

- 4 Ryther, J.H. 1997. Anadromous brook trout: biology, status and enhancement. Trout Unlimited, Arlington Virginia.
- 5 Personal communication from Scott MacNeill, MSc candidate at the University of New Brunswick, whose thesis topic is the effect of sedimentation on PEI trout populations.
- 6 Cyster landings in 1996 were worth \$2.95 million (Department of Fisheries and Environment data)
- 7 The proportion of current agricultural land within 10 m of a stream is from the Departments of Agriculture and Forestry and Fisheries and Environment, personal communication, January 1998.
- 8 Farm receipts in 1996 were \$294 million (Department of Agriculture and Forestry data).

THE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT IN BRIEF:

The Natural History Society was one of many groups and individuals who responded to the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Environment hearings on An Act to Amend the Environmental Protection Act and the Issue of Watercourse Buffer Zones. As anticipated by many, agricultural opposition, particularly from the facets of the cattle industry, was very strong and vocal. Environmental groups and concerned citizens also responded strongly. Many felt that the proposed buffer conditions were not strong enough and represented a dilution of the Round Table recommendations. A strong division of opinions resulted between what was being recommended by the environmentalist and farming communities.

All awaited with anticipation the report from the Standing Committee. In late April, 1998, the report was tabled in the Legislature. The highlights of these are noted below. The Standing Committee members made a radical shift in proposed policy with the tabling of their recommendations. For the complete version, contact Island Information Services at 902-368-4000. Their recommendations are provided in abbreviated form below, namely that:

- o The Minister of Fisheries and Environment **not** proceed with second reading of the Act to Amend the Environmental Protection Act.
- o Farmers be encouraged to take Environmental Farm Plan training and it be a prior condition to soil & water conservation assistance grants.
- o Agriculture & Forestry continue to develop an incentive program.
- o The watercourse definition in the EPA be changed to any permanent stream, brook, river, lake, pond, bay, or estuary and any intermittent stream, brook, or stream with a definable bed sediment bed and continuous defined banks, which maintains continuous flow during any 72 hour period between Jul. 1-Oct. 31.
- o Mandatory watercourse buffer zones be established under the Environmental Protection Act, that the amendments come into effect **no sooner than April 1, 2001**, and that necessary amendments be based on the following:
 - o **Conditions which would apply to 10 metres buffer zone:** no fall tillage; forage mowing and harvesting as required with renewal by under seeded cereal crop; mowing in non-crop use areas; soil disturbance requires permit; encourage planting