

Freshwater—Alexander Bays Watershed

Northeastern Newfoundland's watersheds are known for scenic views, abundant wildlife and excellent angling opportunities. Freshwater Bay and Alexander Bay, located near the municipalities of Gambo, Glovertown and Terra Nova, consist of four local watersheds, including Gambo River, Northwest Brook, Terra Nova River, and Middle Brook. These watersheds are located in the Northcentral Sub-region of the Central Newfoundland Forest ecoregion, an area dominated by Black Spruce forests and Aspen stands due to the prevalence of fire throughout the area's natural history. Corner Brook Pulp and Paper (CBPPL) operates in the Middle Brook Watershed, including Square Pond, Butt's Pond, First and Second Burnt Ponds, and Rodney Pond.



Photo Credits: Middle Brook (FABEC)

The [Freshwater-Alexander Bays Ecosystem Corporation](#) (FABEC) is a volunteer group formed in 1994 consisting of residents of the Gambo, Glovertown and Terra Nova area. FABEC's members work to conserve balanced, sustainable natural populations of salmonid and other indigenous species in the area's watersheds, which have long been known for excellent angling opportunities. To ensure the continued quality of angling and salmonid health, FABEC has collaborated with the Department of Environment and Conservation to develop a research program and special management plan for the Middle Brook Watershed, and has operated fishways on the Lower Terra Nova River and Middle Brook since the early 2000s. FABEC works with federal agencies to hire river monitors to ensure the protection of fish habitat and populations, and conducts an ongoing Middle Brook Trout Angler Survey to determine angler attitudes and preferences regarding trout fishing and management of trout stocks in the Middle Brook watershed.



In 2006, FABEC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CBPPL as part of the public consultation process to prepare a Five-Year Operating Plan for CBPPL Timber License areas in Forest Management District 5. In the MOU, the company agreed it would not construct a forest access road within one kilometre of First Burnt Pond and Middle Brook, and would maintain a 100-meter buffer around First Burnt Pond, Square Pond, and Middle Brook. With operations occurring in winter, the company agreed to construct only two kilometres of all-season roads, and the remaining as temporary roads, to significantly reduce access to the area following harvesting.

An amendment to the MOU in 2015, supported by both parties, resulted in a revised access management plan that further helped reduce access to the area following harvesting and silviculture activities. This includes the decommissioning the first 200 metres of some roads, and removal of a bridge and a road entrance on the Trans-Canada Highway. Through these efforts, CBPPL is working with FABEC to ensure the continued health and vitality of Middle Brook watershed in the Freshwater Bay area.