# THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION N·E·W·S·L·E·T·T·E·R

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## NASCO Representatives Told Salmon Stocks at Lowest Levels Ever

*By Robert Jones, CRSA President and US Commissioner, North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization*

*Malcolm Windsor, Secretary of NASCO, welcomed delegates and representatives to the Miramichi meeting. (Photo: The Atlantic Salmon Federation)*

Despite what may be considered draconian measures to conserve Atlantic salmon in the North Atlantic, fisheries scientists from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) find that salmon stocks are the lowest ever recorded. At a five-day meeting of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) in Miramichi City, New Brunswick, Canada, representatives from the United States, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Denmark (for Greenland and the Faroe Islands), the Russian Federation, and the European Union (the NASCO Council) once again addressed the management and conservation of Atlantic salmon.

Delegates at the meeting learned that salmon stocks are still at seriously low levels despite restrictive management measures introduced both nationally and internationally in recent years. The continuing decline in abundance appears to be linked to conditions in the marine environment. Based on a proposal introduced by Norway, the NASCO Council agreed to set up a Working Group to develop ideas for a five-year program of research to identify and explain the causes of the increased marine mortality of Atlantic salmon, and to exam-

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## First Known Catch of a CRSA School Program Salmon Reported

*By Jim Carroll, CRSA Secretary*

On May 20, 2000 the first Atlantic salmon known to have been stocked as part of the CRSA School Program was caught and released as a two-year-old smolt on Stratton Brook in Simsbury, CT on a Wooly Bugger fly by Simsbury High School student Steve Burns. The silvery, seven-inch smolt was returned to Stratton Brook without a picture for posterity, but with hopes for her return in two years.

***"We (CT DEP) don't stock in Stratton Brook… That has to be a CRSA school salmon!"***

Salmon fry have been stocked in the Farmington River and its tributaries for the last five years by the Connecticut DEP and their volunteers as part of the Connecticut River salmon restoration effort. However, the state has not done any stocking in Stratton Brook, whereas CRSA schools have stocked in the Farmington tributary, with DEP approval.

The catch was made on one of three "Salmon Saturdays" organized by the Harris AgriScience Technology Center of Bloomfield, CT. These special events were available at modest cost to area middle and high school students, and featured classes in fly tying and fly casting as well as presentations on the salmon life cycle, and water quality and

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*CRSA to Celebrate 25th Anniversary at 2001 Annual Dinner/Auction on January 27, 2001*

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ine possible means to counteract the mortality.

In other actions, the Council heard a report from the Standing Committee on the Precautionary Approach established in 1999. The Committee, at a meeting in March, developed a decision structure for use by the Council and NASCO Commissions and relevant authorities in the management of single and mixed stock salmon fisheries. The decision structure lists the questions to be answered, under a precautionary approach, when information on which conservation and management measures are to be based is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate. It was agreed that each of the parties would apply the structure to a selection of rivers with different stock status and management policies, with results to be evaluated in 2002.

In addition, the Council heard a report of a meeting of the Liaison Group between NASCO and the North Atlantic salmon farming industry. The Council welcomed the closer, more open and broader cooperation with the salmon farming industry and the commitment to work together on issues of mutual concern. The ICES representative had earlier reported that the output from salmon farms in the North Atlantic area had reached over 620,000 metric tons in 1999, a 19 percent increase over 1998. The Council continues to be concerned over the genetic impact on wild salmon by escapees from salmon farms and recent experimentation with transgenic (genetically altered) salmon by the aquaculture industry.

The Council also reviewed the matter of salmon catches (2.3 metric tons in 1998 and 1999) by residents of the French islands of St Pierre et Miquelon, south of Newfoundland. The Council approved a resolution requesting France in respect to St. Pierre et Miquelon to immediately set harvest limits for the 2000 fishery at the lowest possible level consistent with the advice from ICES.

During its deliberations. the North-East Atlantic Commission (European Union, Russian Federation, Denmark in respect to the Faroe Islands, Norway and Iceland) was unable to reach agreement on a quota for the Faroes fishery. Notwithstanding the lack of agreement on a quota, the Commission passed a resolution indicating that the Faroe Islands intended to manage the fishery in 2001 in a precautionary manner and with due consideration to the advice from ICES.

The West Greenland Commission (European Union, Denmark in respect to Greenland, Canada and the United States) received the report from ICES which indicated that the prefishery abundance calculated for West Greenland was slightly higher than in 1999. The ICES report also showed that there had been a significant shift in the proportion of North American versus European origin fish in the West Greenland fishery in 1999. The 1999 proportion was 91% North American and 9% European, while the ten-year average from 1982-1992 was 54% North American and 46% European. Both the United States and Canadian representatives indicated their concern for this shift. It was suggested that strong management measures in North American and severe decline in European stocks could have contributed to the shift. It was agreed that reasons for the shift were not clear and that scientific research and analysis is necessary on the issue.

In the discussion of regulatory measures for 2000, it was noted that the agreement reached in 1999 in West Greenland was for both 1999 and 2000. This agreement provides that there shall be no export of salmon from Greenland and that the catch shall be for internal Greenland consumption only. The representative of Denmark (in respect to Greenland) stated that Greenland would abide by the 1999 agreement even though there appeared to be a small surplus (prefishery abundance versus North American spawning requirements) available for harvest. The representative of the United States disagreed that a surplus was necessarily available since there was a significant probability that the prefishery abundance forecast was less than the spawning requirements. There was disagreement as to whether the current regulatory measure should be extended to the 2001 fishery. However, it was agreed by resolution that, “unless a significant

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**THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION**

The Connecticut River Salmon Association (CRSA) is a nonstock, nonprofit Connecticut corporation. Our mission is to support the effort to restore Atlantic salmon in the Connecticut River basin, a joint undertaking by the states of Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut, together with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the National Marine Fisheries Service, pursuant to an act of Congress in 1983.

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improvement is demonstrated in the condition of stocks available to the West Greenland fishery, the catch at West Greenland in 2001 will be restricted to the lowest possible level."

The advice from ICES to the North American Commission (Canada and the United States) once again indicated that salmon should be harvested only from those North American rivers where the spawning requirements are expected to be achieved and surpluses are available. The representative of Canada described the management measures for 2000 and pointed out that there were no longer any commercial fisheries for salmon on the east coast of Canada. He reported that the license retirement program on the Lower North Shore of Quebec was completed at a cost of $1,400,000 and that an additional $700,000 was spent to retire the remaining Gaspe licenses. It was also reported that work was underway for a recovery plan for stocks in the inner Bay of Fundy and that in Quebec, a multi-year plan has been announced which establishes conservation limits and management targets for each river.

The representative of the United States presented a review of catches and conservation measures in the United States. He reported that the 1999 documented returns of adult salmon to U.S. rivers numbered 1452, 18% lower than 1998, and that in excess of 13 million juvenile salmon had been stocked in 1999. He also reported that it had been determined that the Gulf of Maine distinct population segment of Atlantic salmon is in danger of extinction and that it was proposed to be listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. The comment period for this action is now closed and a final decision is expected on or before November 17, 2000. ◆

*The next meeting of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization is scheduled for Galicia, Spain from June 4-8, 2001.*

*Vermont Notebook …*

## A Report on Anadromous Fish Restoration

By Jay McMenemy
*Fisheries Biologist, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife*

The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife is an active participant in the cooperative program to restore anadromous fish to the Connecticut River basin. Department staff engage in a variety of activities that are summarized below:

**Atlantic Salmon Fry Stocking and Evaluation:** For the past several years, about three million salmon fry have been stocked annually in Connecticut River tributaries in Vermont. Fry are stocked in May using a large network of volunteers. A volunteer or agency staff person walks every foot of streams stocked with fry, planting them into suitable habitat as they go. Fry are currently stocked into the West, Saxtons, Williams, Black, White, Ompompanoosuc, Wells, Stevens, Passumpsic, Paul, and Nulhegan watersheds. Fry are also stocked, by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, into Vermont tributaries of the Deerfield River that drain into Massachusetts. The Green Mountain National Forest (U.S. Forest Service) stocks fry into most of the White River drainage and the upper tributaries of the West River. Most of the fry stocked in Vermont come from the White River National Fish Hatchery (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), but some also come from the Pittsford National Fish Hatchery and the Roxbury State Fish Culture Station..

In order to evaluate the survival and growth of stocked fry, salmon populations are sampled by electrofishing annually at index stations on all of the stocked tributaries. Between state and federal Forest Service efforts, about 80 sites are sampled annually. This allows us to estimate potential smolt production and to adjust our stocking to maximize survival. Generally, survival has been similar to values reported in the scientific literature for Canadian wild salmon rivers.

**Fish Passage:** Safe and efficient upstream and downstream passage is essential to allow anadromous fish to migrate to and from the ocean. In cooperation with the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, we operate fish ladders, from south to north, at Vernon, Bellows Falls, and Wilder Dams on the mainstem of the Connecticut River. These ladders were built and are maintained by the owner, currently Pacific Gas and Electric Generating (PGE Gen). (Note: a map displaying dams in the Connecticut River watershed can be viewed on the CRSA web site, http:\\www.ctriversalmon.org.)

Because Bellows Falls is the historical limit for shad migration, the Bellows Falls and Wilder ladders were built only for salmon. Since thousands of American shad pass the Vernon ladder annually, it appears to be very efficient for passing shad. However, the problems with shad passage at Turners Falls, the next dam downstream, have limited the numbers of shad reaching Vernon.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates a salmon trap and truck facility at their flood control dam at Townshend on the West River. This facility is being extensively upgraded this summer to improve salmon passage.

Downstream passage facilities to guide salmon smolts safely past hydroelectric turbines are in place at all mainstem Connecticut River dams from McIndoes Dam, near St. Johnsbury, downstream to the sea. Downstream passage at dams on tributaries in Vermont varies from complete efficient systems, to interim spill, to

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# CRSA School Program: Stocking 2000

*By Richard G. Bell, CRSA Vice President & Chair, CRSA Education Committee*

As CRSA completed its sixth year working with local Connecticut schools in the hatching, rearing and stocking of Atlantic salmon fry, the stocking of fry from forty-four schools at various acceptable and designated sites within the narrow late April to early May timeframe became a challenging task. Yet it was accomplished this year without a hitch, thanks to the leadership of knowledgeable teachers and the presence for the first time of CRSA Educational Consultant Gary Bogli, who lent much needed manpower and expertise to the effort.

In many instances, teachers whose classes had stocked fry in previous years managed the stocking on their own. This was true of Dr. Julia Rankin's fifteen River-to-the-Sea schools in and around greater Hartford. Most of these schools utilized selected sites on tributaries of the Farmington River. The CRSA liaisons for these and other schools in the northern half of the state are Bob Jones, CRSA president, and Jim Carroll, CRSA secretary. Sixth graders from Tom Halligan's class at South Windsor's Timothy Edwards Middle School, in addition to releasing their fry in Mill Brook in Windsor, spent stocking day touring the Rainbow Dam Fishway on the Farmington River under the tutelage of Connecticut DEP Fisheries staff.

Downstate and to the west, most of the schools have Dick Bell, CRSA vice president and educational committee chair, as their liaison. Gary Bogli, whose presence facilitated the very complex stocking schedule, assisted Dick this year. Downstate schools use other Connecticut River tributaries for stocking. The Salmon River at Comstock Covered Bridge is able to accommodate large groups, and on April 25, three busloads of eager students and parents from the Beecher Road School in Woodbridge, under science teacher Alan Concilio's leadership, arrived to stock its three tanks. Not to be outdone, Polly Richter's Tyl Middle School group of Oakdale, which successfully nurtured six tanks, sent six busloads to Comstock Bridge, three on April 27th and three on April 28th. John Wilska's Old Saybrook Middle School students, on their way to Providence for a field trip, arrived in three busloads to stock at the Eight Mile River site in Devil's Hopyard Park.

Some problems involving long distance transport of the fry were successfully solved, making a statewide expansion of the program in the future feasible. Greenwich High School seniors, led by science teacher Ray Hamilton, provided extra oxygen and cooling arrangements for the long trip from Greenwich to Comstock Bridge. Similar arrangements were also worked out by Kevin Chavez of Sunnyside Elementary School in Shelton, George Baldwin of Amity Junior High in Orange and Christine Noel of Jonathan Law High School in Milford, all of whom made the successful long haul to the Eight Mile River in Devil's Hopyard State Park. Marge Drucker of North Haven Middle School, who has stocked for the previous five years at Comstock Bridge, tried the Devil's Hopyard site this year, and found it at least as good, probably better, for her purposes.

The Lyme Consolidated School, assisted by the Old Lyme Center and Middle Schools, made its usual fine parade to the town park behind the school on the Eight Mile River. Their fish are stocked to the roll of a drum! One of the more interesting trips this year was made by James Grandpres' Children's Home Group from Cromwell. They pioneered a visit to a dramatic local spot on Dickinson Creek, a tributary of the Salmon River, at the point where the creek goes under the old Airline Railroad Crossing. At least one student couldn't resist plunging into the marvelous pool created at this point in the stream. More would have followed, had it not been for an enormous water snake, which decided to parade around the pool, demonstrating his territorial claim!

Although it rained before some stockings, and after others, CRSA maintained its perfect record of having no rain fall on a group while stocking!

*Salmon stocking is fun for all! At left and above, students from South Windsor's Timothy Edwards Middle School on stocking day. (Photos: E. Holcombe)*

With the anticipated continued expansion of the School Program during 2000-2001, the challenges of maintaining a successful program will be difficult to meet. However, with the help of dedicated teachers, CRSA volunteers and Connecticut DEP Fisheries staff, these challenges will continue to be met. ◆

## CRSA DINNER SET FOR JANUARY 27, 2001

The Connecticut River Salmon Association will hold its 2001 Annual Dinner on January 27, 2001, at 6:30 pm, according to CRSA Dinner Chairman Ed Ruestow. The dinner, which will mark the association's 25th anniversary, will feature a special guest speaker, exciting silent and live auctions, and raffles. Many special and unique donations are anticipated in honor of this anniversary celebration.

The dinner will be held once again at the Hawthorne Inn and Restaurant on the Wilbur Cross Highway in Berlin, Connecticut. The CRSA is returning to the Hawthorne Inn because of the excellent food and service, said Ruestow, adding that "Last year's event was the most successful in the past eight years and our members and guests have voted to return."

The Dinner Committee has planned another evening of silent and live auctions along with several raffles. "The donations in goods and services last year from contributors were outstanding, and reflect their support for the salmon restoration program and the very successful CRSA School Program. After all, there are now 44 communities in Connecticut that are incubating salmon eggs because of the contributors' direct help. Those are resources coming back to the Connecticut donors' own towns and cities," Ruestow noted.

In accordance with a change made to the bylaws and procedures several years ago to make the association more responsive to the membership, the CRSA Annual Meeting will be held before the dinner. All of the directors will stand for election, and a ballot and proxy will be sent to all members in late December for those who cannot attend the dinner to vote in person.

Anyone interested in making a donation or obtaining dinner information or tickets should write or call:

Edward H. Ruestow,
CRSA Dinner Chairman
23 High Gate Lane
West Hartford, CT 06107
(860) 521-1426

## *2000 CRSA Dinner Auction Donor List*

*Visit our donors on the web! Those with asterisks have web sites, which can be accessed from the CRSA web site at http://www.ctriversalmon.org/auction.html.*

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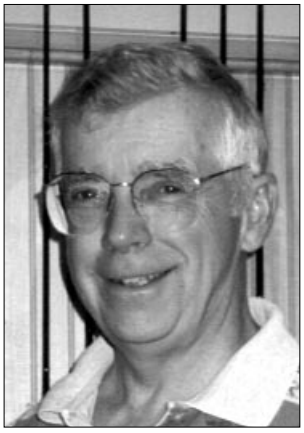

## Bogli Retained As Consultant

Gary Bogli, a retired teacher and a resident of Manchester, CT, was retained by the CRSA in 1999 as a consultant to the growing CRSA School Program.

Education Committee chairman Dick Bell said, in making the appointment, "The tremendous growth in five years from the one middle school in North Haven to the 44 school sites in the Fall of 1999 incubating eggs and hatching salmon fry forced us to find more support hours with educational expertise. We are very fortunate to have found someone with Gary's background so we can continue to grow this successful CRSA program."

Gary was born in Hartford, but raised and educated in Manchester. After graduating from Trinity College in Hartford in 1958, and obtaining his Masters in Education from the University of Hartford, Gary taught for four years at the Robinson School in West Hartford. He then taught Social Studies for 33 years in the South Windsor school system, primarily at Timothy Edwards Middle School.

Gary has been involved in a number of fishing and environmental activities. He has been a member of the Connecticut Fly Fishing Association for 35 years, was a board member for 12 years, and served a term as president.

His appointment was made possible by a generous grant from the Patrick and Aimee Butler Family Foundation of Saint Paul, MN. This family foundation provides support to the arts, education, environment, human services and philanthropy.

# Spring 2000 A Disappointing Season

*By Steve Gephard*
*Supervising Fisheries Biologist*
*CT DEP/Fisheries Division*

It's hard to find anything exciting to say about this spring's salmon run to the Connecticut River. The run total now stands at 76, and that is very disappointing. That number could go up, but it is unlikely that it would increase by very much. First, we need to review the data at the Holyoke dam and upstream dams. Ten salmon were deliberately released above Holyoke and these were outfitted with radio transmitters so that biologists could track them. There may have been more than ten salmon that passed the Vernon Dam fishway and some of them may not have been sporting transmitters, so that information needs to be examined to see if some fish eluded capture at Holyoke. Secondly, due to the unusual water year in the river, there is a chance that some spring fish failed to ascend upstream far enough to be captured in the fishway traps and may still be at large in the lower river. If so, this summer's relatively high and cool river flows may help keep them alive until the fall when the fishways re-open and the fish begin moving again.

Clearly the river was much cooler than usual and that affected run timing. However, it is unlikely that large numbers of salmon failed to enter the fishways. Furthermore, all salmon runs in the United States and many parts of Canada have been very low this year. For example, the Penobscot River only reports 474 fish to the Veazie trap, and the St.John River has received only 1,265 fish at Mactaquac, compared to 5,003 last year. Obviously, 2000 is shaping up to be a very bad year for salmon.

On a brighter note, the shad run to the river was a bit higher this year than last, although it is still lower than expected. Many of the other species runs continue to be low.

This spring, nearly 50,000 two-year old hatchery smolts were stocked into the river; half below Holyoke Dam and half above the Rainbow Dam on the Farmington River. These are the first full group of smolts to be stocked into the system since 1994 and the first two-year old smolts since 1980. The Rainbow Dam was outfitted with a downstream bypass for downrunning fish (such as smolts) a number of years ago, with help from the CRSA.

Due to the lack of a suitable sampling facility, no careful monitoring of emigrating smolts has been possible. However, the DEP completed a sampling facility in September of 1999 and it was first operated for smolts in May of 2000. The facility worked very well and gave proof that the bypass is working well. Both wild (fry-stocked) and hatchery (smolt-stocked) smolts were captured in the bypass. At that time, the hatchery smolts had been "at large" for over a month. While everyone expects the wild smolts to look good, biologists were very impressed with the appearance of the hatchery smolts. Some of them would have been difficult to distinguish from wild smolts were it not for the adipose fin clip that they carried. This release should result in adult returns in 2002.

A total of 11 adult salmon were allowed above dams this spring. One was an accidental release at the DSI Dam on the Westfield River; the other ten were deliberate, radio-tagged releases at Holyoke. Jay McMenemy, a fisheries biologist from the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, has been monitoring these fish and knows of most of their current locations. He and others will continue to track them right up until spawning time. ◆

*I will close with a personal note. In June, Bruce Williams, a fisheries technician with the program and a CRSA member, was injured at the Rainbow Dam Fishway while on the job and "going the extra mile" for the program. He will be back to work soon, but his absence has caused real shortcomings to the project. I'm sure the CRSA joins me in expressing our relief at his full recovery. We look forward to having him back on the job, working on behalf of Connecticut River Atlantic salmon.*

**Total Fish Counts as of Friday, July 21, 2000***

| | |
|---|---|
| Atlantic Salmon | 76 |
| American Shad | 228390 |
| Blueback Herring | 9587 |
| Gizzard Shad | 37737 |
| Sea Lamprey | 24045 |
| Striped Bass | 476 |

**Totals by Location**

| River | Location | Species | Returns |
|---|---|---|---|
| Salmon River | Leesville Dam, Leesville, CT | Atlantic Salmon | 8 |
| Farmington River | Rainbow Dam, Poquonock, CT | Atlantic Salmon | 6 |
| | | American Shad | 259 |
| | | Alewife | 5 |
| | | Gizzard Shad | 43 |
| | | Sea Lamprey | 1014 |
| | | Striped Bass | 2 |
| | | Sea-run Trout | 2 |
| Westfield River | DSI Dam, W. Springfield, MA | Atlantic Salmon | 12 |
| | | American Shad | 3555 |
| | | Gizzard Shad | 112 |
| | | Sea Lamprey | 1995 |
| Connecticut River | Holyoke Dam, Holyoke, MA | Atlantic Salmon | 50 |
| | | American Shad | 224576 |
| | | Blueback Herring | 9587 |
| | | Gizzard Shad | 37572 |
| | | Sea Lamprey | 21036 |
| | | Striped Bass | 474 |

*Note: Numbers are preliminary and do not necessarily reflect all fish passed.

Comment: Of the 50 Atlantic salmon counted at the Holyoke Dam, 10 were released to continue upstream. Five have negotiated the fishway at Turners Falls and five have passed the Vernon Dam in Vernon, Vermont while two have gone through the fishway at Bellows Falls, Vermont. Most fishways are closed for the season but will reopen to pass any fall run fish. Updated information can be found on the Connecticut River Coordinators' web site at www.fws.gov/r5crc.

## News in Brief...

### *CRSA Receives $1,000 Grant From Butler Foundation*

For the second consecutive year, CRSA is the recipient of a grant from the Patrick & Aimee Butler Foundation (Foundation) of Saint Paul, MN, a family foundation providing support to the arts, education, human services, and philanthropy. CRSA member Jude M. Peterson of Shutesbury, MA is a grandson of Patrick and Aimee Butler, and a trustee of the Foundation.

CRSA was awarded $1,000 this year, in addition to the $6,500 grant it received from the Foundation in 1999. As with last year's grant, the new funding will be included in CRSA's general fund, and used for educational purposes.

### *Bell New President of NEC*

CRSA vice president Richard G. Bell was approved as the new president of the New England Council (NEC) of the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) by CRSA's Board of Directors at their quarterly meeting on March 16, 2000. As president of NEC, Bell also becomes a member of the ASF USA Corporate Board. He succeeds Edward C. Meyer, a current CRSA director and past president. Bell also is chairman of CRSA's Education Committee, and directs CRSA's successful School Program. An attorney, Bell is Of Counsel to Tyler Cooper & Alcorn, LLP, in New Haven, Connecticut. He is chairman of the Board of Directors of Yale-New Haven Hospital, and is an officer in numerous other public service organizations in the New Haven area.. He also is president of the Walton Fishing Club.

The New England Council was established to facilitate CRSA's participation in the governance of ASF. A seventeen-member Management Board, comprising seven Council presidents from the United States and Canada, and five members each from ASF's USA and Canada Corporate Boards, is responsible for setting ASF policy.

## Vermont *(continued from page 3)*

no protection at all, depending on the dam. Work is ongoing to improve passage so smolts can safely pass all dams. Fortunately, several of our rivers have few or no hydroelectric dams.

**Habitat Protection and Restoration:** Good habitat for spawning, juvenile production, and adult holding is essential to salmon restoration. State biologists participate in a variety of regulatory processes, including state land use and stream alteration permitting and federal hydroelectric relicensing, to protect and restore stream habitat. We are also working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reduce the severe impacts that the operation of their flood control dams has had on aquatic habitat. The Green Mountain National Forest has an extensive program of stream habitat restoration in the West and White watersheds.

**Adult Salmon Radio Tracking:** For many years, 10% of the salmon reaching Holyoke Dam on the mainstem have been released to continue their upstream migration. Monitoring of these released salmon has been limited to fishway observations and snorkeling surveys in some areas. Although we know that salmon adults have been in the West and/or White Rivers in most years, we didn't know a lot about where they spent the summer, how much they moved around, and where they spawned. Starting in 1998, that all changed because most of these adult salmon have been radiotagged.

The salmon are tagged by Normandeau Associates, consultants for PGE Gen. As part of the relicensing settlement for their dams on the Deerfield River, PGE Gen was required to conduct radiotracking of adult salmon released from Holyoke Dam to assess the need for upstream passage on the Deerfield. The company provided a radio receiver to the fisheries agencies to monitor salmon that did not enter the Deerfield but instead entered other tributaries in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont.

Salmon are trapped at Holyoke and anesthetized so the tags can be surgically implanted. After recovery, they are released upstream of the dam to continue their migration. Monitoring by agency staff has detected salmon in the Deerfield, Mill, and Sawmill Rivers in Massachusetts, the Ammonoosuc, Ashuelot, and Cold Rivers in New Hampshire, and the Black, Saxtons, West, White, and Williams Rivers in Vermont. In addition, a few salmon have dropped back down over the Holyoke Dam and ascended the Westfield River.

A variety of interesting and important data has been obtained from radiotracking. Spawning has been documented in the Sawmill and West Rivers and has likely occurred elsewhere. Six completed redds were found in the West River in 1998, the first documented spawning by salmon in Vermont since they were extirpated from the state by construction of the Turners Falls Dam in 1798. A 19-pound salmon spent the drought summer of 1999 in a small tributary of the West River in a pool not much bigger than a bathtub.

Some of the tagged salmon have commenced their migration back to the ocean soon after spawning in the fall, while others have stayed in the tributaries for the winter before outmigration. Hopefully, we will see some of them as 20-pound repeat spawners in the future! The radiotagging program is scheduled to continue until construction of a fishway on the Deerfield which will occur when four salmon are documented at the base of the first dam on the river in two consecutive years. ◆

## First Catch *(continued from page 1)*

testing. The Harris Center is a new, aquaculture-focused, vocational/agricultural school that is the center of a fifteen-school consortium offering an aquaculture education program, "River-To-The-Sea," to area students. Students from Bloomfield High School, Carmen Arace Middle School (Bloomfield), Farmington High School, Simsbury High School and Hall High School (West Hartford) witnessed the catch while taking a number of very active brook trout during a fun outing.

*Bloomfield teacher Spencer Clapp nets a fish for Simsbury High School student Steve Burns in Stratton Brook during one of three "Salmon Saturdays" sponsored by the Harris AgriScience Technology Center (Photo: J. Carroll)*

The significance of the catch was not fully understood until Steve Gephard, DEP biologist and Salmon Restoration Program manager, was told about it. "That's a first!" he said. "We (CT DEP) don't stock in Stratton Brook. That has to be a (CRSA) school salmon!"

It seems very appropriate that the first Atlantic salmon confirmed as stocked by a school should be caught as a two-year-old smolt by a CRSA School Program student. The catch demonstrates that the school fry stocking is successful and the smolts are going to sea.◆

## *Application for Membership*

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CRSA, AND MAIL THEM TO:

**CRSA**
**76 DEMING STREET**
**SOUTH WINDSOR, CT 06074**

NEW ❑

PATRON: $500 ❑

LIFE: $250 ❑

SUSTAINING: $100 ❑

SPONSORING: $50 ❑

CONTRIBUTING: $25 ❑

FAMILY: $25 ❑

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**THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION**
76 Deming Street
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