

## THE BLUFF WILDERNESS HIKING TRAIL

The Bluff Trail is a 32k trail containing four stacked loops. It was constructed by the Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization (WRWEO) and completed in 2005. It is located in the Five Bridges Lakes Wilderness Area. This area was declared a protected area in October 2011.

The Bluff Trail is home to Nova Scotia's only native moose population, as well as black bears, eastern coyotes, and many other animals. The trail goes through ecologically sensitive barrens and is home to a large variety of flora including Broom Crowberry and Rare Mountain Sandwort.

The survival of the flora and fauna in this protected wilderness area depends on visitors becoming familiar with principles and skilled in the practices of **Leave No Trace** (LNT) hiking.

## LEAVE NO TRACE (LNT) PRINCIPLES

- **Follow official trails.** Travel single file in the centre of the trail, even through wet and muddy areas. Use only Approved LNT Educational Sites for camping.
- **Pack out all food** (including peels and shells) and litter including toilet paper. Do NOT burn food scraps or garbage.
- **Bury human and dog waste** at least 60m off trail and away from water or pack it out.
- **Leave rocks, plants, trees, and other natural objects as you find them.** Do not build an Inukshuk, furniture, cairns, or fire rings. Do not cut trees or pick flowers.
- **Use ONLY LNT fire bowls & camp stoves.** Campfires are prohibited. Use ONLY fallen dead wood for LNT fire bowl fuel.
- **Observe wildlife from a distance.** Do not follow, approach, or feed animals. Feeding may cause aggressive behaviour.
- **Note that dogs should be leashed** (HRM Bylaw A-300).
- Be courteous to others. Enjoy the sounds of nature.

WRWEO  
Unit 14, Box 300  
3650 Hammonds Plains Road  
Upper Tantallon NS B3Z 4R3  
902 876-7377  
info@wrweo.ca  
www.wrweo.ca



## TRAIL INSPECTIONS

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Litter/Garbage ∞ Camp Fires ∞ Tree Cutting or Limbing  
∞ Problems with Boardwalks ∞ Problems with Signage ∞  
Problems with Way Markers ∞ Slope Erosion ∞ Trail  
Braiding ∞ Trail Widening ∞ Trail Spurs ∞ Deadfall &  
Windfall Blocking Trail ∞ Hazardous Brook or Stream  
Crossings ∞ Hazardous Conditions on Trail Surface ∞ Wet  
Areas in Need of Trail Hardening ∞ Evidence of OHV or  
bicycle Use ∞ Edge Brushing & Low Branches

### WHAT TO DO REMEDIATE ∞ RECORD ∞ REPORT

Collect garbage and litter. If items are too large to pack out, record location and description of size and weight so others can find and collect them. Cache rocks from a campfire or inuksuk in the bush near trail to be used for trail hardening; dismantle log furniture by cutting and hiding logs as far from site as possible. Remediate duff layer on top of damaged or disturbed soil by spreading leaves and twigs to cover the area. Begin to remediate spurs by placing deadfall, windfall, or rocks across the opening and report need for "Stay On Trail" sign at the location.

Record location of all remediation work, and if possible, submit 'before' and 'after' photos. Include the date, length of time, and number of people who helped with trail work.

### Trail Inspection Report

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Time on trail \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Loops \_\_\_\_\_  
Trail Conditions dry/wet/snow depth/ice/etc. \_\_\_\_\_

**Concerns & Coordinates** (ring fire, cut trees, illegal camp sites, poor drainage, large items to be packed out, fallen tree across trail, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Recommended or Recorded Remediation** (work required; length of time; number of workers; equipment; signage; etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

❖ Send records, reports, photos, etc. to [info@wrweo.ca](mailto:info@wrweo.ca)

## COUNT TRAIL USERS

When you visit the trail record the time you spend on the trail, the area you cover and the number of other users and dogs you observed while on the trail.

## COUNT TRAIL USERS – continued

### Trail Count Report

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Time on trail \_\_\_\_\_  
Location/#loops \_\_\_\_\_  
User/Dog Count \_\_\_\_\_  
Weather \_\_\_\_\_

❖ Send your trail count to [info@wrweo.ca](mailto:info@wrweo.ca)

## ENGAGE TRAIL USERS

Remind trail users that The Bluff Trail is located within a **Protected Wilderness Area** and is governed by the *Wilderness Protection Act*. Except in certain circumstances, the Act prohibits:

Littering ∞ Campfires ∞ Developing Campsites  
Tree Cutting ∞ Damaging or Removing any Plants  
Unauthorized Motor Vehicles

### Campfires

**Problem:** Campfires are prohibited under the Act; they damage vegetation, soil layers, and tree canopy; The Bluff area is particularly vulnerable to forest fires.  
**Solution:** use camp stoves or user-supplied LNT fire bowls or pans.

### Off-Leash Dogs

**Problem:** The Bluff Trail is not a designated off-leash area and is governed by Halifax By-Law A-300; dogs can harm vulnerable flora and fauna species; dogs can be injured by porcupine, coyote, and other species in the area.

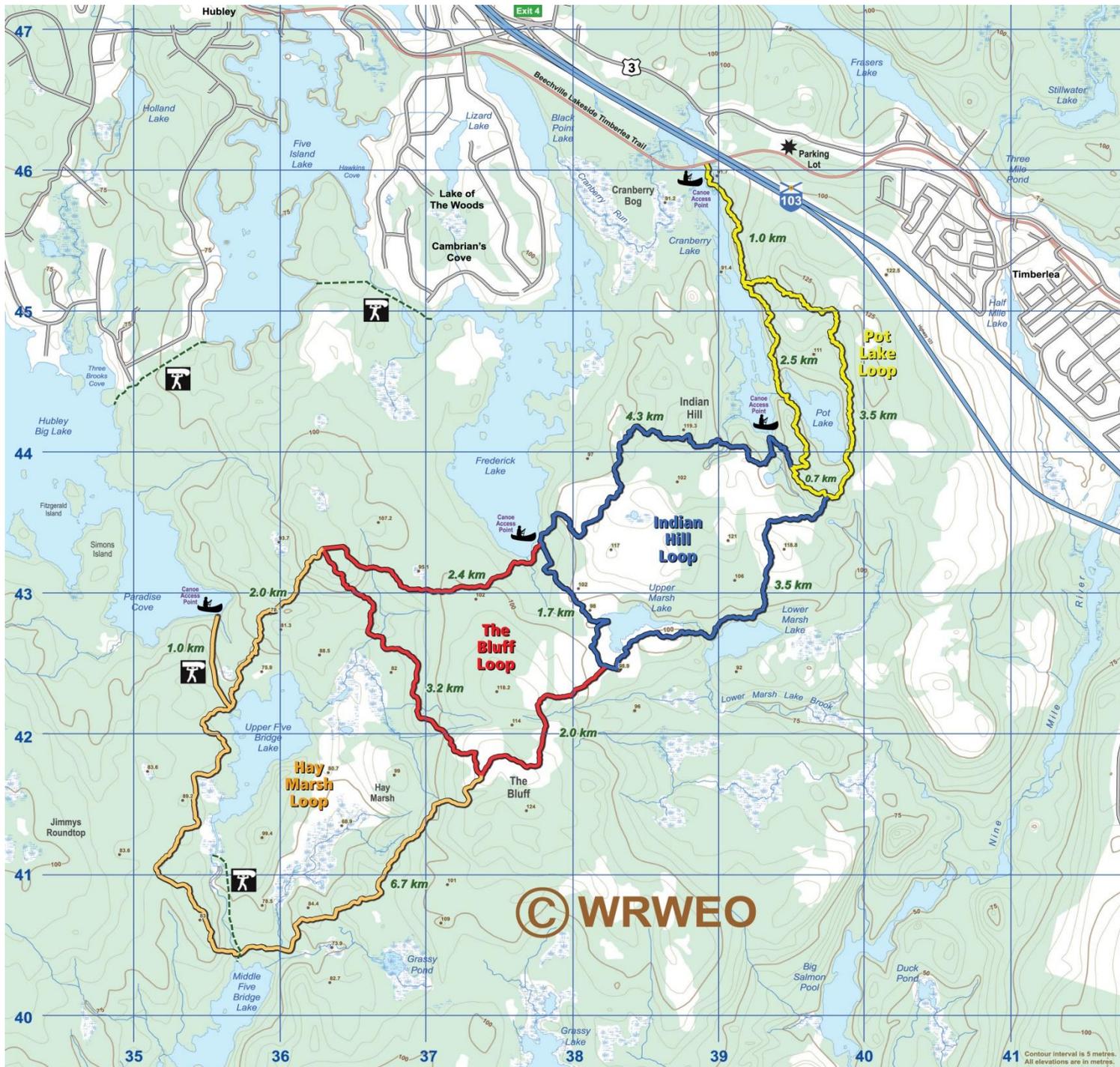
**Solution:** For off leash recreation use designated off-leash park areas: Sandy Lake Park (Bedford); Hemlock Ravine Park; Fort Needham Memorial Park; Point Pleasant Park; Shubie Park; and, Dartmouth Common.

### Trail Widening, Spurs, & Braiding

**Problem:** Think of the trail as a wound which threatens the survival of the local flora and fauna. A number of species in the area are already at risk. The wider the trail - the larger the wound - the greater the threat.

**Solution:** Always travel single file in the centre of the trail, even through wet and muddy areas. Do not create spurs, widening or braiding & remediate as quickly as possible.

**12 WAYS TO HELP  
THE BLUFF WILDERNESS HIKING TRAIL**



\*R&R: Record & Report to [info@wrweo.ca](mailto:info@wrweo.ca) activity, date, length of time, and number of people who helped, before- and after-photos, etc.

- Park perpendicular to the edge on the West side of the parking lot
- Collect garbage/litter in parking lot; - R&R
- Collect garbage/litter on trail - R&R
- Count other users on the trail - R&R
- Create a trail report during your hike: look for evidence of harmful human impacts, hazards on the trail, and/or areas in need of maintenance - R&R
- Remediate campfires: Cache rocks from a campfire in the bush near trail to be used for trail hardening; disperse ashes and burnt wood, cover area with leaves and twigs to restore duff layer on top of damaged or disturbed soil - R&R
- Remediate damaged campsites: dismantle log furniture, cut and/or hide logs as far from site as possible, cover area with leaves and twigs to restore duff layer on top of damaged or disturbed soil - R&R
- Remediate Inukshuk & cairns: dismantle and cache rocks in the bush near trail to be used for trail hardening - R&R
- Remediate spurs: place deadfall, windfall, or rocks across the opening - R&R possibly recommend need for "Stay On Trail" sign at the location.
- Help WRWEO create a complete sign & infrastructure inventory: document the location, size, messaging, and condition of signs along the trail. Document the location, length, width, and condition of boardwalks and stone hardened trail surfaces - R&R Include photos.
- Talk to trail users about Protected Wilderness Area rules and Leave No Trace (LNT) Practices - R&R
- Become a member of WRWEO or make a donation on line at: [www.wrweo.ca](http://www.wrweo.ca) Membership fees and donations support ongoing conservation efforts and membership increases our representation and credibility as an organization.