



Shelburne Heritage River Photo © Jim Foster

## A Newsletter for Canadian Heritage River Managers & Stewards Vol. 1, no.1 - 2017

### Calling all River Managers & River Stewards

This newsletter is brought to you by the Technical Planning Committee (TPC) of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System and is a forum through which heritage river managers and stewards can share success stories and connect across Canada.

### About the Canadian Heritage Rivers System

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) is Canada's national river conservation program. Established in 1984, the CHRS gives national recognition to Canada's outstanding rivers and encourages their long-term management to conserve their natural, cultural and recreational values for the benefit and enjoyment of Canadians, now and in the future.

There are currently 42 Canadian Heritage Rivers (39 designated, and 3 nominated) across the country, totalling close to 12,000 km. The CHRS is a federal-provincial-territorial government program that works with community-level river stewardship groups to promote and conserve rivers with outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values.

### River Managers Forum - Calling all River Managers and Stewardship Groups — we want to hear from you!

The 2016 CHRS River Managers Forum was held prior to the commencement of the 8th Canadian River Heritage Conference in Saskatoon in October. River Managers talked about the CHRS program, shared ideas, challenges and best practices, and gave feedback to the TPC on some specific questions. A summary of what was heard during the Forum is attached.

We are looking for your input about how river managers can be more involved with the CHRS, as well as what you would like to see in the renewed CHRS Strategic Plan. The worksheet used to guide the discussion at October's Forum is attached to this newsletter. If you were unable to participate in the Forum, or if you participated but have more to tell us, please complete the worksheet and return it to the TPC at:

[heritagerivers@pc.gc.ca](mailto:heritagerivers@pc.gc.ca) / [rivieresdupatrimoine@pc.gc.ca](mailto:rivieresdupatrimoine@pc.gc.ca).

### Welcome from our Chair – Volker Michelfelder

I work for BC Parks as a planner and live near the Bella Coola River, the gateway to the Great Bear Rainforest on the Central Coast of British Columbia. As part of the annual chair rotation, I am excited and humbled to start my term as the TPC chair.

Joining the TPC in the spring this year as the B.C. representative, I soon realized that I've joined a team of passionate and seasoned professionals eager to go beyond and above the call of duty to support a vibrant CHRS.

More importantly, I've also realized that engaged communities, stewardship groups and river managers are an essential ingredient of a vibrant CHRS. I am excited about this newsletter, as it will help us to hone the essential connection with stewardship groups and river managers.



Photo © Volker Michelfelder

TPC Chair Volker Michelfelder, his wife and dog at the shore of the Bella Coola River



Photo © Parks Canada

The Athabasca Heritage River flows through Jasper National Park

*“We must begin thinking like a river if we are to leave a legacy of beauty and life for future generations.”*  
— David Brower

### Canadian Heritage Rivers Celebrate Canada’s 150th!

The CHRS is very excited to be participating in Canada’s 150 celebrations in 2017. The Department of Canadian Heritage’s Canada 150 Fund is sponsoring events on nominated and designated Canadian Heritage Rivers in 2017 offering a great opportunity to explore and celebrate their natural and cultural wonders.

Funding will be provided for each participating Canadian Heritage River to hold a public event or activity that helps raise awareness about the river’s environment and its connection to local tradition and history. It is also a chance to celebrate the fact that rivers are important to Canada and Canadians and they are a sacred national resource that must be stewarded into the future.

The project is being administered through The St. John River Society in New Brunswick with support from Parks Canada. To date, 34 of our 42 rivers have committed to participating in the project. The project will also provide materials and communications support to participants to help connect them to all other Canadian Heritage Rivers celebrating during 2017.

We’ve already started by developing a project hashtag for social media: #OurRivers #NosRivieres. You can start using it today!

### “O Canada” Video to Celebrate Our Rivers

As part of the Canada 150 heritage rivers project, it is hoped that with partnership from river groups such as yours, a video can be made of enthusiasts singing “O Canada” on rivers across the country. We need 15 partners to help with this - it’s as simple as grabbing a smartphone, getting on your river with friends and singing our national anthem, “O Canada”.

The final video will be edited to be the length of the song “O Canada” with a line being sung from different Canadian Heritage Rivers across the country. It is meant to capture the joy and fun of being out on our rivers, and the importance of rivers to our national identity.

The deadline to provide a video is mid-May and the hope is to release the video on Canadian Rivers Day - June 11th, 2017. If you can help or know of a group that can help, please contact the project director, Molly Demma at [molly@stjohnriver.org](mailto:molly@stjohnriver.org) or (506) 450-8709.

2017 is going to be a wonderful year for rivers in Canada!

### 8<sup>th</sup> River Heritage Conference, October 2016, Saskatoon

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin, in collaboration with the CHRS and Saskatchewan Parks, Culture and Sport hosted this year’s conference in Saskatoon, SK. River managers from across Canada came together to tell the myriad stories of our rivers and how they shape our collective Canadian identity. We heard presentations from a wide variety of speakers on how rivers inform our culture, history, science, everyday lives both in Saskatchewan and across the country. The conference provided the opportunity to showcase and weave these disciplines and craft a collective narrative about the importance of our rivers and their heritage.

To learn more about Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin you can visit their website at [www.saskriverbasin.ca](http://www.saskriverbasin.ca).



Photo © Peter Mather





Shaylene Stone, Genevieve Singleton, Jill Taylor-Hollings

### National River Conservation Award of Merit

The National River Conservation Award of Merit is given to groups or individuals who have demonstrated an outstanding level of leadership in river conservation, either on a Canadian Heritage River or at a national level.

The award was recently given to:

- Antler River Guardians of the 4 Directions. This group consists of First Nations' youth from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Caldwell First Nation and Bkejwanong First Nation.
- Gerald Thom (posthumous), of the Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society.
- Bloodvein (Miskweyaabiziibi) Archaeology Project

### Ottawa River Designated into the Canadian Heritage Rivers System

On July 28, 2016, the Ontario portion of the Ottawa River, which runs for 590 km from the head of Lake Timiskaming to East Hawkesbury, became the newest designated Canadian Heritage River.

The Ottawa River was designated to the CHRS for its cultural heritage values. It is considered to be the heartland of the Algonquin people, and archaeological evidence suggests Indigenous use of the river dates back more than 6,000 years. After European contact, the river became an important transportation route for the fur trade and logging industry. The Ottawa River also has significant natural values and exceptional, wide-ranging recreational values.



Photo © Parks Canada

### Funding for National Historic Site in Manitoba

Earlier this year, the federal government announced new funding for Parks Canada places in Manitoba, including \$1.1 million to rehabilitate buildings at York Factory National Historic Site, which is situated on the Hayes Canadian Heritage River near Hudson Bay. Repairs and/or upgrades will be applied to a number of facilities including the Staff House, the Powder Magazine, the floating dock and boat launch system, and the Depot Building.



Photo © Parks Canada

### Shelburne Heritage River and the Revival of Cofan Cabin

Cofan cabin has stood on the shores of the Shelburne Heritage River, Tobeatic Wilderness Area, Nova Scotia since the late 1920s. It is associated with Mi'kmaq encampments and transit routes and was used for sanctuary patrols and wildlife research at the time. It is now part of wilderness and recreational heritage for the area and is well loved by wilderness travellers today.

The cabin was deteriorating and needed repair, so the Province of Nova Scotia partnered with Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute, a local non-profit group, to rehabilitate this well-loved cabin.



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