

opportunity to witness this. A geological expedition there had so heavily polluted the River Izhma with petroleum products that it proved necessary to shut down the intake works serving the foresters and curtail the supply of drinking water. Eye-witnesses say "Strike a match and set fire to the water, start to fill a bottle and all but a quarter will be fuel oil".

The Oblast' Committee for Nature Conservation presented the geologists with a bill for 70,000 roubles. Are fines really the answer?

#### BY WATER... ON A TRACTOR

They say that the Pinega can be forded by tractor, with the entire crossing made on logs. Indeed, by autumn, when the river empties into the Dvina near Kholmogor, the timber floaters have spanned it with a continuous log boom, and timber accumulates in its estuary from shore to shore over a distance of several kilometres.

In the fall of 1987 a log jam occurred there. It was formed by a "plug" of timber reaching all the way to the river bottom over a distance of five kilometres upstream. With the help of neighbouring enterprises, the timber floaters of the Kholmogor rafting office worked heroically for several days and nights, with the result that they eliminated the damage and saved costly floatation gear and indeed, even the Pinega itself from catastrophe. But disasters, as they say, do not come singly. It was precisely at that moment that a shoal of Atlantic salmon came to spawn. The valuable fish were unable to get to their spawning grounds in the fast-flowing and clear waters of the Upper Pinega and there was virtually nowhere else to return to...