

# The Bridge

## Co-Chairs

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**March 2014**

*Trust memberships make a great gift for those interested in conserving public land in its natural state for public use. Membership for that special person can be obtained by contacting Beth McGee*

[jemcgee@eastlink.ca](mailto:jemcgee@eastlink.ca)

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## Message from the Co-Chairs

Friends:

Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust has been working with partner organizations in the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area Stewardship Coalition to promote and protect our natural environment and encourage appropriate wilderness recreation.

Since the public meeting we held last August, the Trust has been working with Nova Scotia Environment to enable bicycle access to the Joshua Slocum Trail and the Old St. Margaret's Bay Road within the wilderness area. We are also examining access points to Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area (FBLWA), and supporting the vision for an interpretive centre at the Hubley Community Centre. Our goal is to ensure the community continues to have opportunities to enjoy FBLWA responsibly.

We would like to thank Iain Rankin, MLA for Timberlea-Prospect for recognizing the work of the Trust in the House of Assembly on December 2, 2013.

We have launched a new website, and we have now a Facebook page to keep our members up to date on our activities. Check out the Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/fivebridgeswildernesstrust](http://www.facebook.com/fivebridgeswildernesstrust).

The Trust has been active in opposing changes to the Otter Lake Landfill, such as the removal of the Front-end Processing and Waste Stabilization Facilities, increasing the cell heights by 15 metres and extending operations at the landfill.

We are also supporting the Backlands Coalition in opposing a proposal by developers to re-zone the Purcell's Cove Backlands under HRMs Regional Plan. Currently the Backlands are zoned Urban Reserve.

We invite you to attend our Annual General Meeting on Thursday, March 27 at the Hubley Community Centre. We look forward to updating you on the implementation of the work plan we developed at our last AGM, and the many activities we have undertaken this past year.

Sincerely,

Jill & Harry

## Annual General Meeting

Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust will hold its Annual General Meeting on Thursday, March 27 at the Hubley Community Centre. Registration opens at 6:30 and the meeting will begin at 7p.m.

The Members will be updated on the Trust's many projects and activities this past year, followed by a discussion about opportunities for cyclists to enjoy the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area. Our guest speaker will be Keith Croucher from Bike Nova Scotia.

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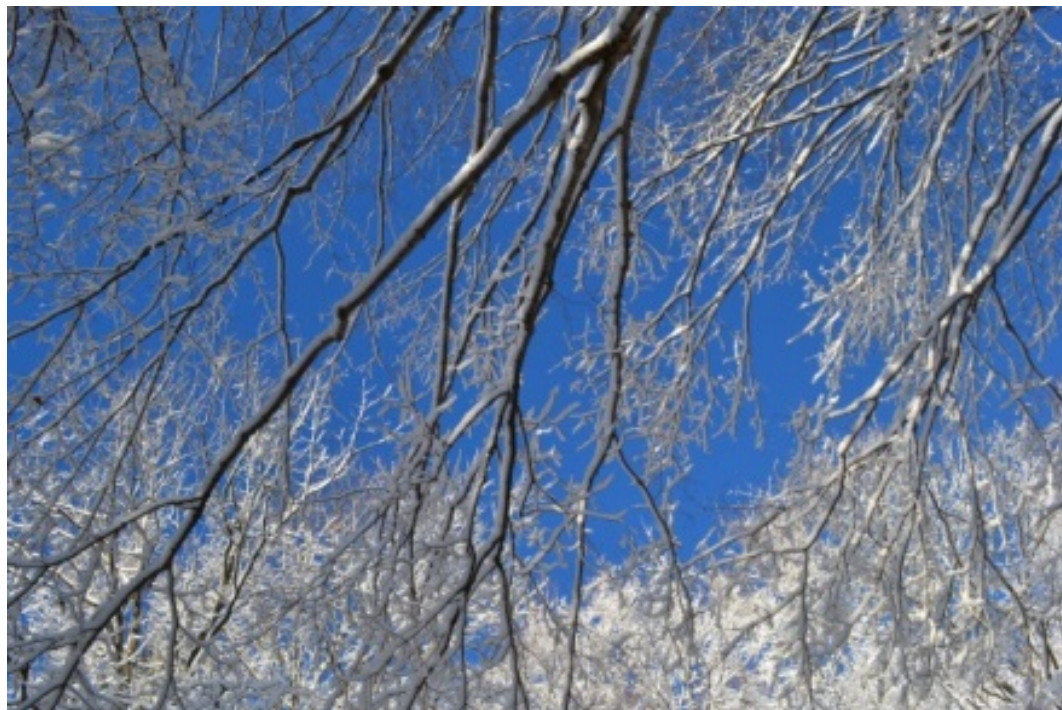
**Report on Meeting of November 14, 2013 concerning the Western Common**

HRM Councilor Reg Rankin initiated a meeting with Richmond Campbell, Co-Chair of Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization (WRWEO), Beth McGee, FBWHT, and Peter Bigelow, HRM, on November 14, 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how community leaders, especially those involved with the community near the Western Common, might advise HRM staff on issues in three main areas: (1) the relation of the landfill to the rest of the Western Common; (2) the relation of the Western Common to the Ragged Lake Industrial Park, especially regarding matters of environmental impact (given the flow of water between Ragged Lake and other lakes downstream) and the need to clarify the boundary between the industrial park and the lakes; and (3) the implications of the Western Common for green-belt in HRM.

It was suggested that the best group to undertake this task was the newly formed Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Stewardship Coalition. Leaders in the Coalition have 10 years' experience working together, including three years with the Chebucto Wilderness Coalition that represented 30 community groups, to which they reported regularly with detailed newsletters about the progress in getting protection for the public lands now known as the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area. Beth and Richmond emphasized that the record shows how this group can give informed and constructive advice regarding the extensive lands adjacent to the Nile Mile River and would be ideal for the task.

Following further consultation, community representatives concluded this would be an appropriate project for the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area Stewardship Council. HRM provided several copies of documents prepared by Environmental Design and Management Ltd. (EDL). Tom Musial as Chair of this Council, reviewed the document provided and confirmed that the project is within the mandate of the FBLWA Stewardship Council.

A meeting has been set for March 3 with Councillor Reg Rankin and Robert Jancke of HRM with Tom Musial and Beth McGee to clarify HRM's mandate for the community advisory group and develop a plan for moving forward.



## **Halifax to Lunenburg Trail Funding Announced**

Catherine Klefenz, Beechville, Lakeside, Timberlea Rails to Trails

On January 17, 2014 all levels of government joined together to announce a total of \$178,000 to enhance the trail experience on trails linking Halifax to Lunenburg.

Nova Scotia is upgrading, unifying and branding seven of its trails as a new outdoor adventure tourism product: a continuous 109km hiking and cycling route from Halifax to Lunenburg. The destination trail will be promoted as a new way for visitors to experience two of the province's most popular destinations—and all the scenic communities in between.

The Government of Canada is investing \$83,000 in the project, through ACOA's Innovative Communities Fund (ICF). The Province of Nova Scotia is contributing \$65,000 through Nova Scotia Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. Additional support for the project includes \$20,000 from Halifax Regional Municipality, \$5,000 from the Municipality of the District of Chester and \$5,000 from the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.

Representatives from each of the seven trail systems have formed the Halifax to Lunenburg Steering Committee to spearhead the project, which includes the development of a trail brand, way finding signs, information kiosks, improved access points, amenity and rest areas and a mobile-compatible website. The committee is collaborating with communities along the trail corridor and using local suppliers for goods and services related to the project.



## **Riding Bicycles in the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area (FBLWA)**

In August 2013, the Trust hosted a public information meeting to update residents on the work being done on the Joshua Slocum Trail and the Old St. Margaret's Bay Road where each pass through the Wilderness Area. Peter Bush, Protected Areas Coordinator with Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) was on hand to answer questions about what you can do in a Wilderness Area. During the meeting the issue of riding bicycles in the FBLWA was raised.

Under the current legislation, bicycle riding is not permitted in a wilderness area, unless on a designated route. Currently there are no designated routes in wilderness areas in Nova Scotia for bicycles. Designation of bicycle routes may require a group to enter into an agreement with NSE, much like ATVANS has done on behalf of the ATV riders.

Since that time, discussion has been ongoing to find a group who could represent the bicycle riders. In January 2014, the rails to trails system beginning with the Chain of Lakes Trails Association on through to Lunenburg was designated the Destination Trail. This designation gives further impetus to encouraging bicycle riders to take a side trip from the rails to trails to visit FBLWA. With the availability of the connector trail to the Joshua Slocum trail as accessed from the St. Margaret's Bay Rails to Trails, cyclists could access FBLWA without having to ride on any highways.

In early February, Beth McGee, met with Peter Bush (NSE) and Lawrence Plug (an executive member of Bike NS) to outline the cycling possibilities in and adjacent to the FBLWA. Peter Bush outlined what would be required for Bike NS to enter into a trail management agreement. NSE, Bike NS and the Trust agreed to continue to communicate about the potential opportunities to designated bicycle routes in FBLWA.



## **Our HRM Alliance Update on Regional Plan +5**

Tristan Cleveland

Draft 4.0 of the Regional Plan has been released and, while it remains an imperfect document, we are happy to have secured a number of advances.

The final hearings on the Regional Plan will be held in April. It is crucial that every Alliance group is represented at these hearings for two reasons:

- It is likely that pro-sprawl groups will come out to oppose advances made in the regional plan, and so we must ensure we do not lose the progress we've made.
- True success will be decided in the upcoming Greenbelting and Public Open Spaces Priorities Plan and other secondary plans. We need to show council there are broad-based support for our ideas (from each district) to ensure serious commitments can be made in these plans moving forward.

## **HRM's Solid Waste Management Review Update**

John Cascadden

HRM staff presented the Staff Report on the Solid Waste Management Review at a Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 14.

The first six recommendations found in the Staff Report were passed by Council. They include developing a business case for the source separated organics program to introduce an Anaerobic Digestion processing capability and other program changes to improve system cost performance and compost quality, by-law amendments to improve organics collection, processing and finished compost product quality, and a public hearing on by-law amendments to mandate the use of clear garbage bags (with one nested opaque bag) and reducing garbage bag limits from 6 to 4.

Recommendations 7, 8 and 9 were deferred and will be dealt with at future COW meeting; the date of which has not yet been announced. The deferred recommendations include:

- Amending By-law S-600 to allow for the export of ICI residual waste outside HRM,
- Consultations on options for changes in the operating model (front end processor facility, waste stabilization facility, residual disposal facility) at Otter Lake Landfill,
- The extension of operations at Otter Lake beyond 2024, increasing the vertical height of existing and future cells by 15 meters and establishing an Integrated Solid Waste Management Campus at Otter Lake.

There needs to be a concrete agreement about when Otter Lake operations will be retired. The Community believes the agreement to close the facility in 2024 should be honoured.

This a time for action! Residents who are upset about the way this review has been handled are asked to e-mail Mayor Mike Savage ([mayor@halifax.ca](mailto:mayor@halifax.ca)), and the HRM Clerks Office ([clerks@halifax.ca](mailto:clerks@halifax.ca)).

## **Update on Bowater Mersey Lands**

Geoff Le Boutillier

A lot of you may be wondering, what is going to happen to Bowater Mersey's former St. Margaret's District. What ever happened to the Community Forest initiative? Well, in short, chronological strokes, here's the skinny:

In early 2012, Quebec's Resolute Forest Products decided to shut 'er down and sell all their Nova Scotia assets - everything that used to belong to Bowater including the St. Margaret's

District, which was part of 550,000 acres of working forest, plus the Liverpool mill and a big sawmill. Many people in our community got involved in the "Buy Back the Mersey" movement at that time. We dedicated the summer and fall to trying to get the provincial government to buy the land and ensure its sustainable management by, with, and for Nova Scotians. We all saw this as a golden opportunity to change the way forestry is practiced in this province – Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for all Crown land, and adherence to the Mi'kmaq principle of netukulimk, managing a resource for seven generations hence.

In early December, the premier at the time announced that the government would invite proposals for community forests, and that, in return for saving the Resolute workers' pension plan, the province had taken title to all the former Bowater Mersey assets. Suddenly it was all Crown Land just as we'd wanted.

Then New Glasgow's Northern Pulp came knocking. Having harvested all there was to harvest on their Crown leases in Central N.S., to stay open they needed to more than double their 100,000 GMT (green metric ton) allocation. With the east and north all leased to Stern, there was only one place to give them Crown fiber – western N.S., a large proportion of which was comprised of the former Mersey lands. The government is alleged to have given them some kind of indication that their wish would be granted, at least in the short term. Then the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) initiated a grandly named "Western Crown Lands Consultation," asking Nova Scotians what they wanted to do with the Western Crown Lands. There was no mention of the more-than-doubled Northern allocation.

Innocently, we all intervened. We told them about the multiple values of the St. Margaret's District - for recreation, for biodiversity, for connectivity, for our economy; how four of its five great river systems are the nutrient pumps for St. Margaret's Bay; how we have all used it and loved it and lived and died there for generations.

In August after many months of hard work (and considerable expense), St. Margaret's Bay submitted their Community Forest proposal. Six weeks later, the new government shot down the St. Margaret's Bay Community Forest proposal.

And then just recently DNR issued a draft of their Western Crown Land Management Plan. It only names one purpose for the SMB District – resource extraction.

So, where are we now? We have some kind of deal for a doubled allocation for Northern, fiber to come from somewhere in western N.S., the closest lands being the former St. Margaret's District. We have a government under huge pressure to feed its powerful sawmills. We have a firm rejection of the efforts of the people of St. Margaret's Bay to see FSC certification and community management achieved for their forest. And we have a proposed Management Plan that sees one purpose and one purpose only for the asset – resource extraction.

There, that's the skinny to date. Want to help? Write the Premier. Write the Minister of Natural Resources, Zach Churchill. Write the press. The former St. Margaret's District's appears headed for the slag heap.



## **Council of Community Organizations**

Council of Community Organizations (CoCO) meetings continue to provide opportunities for community groups to network and develop partnerships on common issues and activities. Meetings are held five times per year.

Since the fall, there have been three CoCO meetings, one at the Prospect Community Centre in September, and two at the Lakeside Community Centre in November and January. The proposed changes to the Otter Lake Landfill remain a primary focus for organizations on the Chebucto peninsula and many have participated in the Waste Management Review process.

CoCO members have reported exciting developments, including a new vision for the Hubley Community Centre, plans to engage families and youth through the Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization, and the new Destination Trail that includes the area Rails to Trails organizations.

If you would like to receive notices about upcoming CoCO meetings, please send your contact to fbwhbt@gmail.com.

## **Adoption of Nine Mile River**

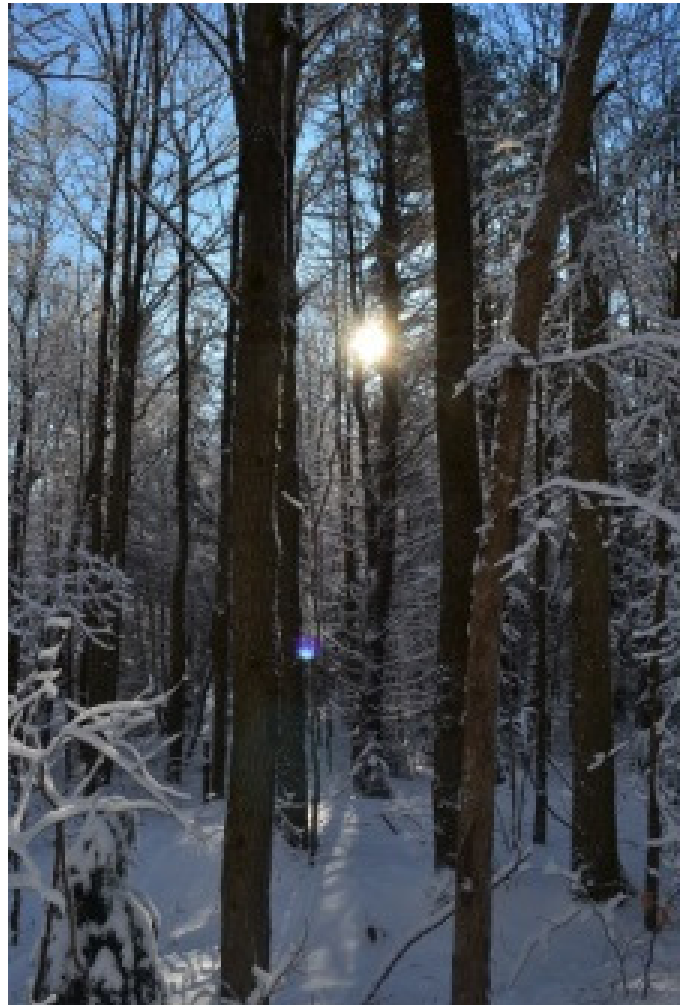
FBWHT has recently embraced a concept to “Adopt the Nine Mile River.” The watershed feeding the Nine Mile River is huge and important to everyone who lives in Terrance Bay, Prospect, Timberlea, Hubley and Hammonds Plains. Did you know that 2/3rds of Kingswood subdivision and Highland Park South are in the headwaters of this river system?

The watershed feeding the river has been encroached upon over the years by residential / commercial development and twinning of Highway 103. The Otter Lake Landfill also sits next to the river.

Water quality analyses along the river over the past few years have shown that this river is now mesotrophic, which raises a red flag! Our big question at FBWHT is, how much more development can occur before fish, plant life and animals are impacted, along with public enjoyment of this valued ecosystem?

On a positive note, provincial lands south of HWY 103 on the Chebucto Peninsula have been proclaimed as Protected Wilderness due to pressure by FBWHT and other partner organizations. Now HRM has gotten on board by collaborating with the province to extend a Green Belt from the recently proclaimed Blue Mountain Wilderness Area (situated west of HWY 102 and SE of Kingswood) westward to Hammonds Plains, which will go a long way to protect the headwaters of the Nine Mile River.

So here is Our Plan: The first phase of “Adopting the Nine Mile River” is to assimilate available information on ecological habitats, land use and water quality in the watershed and receiving Nine Mile River, so that maps can be produced and information evaluated. Point sources of current impacts will be identified. We have applied for grants to cover costs of



laboratory analytical analyses to be collected this year.

FBWHT intends to influence Provincial and Municipal future planning to ensure habitats and water quality are not further adversely impacted, and to recommend restorative measures to government, NGOs and vested private interests.

If you are interested in ensuring the long term ecological sustainability of this watershed for future generations, contact us to help with time or financial contributions.

For more information on this project and how you can help, contact [fbwhbt@gmail.com](mailto:fbwhbt@gmail.com).

### **Hubley Community Center Revitalization**

Harry Ward, Co-Chair Hubley Community Centre

This has been a critical time for the Hubley Community Center (HCC) as the association has had to determine a new way to transform our cherished landmark.

Community members would like to see HCC remain a central destination and be a vibrant hub of activity once again. It is our hope that the new vision and direction will bring HCC into the twenty-first century and over time create a new iconic HCC that celebrates its connection to the surrounding nature.

We are seeing inspiring projects in Canada and around the world in which cities are revitalizing their parks, waysides, and the trend of more unstructured activities for all ages.

What we offer for your consideration is a new model for HCC that is a significant departure from the usage it has had in the past. With its close proximity to the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area and the Jerry Lawrence Provincial Park, we propose that the HCC becomes an interpretive center that is open year round and provides open access to all the nature nearby— where a significant portion of the area is parkland for individuals and families to gather and enjoy the areas natural surroundings, waysides, and sweeping views.

Our aim is to work with government, nature advocates and community members to create a roadmap for this important community-project, as well as to provide a framework to foster this important connection to nature. We have presented a business plan to HRM, which supports this new vision for the HCC.

We hope to hear your thoughts about our new vision for HCC. Please contact Harry at: [harryward@eastlink.ca](mailto:harryward@eastlink.ca).

### **May Fair in the Park**

Join Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust for a spring celebration at the annual May Fair in the Park on Sunday, May 25 at Jerry Lawrence Provincial Park.

Come enjoy children's games, BBQ and a chance to learn about the many organizations working to make our community a wonderful place to live.

### **Wetland Hot Line**

If you become aware of an action that is having a negative impact on a wetland, watercourse, or a matter that is a chronic problem, please call **1-800-565-1633**, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Give as much detail as possible so that your matter can be directed to the proper resource and addressed in a timely matter.

The **Council of Community Organizations (CoCO)** is an important forum to share community intelligence. The next meeting...

**Thursday, May 29**

**7pm  
Location TBA**

**Everyone Welcome!**

CoCO notes can be found on the Trust website.

[www.fivebridgestrust.ca](http://www.fivebridgestrust.ca)

**2014  
Community Council  
Meetings**

**Please call 490-4000 for  
time and location of the  
meeting.**



### Charitable Donations

Charitable donations to support the work of the Trust may be made by

contacting

**Beth McGee,**

[jemcgee@eastlink.ca](mailto:jemcgee@eastlink.ca)

An income tax receipt will be issued for your donation.

### Moose Watch

Anyone having knowledge of moose sightings, spoor or antlers on the Chebucto Peninsula is encouraged to contact Butch Galvez, Nova Scotia Natural Resources.

[galveziv@gov.ns.ca](mailto:galveziv@gov.ns.ca)

**902- 861-2560**

### The Bridge

**Edited by Afton Doubleday  
and Beth McGee**

**Layout - Jeff Parks**

**Photos** on Pg 2,5,6,8  
courtesy of **Catherine King**

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of **The Bridge**, please send an email to

[fbwhbt@gmail.com](mailto:fbwhbt@gmail.com)

and type "subscribe"  
in the subject line.

### **Save the date!**

Hans Toom will lead the Annual Lewis Lake Warbler Walk at Jerry Lawrence Provincial Park on Sunday, June 1st.

### **Winter in the Wilderness Area**

We hope these beautiful pictures will encourage you to get out and enjoy in Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area in all seasons. Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are permitted on trails in the wilderness area.

### **Bay Treasure Chest**

The St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association, in partnership with Bay Rides, the Bay Youth Hub (GPI Atlantic Youth Project, St. Margaret's Bay Skate Park, St. Margaret's Bay Toy Library and Unicorn Theatre), the St. Margaret's Bay Seniors Association and the Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust, is establishing a community development fund to be known as the Bay Treasure Chest.

The Treasure Chest will take the form of a weekly 50/50 draw and will cost players \$2 per week to play. Enter by registering at a participating retailer, and paying your entry fee by noon on each Wednesday. Weekly draws are made every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. and the winner will be notified by telephone that same evening. The winner will also be announced in our retail stores every Friday and in The Masthead News.

The winning number will receive 50% of the week's net revenue (gross revenue less the Provincial Gaming Commission's levy of 2.13%). The balance of the funds will be shared pro rata among the five not-for-profit community organizations.

The **BAY TREASURE CHEST** is coming to a retailer near you on **April 16, 2014.**



Watch for this symbol for your chance to help local organizations and win money!

