Murray River and Area Watershed

A watershed is an area of land that drains into a particular river, lake or other body of water. In the Southeast Environmental Association (SEA) region there are six main watershed areas, made up of 26 sub-watersheds, covering 731.6km^2. One of the main watershed areas is the Murray River watershed . It is made up of five sub-watersheds.

Simple diagram explaining how a watershed works.

Murray River and Area

Sub-watersheds:

- Murray River
- Greek River
- Fox River
- South River
- Nicolle Point

Total length of streams: 108.4km

Total area: 13,855.8ha (138.6km^2)

Basin Name: Murray Harbour

Largest Land Use: Forest (64.7%)

Map of Prince Edward Island with the Murray River and Area watershed highlighted in blue.

Location

The Murray River and Area watershed is located in southern Kings County and includes all areas that drain into the Murray River and Murray Harbour. This includes:

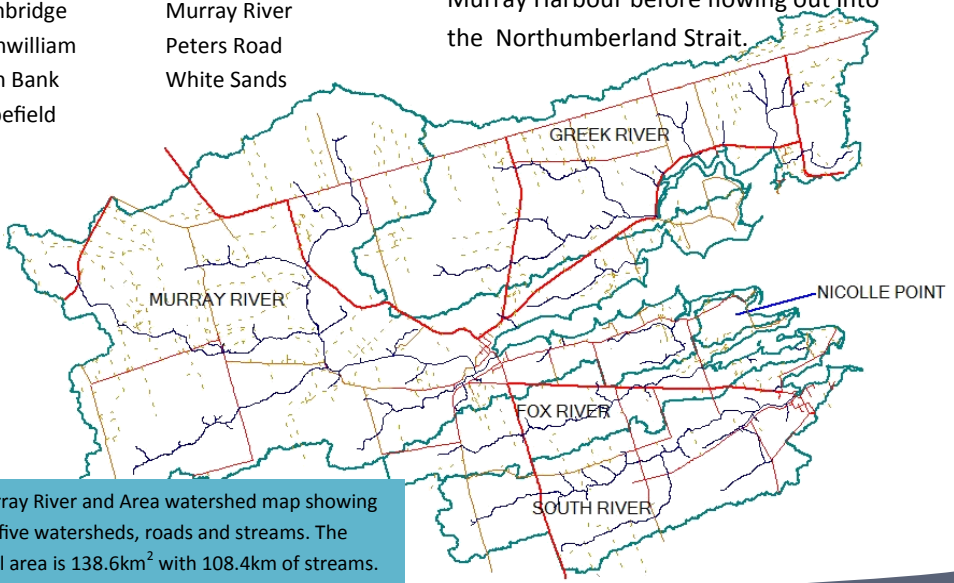
Abney	Mount Vernon
Alliston	Murray Harbour
Caledonia	Murray Harbour N.
Cambridge	Murray River
Glenwilliam	Peters Road
High Bank	White Sands
Hopefield	
Iris	

Physical Description

Murray River watershed drains into Murray Harbour which flows into the Northumberland Strait then to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The watershed covers an area of 70km^2, with headwaters located in Mount Vernon, Hopefield and Glenwilliam. The total length of streams in this watershed is 52km which includes MacLure's Pond, the largest pond in PEI.

Greek River watershed covers an area of 36.2km^2 including Cambridge and Peters Road . There are 24.8km of streams flowing into Murray Harbour from this watershed.

Fox River watershed is 11.1km^2 in area, with 7.4km^2 of forested land . It is made up of 9.8km of streams that drain into Murray Harbour before flowing out into the Northumberland Strait.



Murray River and Area watershed map showing the five watersheds, roads and streams. The total area is 138.6km^2 with 108.4km of streams.

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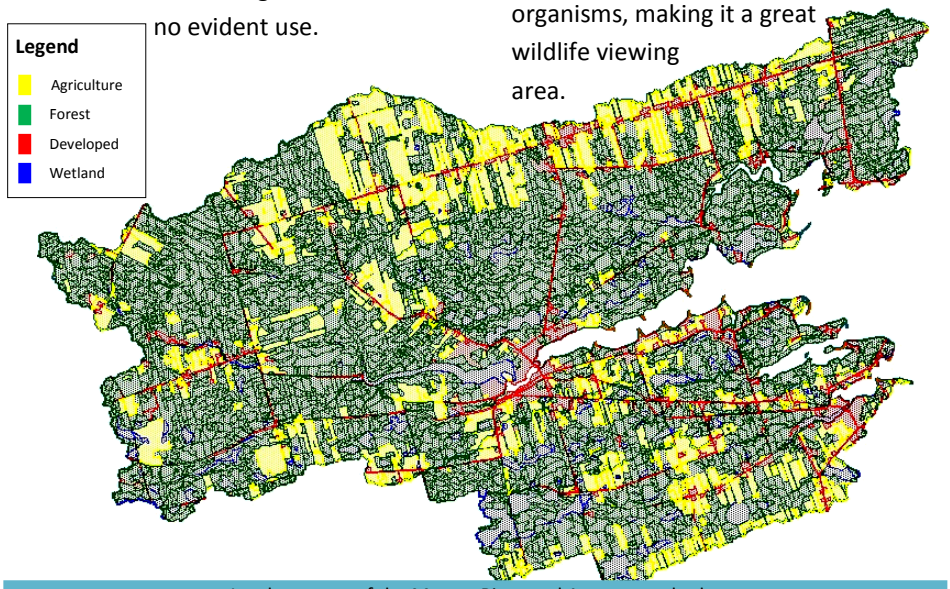
South River watershed covers 20.2km^2 including the Community of Murray Harbour. It has 22.1km of streams draining into Murray Harbour, before flowing out into the Northumberland Strait.

Nicolle Point watershed is the smallest in the SEA region. It is 1.2km^2 in area. It has 10m of stream draining into Nicolle Cove, then the waters move out into Murray Harbour.

Watershed and Area Land Use

Based on land use data from 2010, forested areas dominate the land in the Murray River and Area watershed at 64.7%. Agricultural land accounts for 18.2%. Developed land, which includes commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, residential, transportation and urban, covers 7.5%. Wetlands cover 6.1% and the remaining 3.5% of land has no evident use.



Land use map of the Murray River and Area watershed.

Land Use	Murray River (Hectares)	Greek River (Hectares)	Fox River (Hectares)	South River (Hectares)	Nicolle Point (Hectares)	Total Area (Hectares)	%
Agriculture	1363.6	613.6	157.6	387.0	4.1	2525.9	18.2%
Developed	203.5	53.7	21.5	67.0	48.6	427.9	7.5%
Forest	4556.4	2517.9	737.1	1065.8	89.9	8967.0	64.7%
Wetland	344.4	166.4	78.8	238.5	16.9	845.0	6.1%
Non-evident	249.5	31.8	57.2	91.9	38.2	477.9	3.5%

Breakdown of the land use for the six sub-watersheds in the Murray River

MacLure's Pond

MacLure's Pond, located in Murray River, is the largest freshwater body in Prince Edward Island. It is highlighted by the Murray River Pines Trail, which offers a short hike through red and white pines trees.

Belted Kingfishers can be spotted fishing for food at MacLure's Pond.

This natural area covers four hectares of Provincial crown land. The pine stand is a great example of old growth pine forest, with some trees dating back to 1870 or earlier. MacLure's Pond is a perfect habitat for a variety of organisms, making it a great wildlife viewing area.

Conservation Issues

Riparian assessments of the Murray River and Area watershed have not been completed in recent years. The 2001 watershed management plan for Murray River highlighted some of the issues in the streams; however, due to funding restraints, SEA was unable to complete the necessary restoration work. With little stream restoration completed in the Murray River and Area watershed, these issues still remain:

- Natural blockages
- Beaver activity
- Thick alder growth
- Sedimentation

Water quality monitoring site, located in Iris, that is part of the Murray River stream system.

These issues may result in:

- Fish passage impediment
- Loss of habitat
- Loss of biodiversity

Get Involved!

SEA can now carry out restoration work on streams in the region. An updated management plan for the Murray River and Area watershed needs to be developed to address issues in the area. SEA requires public support and input for this to be successful. We urge you to get involved. Please contact us if you are interested in improving the watershed you live in.

Southeast Environmental Association
41 Wood Islands Hill
Montague, PE

Follow SEA:

Phone: 902-838-3351
Email: sea@pei.aibn.com
Website: www.seapei.org

Contact SEA to find out what watershed you live in!