

Five  
Bridge

Wilderness  
Heritage  
Trust

*Preserving Public Land  
For Public Use*

Volume 2, Issue 5

December 2004



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***The Trust's 2005 Annual  
General Meeting will  
take place at the Bay  
Road Baptist Church on  
April 7, 2005. The meet-  
ing is open to the public.***

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# The Bridge



## Many thanks to our dedicated volunteers

This issue of The Bridge places several current Trust activities alongside the recommendations of the HRM Planning Committee.

During this holiday season, the Board of Trustees extends a heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers and government officials who recognize the poten-

tial of using public lands in their natural state for appropriate recreational, educational and scientific use and who have contributed to these objectives.

## Trust directors pleased with community roles and environmental values in HRM recommendations

On December 14, Halifax Regional Council endorsed the proposed regional plan based upon "Transit Linked Communities." Most growth will be directed to transit-linked centres along major transit corridors leading to the regional centre. Some higher population rural centres will also be designated for municipal piped services and public transit while other rural centres will use wells and shared sewage treatment.

Opportunities for unserved residential development between centres will be provided. Innovative subdivision design based on clustering and shared wastewater disposal will be encouraged.

Council endorsed the next step— policy development— and directed that extensive opportunities for public involvement be undertaken.

There are significant environmental benefits from the proposed plan. Five new regional parks and 14 new wildlife corridors (including Peggy's Cove to Big Hubley Lake) are proposed. A 10% reduction of greenhouse gases by greater energy use efficiency is projected, and a concerted effort to protect watersheds (only 8% of HRM is covered by lakes, rivers and streams) from further degradation is planned. Rather than the projected 18,000 hectares of land that would be needed for develop-

ment if current trends continue, only 5000 hectares are foreseen as needed to accommodate the more concentrated growth of new developments.

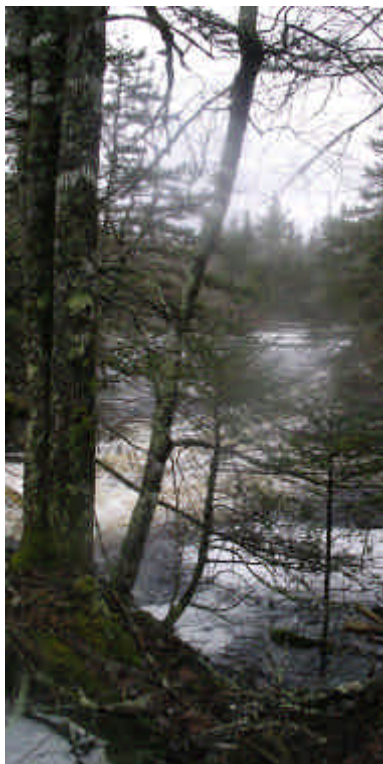
Finally, the plan will be proposing, for public consultation, policies to promote cooperative stewardship activities with public and private landowners, volunteer organizations, and individual citizens to identify priority fish and wildlife habitat not protected under other existing policies and legislation.

For more detailed information, go to [www.halifax.ca/regional planning](http://www.halifax.ca/regional_planning)

Joe O'Brien, Chair, Regional Planning Committee



*“The GIS Mapping Project will allow speedy and accurate mapping of data including the location of roads, trails, streams particular species of flora, fauna, and places of historical significance such as old burial sites and homesteads.”*



## Angler project promotes trout conservation

The Five Bridge Anglers Conservation Committee (FBACC) has been working very closely with the Department of Fisheries and Agriculture in securing and analyzing data from the Five Bridge Lakes. Members of the FBACC have been gathering scale samples and other relevant data to assist DOFA in determin-

ing the health of the eastern brook trout population in the area. Trout are measured and scale samples taken along with location of the catch, time of day, date and observations regarding climate. The data will be processed and will assist the department in making decisions regarding future

stocking programs as well as monitoring the health of the wild trout population. If you are interested in participating in the coming years sampling project, plan to attend the next meeting of the FBACC in the new year. The date and venue of the meeting will be published in a future edition of *The Bridge*.

## Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping classifies natural and cultural area assets

With the aid of a grant from the Shell Environmental Fund, the Trust purchased a Global Positioning System (GPS) that will allow it to accurately map features of the Five Bridge public lands. To date, these features have been recorded at many different times in various formats by different individuals and have been stored in different locations.

The GIS Mapping Project will allow speedy and accurate mapping of data including the location of roads, trails, streams, species of flora, species of fauna, and places of historical significance such as old burial sites and homesteads.

The information gathered through this project will be easily transferable and updated.

One very important feature of the GIS Project will be that the same protocols will be used during all aspects of the information gathering and recording process. If you are interested in learning more about the GIS Mapping Project or playing an active role in gathering data please contact Jeff Parks at 876-0099.

## HRM proposes conservation designation for ecologically sensitive land at Big Five Bridge Lake

The Trust in collaboration with the Western Community Council has been successful in having the HRM land around Big Five Bridge and Moore's Lakes designated as a Conservation Area.

Public hearings were held by HRM to ensure the public consultation

process was followed and those that attended heartily endorsed this ground-breaking decision. The impact of this decision is that these lands will be designated for passive recreation use only.

The Trust currently has another application before the Western

Community Council to designate newly acquired land on the western side of Nine Mile River as a Conservation Area.

The Trust appreciates the support of Councilors Meade, Rankin, and Adams and looks forward to working with them on other projects.

## Nature Watch & Terrestrial Plot Monitoring

In collaboration with Saint Mary's University and Environment Canada, the Trust initiated a NatureWatch program to give school children, community groups, and interested individuals hands-on contact with their natural environment while introducing them to principles of scientific monitoring.

**NatureWatch** is a suite of community-based "citizen science" monitoring programmes including [FrogWatch](#), [WormWatch](#), [IceWatch](#) and [Plant-Watch](#). Through these programmes, Environ-

ment Canada collects national information on indicators of ecosystem health. New "citizen science" programmes will soon be available on lichens, tree health and benthic macroinvertebrates. The Trust coordinates these programs locally through a variety of monitoring activities.

In collaboration with Saint Mary's University and the Department of Natural Resources, the Trust has also set up two **Terrestrial Monitoring Sites** at the Lewis lake Provincial Park for observation and study. The

project monitors stake out an identified area, catalogue the trees, flowers, scrubs and animal life that may reside there, gather data on a regular basis, and catalogue the results for further study.

The Trust's intention is to generate interest in the future and health of our wilderness areas, particularly among school children, in the hope that they will better understand and enjoy nature in its unspoiled state. Contact Catherine King for more information: 823-3433.

*NatureWatch gives school children, community groups, and interested individuals hands-on contact with their natural environment while introducing them to principles of scientific monitoring."*



*The Trust thanks MLA Bill Estabrooks, MLA John Chataway, HRM Councillor Reg Rankin, the Department of Natural Resources, and HRM Department of Public Works and Transportation for their support of the trash cleanup.*

## Trust & ATV group plan trash cleanup on public lands

The Trust is organizing a clean-up of the Five Bridge public lands. The clean-up effort is being organized by Carroll Mason one of the Trust's trustees. The purpose is to rid the public land of derelict vehicles and other refuse that has been dumped along the fire road and the Old St. Margaret's Bay Road.

Arrangements have been made with a local

junk yard to take the material extracted from the area. The Department of Natural Resources, MLA Bill Estabrooks, MLA John Chataway, and HRM Councillor Reg Rankin have all contributed funds to make this project possible. HRM has consistently supported Trust activities and has agreed to assist with the transportation of the refuse once it is removed

from the woods. The Safety-Minded ATV Club have agreed to assist in removing items from the woods and transporting them to a location where HRM can pick them up. The support of all of the above is very much appreciated by the Trust.

If you have an interest in supporting this project, please contact Carroll Mason at 826 2848 for more information.



## Charitable Status will provide benefactor tax break

The Trust has applied to the Canada Revenue Agency for Charitable Status under the Canada Income Tax Act and Regulations. Once it has received CRA's approval, the Trust will be able to provide its benefactors

with a tax receipt for contributions of money, equipment, or real property.

The Trust anticipates approval early in the new year. With approval, it will be in a

position to raise funds to support its objectives.

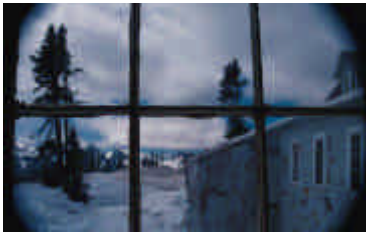
If you would like to help the Trust raise funds to support stewardship activities, please contact Beth McGee at 832-2245.

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*In Memoriam*

**John Chataway**

**1947-2004**

As this issue was going to press, we learned of the passing of John Chataway, MLA for Chester-St. Margaret's. John was a true supporter of the work of the Trust. He attended COCO meetings when his busy schedule permitted. He contributed funds to Trust activities. He was instrumental in arranging a meeting with DNR Minister Richard Hurlburt regarding the Trust's proposal for Collaborative Environmental Stewardship. With John's passing, the Trust has lost a good friend.



## Trust to choose new directors at 2005 AGM

The success of most organizations rests with the leadership of its directors. In April 2005 a number of trustee's terms will expire and a nomination committee has been formed to identify interested individuals to lead the work of the Trust. The terms of the trustees

are staggered to ensure continuity. Retiring members may re-offer their services and any member in good standing may be nominated from the floor of the AGM.

If you are interested in serving on the Board of Trustees, please contact

the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Allan Shatford at 823-2585.

The Trust's 2005 Annual General Meeting will take place at the Bay Road Baptist Church on April 7, 2005.

## Council of Community Organizations (COCO)

COCO plays a pivotal role in keeping individuals and organizations informed about activities that impact directly and indirectly on the cherished lifestyle of those living on the Chebucto Peninsula.

The Council enjoys the support of many community-based organizations and gives the local politicians an opportunity to keep informed of the issues that concern area residents.

COCO is a good example of effective community participation in the political process. During this past year, for example, COCO served as the vehicle that brought five community organizations together to discuss the 48 recommendations of the Voluntary Planning Committee concerning off-highway vehicle use and offered recommendations that emerged in the task force's final report. COCO's success has made it the model for

the Trust's proposal for collaborative stewardship.

The Safety Minded ATV Club will host the next COCO meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 20, 2005 at the Club's facilities on Station Road and the Head of St. Margaret's Bay. Further information can be obtained by contacting Beth McGee at 823 2245. All community based organizations are encouraged to send a representative.

## Trust invites community stakeholders to participate in stewardship framework

The Trust would like to see stewardship projects arise from government policies that protect public land coupled with planning and monitoring activities in which community groups play an active, ongoing role.

One of the Trust's founding mandates was to develop a model for local community management of wilderness areas. In August, the Trust proposed a framework for collaborative stewardship that envi-

sions such a model.

In this model, community organizations and government offices would meet regularly to share relevant information relating the environmental health and public use of public lands. Such a coalition would advise government on matters of public interest, and encourage users of public land to undertake active roles to care for the land.

The Trust wishes to in-

clude all stakeholders in this project and has invited representatives from some 40 groups to attend an initial meeting on January 6, 2005 to discuss its proposed framework. Interested parties should call Beth McGee at 823-2245 to let her know of their plans to attend. The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Kesham-Goodman Library on Lacewood Drive.