



WRWEO WATCH (Vol. 4, No. 1) December 2007

Newsletter for the Woodens River Watershed Environmental
Organization



Cranberry Lake, near the start of the Bluff Wilderness Hiking Trail

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WRWEO WATCH began in the fall of 2002 to inform our members and the wider community of the work of WRWEO and the environmental issues it faces and to solicit feedback from the community. The last issue was in the spring of 2004 (Vol. 3, No. 3) when we had moved to giving information on our website www.wrweo.ca and soliciting input there. While the website still serves that purpose, the Board of Directors sees the need to communicate directly with our membership through email and therefore to put the news in a similar format. The newsletter will also be available on our website, and members without email can receive hard copies.

Future issues will contain more detailed information, but for now we want to convey the range of activities and issues that are currently engaging us. We hope that our members will raise questions by email, phone, or letter in response to the notes below. Contact information is provided at the end.

New Officers and Board Member

On March 21 at the last AGM held at the William Black United Church Hall in Glen Margaret, Susan Hruszowy was elected chair, Brian Saulnier treasurer, and Paul Berry secretary. In the previous fall Susan, who was secretary at the time, had to take over as chair when one of the co-chairs became ill. She helped pull WRWEO through a difficult period when the parking lot for The Bluff Trail had to be closed due to vandalism. Recently Susan herself has had to resign for health reasons and Paul Berry has become chair and board member Barbara Klass secretary.

Ultra-Running on The Bluff Trail

Besides hikers there are currently quite a few ultra runners on the trail. Ultra running is a step beyond marathons for those who enjoy running 40, 50, or even 100 miles. Kenny Young is one of these runners, who can run all four loops of the trail at once. This venue is a favorite because of its remoteness and natural beauty. A primary goal in building the trail was to make the public aware of the nature beauty and other wilderness values here so that the public will urge their political leaders to protect the area (it is

The board, in accord with the by-laws, appointed a new board member Kenny Young, who is an ultra runner on the trail and brings new ideas and energy to the organization.

The ten board members are (in alphabetical order): Paul Berry (chair), Barbara Klass (secretary), Hildi Konok, Danny LeBlanc, Natalie Leonard, Bill Matheson, Tim McGee, Jim Muir, Brian Saulnier (treasurer), and Kenny Young. The board meets every month on the first Tuesday evening (now at the Sobey's community room in the Hublely Centre in Tantallon).

now vulnerable to being traded away if the Province sees fit to do so). The dilemma has been how to raise awareness of the trail without attracting people to it who will not respect it. Kenny has suggested holding an ultra running event on the trail that will attract runners from all over in addition to media attention, yet because of the nature of the runners and the controls that would be in place (runners would be staggered so that seldom would runners be together) damage to the trail and littering would not occur. WRWEO is planning the race for September 27 of 2008. Your comments would be welcome.

Guided Hikes on the Bluff Trail

In keeping with the theme of raising public awareness, this fall Richmond Campbell held a guided hike of the first two loops of The Bluff Trail as part of a series of events sponsored by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources to highlight the opportunities for outdoor recreation, the Parks Are For People Hikes. The hike began at the parking lot on September 23, 2007 and took a total of seven hours. Though challenging the hike was thoroughly enjoyed. WRWEO is planning similar events in the future, including a similar hike at that time next year. They will be announced at our website.



Field Naturalists examine a plant whose leaf is only a single cell thick - liverwort. [See Wikipedia - Marchantiophyta](#)

Earlier, on April 14, 2007 the Halifax Field Naturalists also received a guided hike on the Bluff Trail with Rich Campbell and Paul Berry. They had approached WRWEO about hiking the trail and Rich was happy to oblige. The hike consisted of a leisurely circuit of the first loop.



A view of the trail shortly after it was brushed out, on the fourth loop.

Trail Maintenance

Last winter, with snow on the ground, the last two loops had “a haircut” carried out by workers who had to camp in the bush since the travel time to reach these loops made it impractical not to stay on site. More maintenance work is being carried out this fall by Vernon Woolsey with the focus on the board walk at the beginning, the first two loops, and installing additional signs to alert ATVers who may attempt to enter the trail at more remote points that the trail is off-limits to all bike motorized and non-motorized by order of the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. A number of fallen trees on the top half of the Pot Lake loop had to be removed to make the trail passable. Funding for maintenance is paid by HRM through the Halifax Regional Trails Association, of which WRWEO has been a member for seven years.

Trail Documentary

Aaron Peters, an expert in multi-media presentations, has met with members who have worked as volunteers with WRWEO in constructing the trail. Aaron has offered without charge to put together a short video documentary involving footage of the trail and brief interviews with

those who organized the building of it and to coach members on fund raising to address other goals, such as protecting the Woodens River from the damaging effects of clear cutting next to the river and protecting the lakes from the effects of recent development. We will have more to say about this in later issues.

NS Trails Calendars

Each year the Nova Scotia Trails Federation puts out a calendar celebrating the trails in Nova Scotia. The Bluff Trail has made it into a previous issue and for 2008 the calendar has a magnificent shot next to Upper Five Bridge Lake on the fourth loop (taken by Mark Johnston). The calendars sell for \$15. They are professional quality and printed locally. Support WRWEO and order a copy for a holiday gift. (Please see contact information below.)



The calendar can be seen at: http://www.pavonis.com/NS_Trails2008.pdf

Wind Power

Though at present Nova Scotia power does not have plans to put large windmills in our area to generate electricity at greatly reduced environmental costs, we

can probably expect plans in the not too distant future. Do members of the watershed community want a say in how and where this is done? If so, please give us your thoughts.

Sheldrake Water Testing

Thanks to much hard work by volunteers the hypolimnetic aeration equipment at Sheldrake Lake is finally operational. This system was installed to meet the deficiency in dissolved oxygen caused by nutrient overloading. Next summer we plan to have the first full season run of aeration, followed by a formal evaluation of the results. The Sheldrake Lake

homeowners have agreed to take over the management of this project but someone is still needed from the homeowners to be trained in the measurement techniques to meet the licensing requirements. Provided the project is successful, it would establish a precedent for treating eutrophication in shallow lakes throughout Nova Scotia, slowing the damaging effects of development on fish habitat.

Forestry and Standing Tall

WRWEO has joined the alliance formed by Ecology Action Centre: Standing Tall – Forest for Life that is dedicated to bringing together the voices of groups like WRWEO to present a unified vision for Nova Scotia forests that will counteract the damaging effects of clear-cutting and other industrial forestry practices. EAC is spearheading this alliance and anticipates the government initiating a public consultation process beginning on March 8 regarding DNR's 10 point strategy for Nova Scotia's forests. For

details and the organizations already supporting Standing Tall go to the link:
http://novascotiaforests.ca/main.php?page=action_position

WRWEO has invited Joanne Cook to talk at a public meeting to discuss the state of forestry practices in Nova Scotia and how they bear on practices in the lower part of the Woodens River Watershed. Time and place are to be scheduled. Anyone who is interested in assisting us or has suggestion for this meeting should please let us know.

Visioning and Management of the Watershed

HRM is now engaged in a public “visioning” process in which a projection is made for how parts of HRM should be planned and managed. We know from past experience that when the process reaches the stage of public discussion of a plan, much of the vision will have already be formed with little chance for the public to do more than make minor adjustments. To be proactive WRWEO needs to present its vision earlier. WRWEO already

has a Management Plan that was developed in 1998 and conceived to be an evolving plan to be modified by continual in-put from the public. (The plan can be viewed on the WRWEO website.) We need now to update this plan and to put it into a form that fits the format that HRM is now using in the visioning process. WRWEO with invaluable help from Frank Hope, a member of WRWEO from the beginning, is producing a draft of its own vision and will soon be circulating it to all its members for criticism and advice before putting the proposal to government.

To Contact WRWEO: Go to the website www.wrweo.ca and click on “contact us”. You can also write or call directly to Paul Berry (Chair), 876-7377, or any of the other board members listed on the website; write to WRWEO, Unit 14, Box 300, 3650 Hammonds Plains Road, Upper Tantallon, Nova Scotia B3Z 4R3. Or you can phone Richmond Campbell (co-founder of WRWEO) at 876-7847 (home) or 489-0457 (cell).