

Just over 2.5 years ago, this coalition effort commenced work to create a new fund to assist with the implementation of the many conservation initiatives across the Island. Most groups found that they could find a variety of projects which assisted with the hiring of staff albeit at low wages but few which would supply money for wage top-up or materials, supply, or travel. The group included representatives of the Island Nature Trust, the P.E.I. Wildlife Federation, Morell River Management Co-op, P.E.I. Federation of Fly Fishers, P.E.I. Trapper's Association, P.E.I. Atlantic Salmon Foundation, Public Advisory Committee and the Natural History Society.

The representatives researched the concept as it was applied in other provinces and, over a series of meetings, produced a proposal for the creation of the fund. The possibilities ranged from the compulsory purchase and placement of a stamp on licenses for fishing, hunting, and trapping to sales of a voluntary stamp. The proposal included purchasers checking off the area in which they wished the money invested. These ranged from fisheries enhancement to natural areas acquisition.

The concept evolved as negotiations proceeded. The new government of the Hon. Pat Binns was supportive but also had its priorities which included finding a way to keep the Cardigan Fish Hatchery open. In the end, consensus was achieved to create a \$13 annual fee applied once only per year for the first fishing, hunting, or trapping licence purchased by an individual. The monies would be placed in a new fund called the Wildlife Conservation Fund. Of the approximately \$150,000 which is anticipated annually, during the next four years, \$60,000 will be going each year to the operation of the Cardigan Fish Hatchery.

A Board composed of representatives of non-government conservation groups will set priorities for the fund, accept applications, and recommend where money should be spent. The Minister will review these recommendations and make the awards. Work is underway on the program and the first awards will hopefully be made later this year.

**THE OX THAT GORES:**

**RIPARIAN BUFFER ZONES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

by David Cairns

Brief to the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Environment  
Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island

23 February 1998

. . . if it is known that the ox was previously in the habit of  
goring, yet its owner has not confined it, he shall surely pay . . .  
. . . Exodus ch. 21 v. 36.

The Natural History Society of PEI has as its objective the protection of the natural heritage of our Island. In this brief we will tell you why riparian buffers are important to our natural heritage, and why the obligation to protect them flows naturally from fundamental principles of law and social responsibility.