our five focal species to determine if the numbers of migrants passing PLBO have changed over time.

D. ADMINISTTRIVIA

Fundy Tidings is circulated quarterly to members of BoFEP and others who have expressed an interest in BoFEP and its activities. If you know someone who might like to receive Fundy Tidings,

or if you would like to be removed from the Fundy Tidings mailing list, e-mail a request to:
seapencom@gmail.com Back issues are available at [Fundy Tidings Archive](#)