

Thursday 08/04/11 Striper fishing and walking the Suncook River

I got out striper fishing with friends Bill and Jean yesterday. We headed out of Hampton Harbor stopping to catch mackerel for bait then heading south to the mouth of the Merrimack River. A hard running incoming tide made for perfect drifts into the mouth of the river towing our mackerel. And some of us actually caught stripers. Well actually Jean and Bill boated two each with two of the four big enough to keep. I lucked out with nary a hit. Now I did catch some of the bait. But I tell you the waters coming out of the Merrimack River tend to fight with the tide creating some pretty choppy waters there. Jean's 22 foot Mako seemed to handle it pretty well until we started sinking. Seriously it seemed to me that there was lots of water, 6 to 10 inches in the back of the boat so I headed up to the bow to sort of even things out. WE headed home under darkening skies about 5pm. And how the boat wallowed never getting on to plain. When we got her out and pulled the drain plug the lower "sealed" hull spurted water for a good 15 minutes. Yes we were slowly sinking. This is just another chapter for us. Things always seem to happen to us in Jeans boat. Like the propeller falling off one time out at the Isle of Shoals. Billy did land a nice 37 inch keeper.

Today I helped lead a group of scientists on another hike along the impacted Suncook River channel. We headed down from route 4 east of the Circle to see how the river avulsion south of there is threatening the route 4 bridge. Luckily the state has come up with some funding to address this threat. And it is not for a lack of trying on the state's (DES) part. I learned today that they have applied for 21 million dollars in federal funding since the 2006 avulsion to no avail. Hurricane Katrina and other National disasters where human life was lost has diverted all the federal funding so far, except for the house buyouts down in Allenstown. But this year, even under terrible funding problems, the state has come up with funding to address the most critical issues of protecting the route 4 bridge and the town road at Leighton Brook..

We have had just enough rain to keep things green and lush for the most part. My garden is doing pretty good although the tomatoes seem to be slow to grow and produce. I did can 16 pints of zucchini relish Sunday evening and finishing Monday morning. I am getting a few cukes but not enough for pickles yet. My beans are just starting to blossom. But fresh vegetables are in the works!