



Halifax North West Trails Association - September 2016

As students returned to school, the buzz was about ‘how I spent my summer vacation!’ For the trails association, this has been a busy summer attending meetings, researching, doing interviews, writing letters to elected officials, grant applications for trail improvements and many other activities. But we had fun too, sharing trails with well over 150 individuals, some even from Dartmouth (!), who may not have explored a trail in the region before. Among these were elected officials and hopefuls, all wanting to understand why it is important to make informed decisions about the future of the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes Regional Park. A big thank you goes out to all of

you who took the time to express concern regarding possible development in the area; September 6 was a red letter day when Council agreed to move forward on the Regional Park and report back in 6 months after talking to 13 additional landowners and begin a formal boundary decision. Input from over 1400 residents helped Council understand the importance of carrying on with the vision as defined in the Regional Plan back in 2006.

Thank you also to Canoe/Kayak Nova Scotia volunteers for introducing the eight lake loop in the Birch Cove Lakes to new and experienced paddlers, a mini-Keji experience. This pristine water route will now be saved when HRM makes land purchases, using legacy funds for green infrastructure including lakes, woods and granite barrens. Easier public access is an important goal. We learned from the experts that unless the provincially-owned Wilderness Area has a substantial buffer around it, its ecological integrity will not be sustained. Perhaps it can all become part of a Canada 150 Project.

Halifax North West Trails Association has been stewarding trails for over 10 years and each year we lead interpreted walks to introduce new users to trails in our region. With private lands to be crossed, signage may not always be present. Plan to explore the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area from the end of Colins Road on Sunday, September 18 at 1pm. Register with Bob McDonald at 902-443-5051. This trail is rugged in places. Check the website for details and other hikes including Blue Mountain Hill, October 2, from Kingswood. www.halifaxnorthwesttrails.ca

Keshen Goodman Library is hosting trail walks for September and October...join us on Tuesdays at 1:30 at the Library for a local walk, approximately 1 hour.

Other scheduled fall hikes around the province can be seen at www.hikenovascotia.ca

HRM is making plans for Open Spaces and a Green Network Plan including Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes Regional Park boundaries; make sure you understand the opportunities. Challenge the candidates for Mayor and Council. The Park was introduced in 2006 so is not a new concept. Make sure that trails and green spaces for recreation continue on future agendas. Active living for all ages will assist in keeping healthcare

costs down. Those living in District 12 will have the chance to meet the 6 candidates on September 22, 7 pm at Bella Rosa Theatre, at Halifax West High School on Thomas Raddall Drive.

If tree planting is your idea of family fun, join us on Oct 1, 9-12 pm at the Lacewood Transit Terminal. Do your part to help plant 50,000 trees this year across Canada as part of TD Tree Days. Visit www.tdtreedays.com to register.

Or plan to participate in the upcoming 2016 Food Run, free with your food donation, on Sunday, October 16, on the local trails. New this year is a team event. To register, go to www.canadagamescentre.ca. The trails group will be on hand with an information booth.

Wendy McDonald