

**News Release**

August 2023

Miramichi, NB

**Miramichi River Stakeholders Concerned About Water Temperature Data Not Being Publicly Available**

The Miramichi Salmon Association (MSA) is encouraging Environment and Climate Change Canada's National Hydrological Service (NHS) to once again share water temperature information with the public.

Since 2022, the NHS has been the only agency providing real-time monitoring data on the Miramichi River. Temperature data is recorded from two hydrometric stations on the Miramichi River and this information was shared publicly through the Government of Canada website. But so far this year, that information has not been made public.

The Miramichi Salmon Association, a river-based conservation organization that acts on behalf of Miramichi outfitters and anglers, works with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to make important river management decisions such as salmon pool closures during warm water events.

MSA President Robyn McCallum said she has been hearing from anglers who are concerned about the lack of publicly available data.

"Our argument, and one that we continue to hear from anglers on the water, is that if the data points are reliable enough to make warm water protocol decisions on, they are reliable enough to share with the public. Our members care about water conditions and fish safety, and they want to understand what the river conditions are to make informed decisions and predictions," McCallum says.

The MSA knows anglers and outfitters have come to rely on viewing real-time monitoring data for the Miramichi on a daily basis, and use this to make decisions about fishing trips, which has spin off effects for the local economy.

The NHS Disclaimer for Hydrometric Data on the Government of Canada website notes quality control issues with the data.

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Between 2014 and 2021, the Miramichi River Environmental Assessment Committee (MREAC), a community-based not-for-profit, received annual funding from the DFO and the Environmental Trust Fund to conduct real-time monitoring on the Miramichi River. The committee monitored sites on the Little Southwest, Main Southwest, and Northwest Miramichi River branches. Information collected included water temperature, water level, air temperature, and precipitation parameters.

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According to MREAC Executive Director Harry Collins, when funding ended, it was indicated to the committee that temperature data would still be publicly available.

“Support stopped in 2022 when the Environment and Climate Change Canada station came online in Blackville. We understood that this station would be accessible to the public and this was the case for much of the 2022 angling season. Why this service is no longer available in 2023 is significant as this was the most used page on our MREAC website.”

The MSA has approached both Eric LeBlanc, DFO Regional Senior Fisheries Management Officer and Steven Falconer, Expert Technologist Monitoring/Data Control for Environment and Climate Change Canada about the concerns raised over temperature data.

For more information about Atlantic Salmon Recreational Fishing for the Gulf Region in 2023, please contact DFO Regional Senior Fisheries Management Officer Eric LeBlanc (506-871-6852).