

FBLWA STEWARDSHIP COALITION

Promoting Community-Based Stewardship of the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area

CHARTER

FBLWA GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These Guiding Principles are not meant to contradict any current laws, regulations, or rules that govern human activities within the Wilderness Area. Instead, they are meant to provide guidance in their understanding and application, leading to a healthy relationship between all involved, and to changes needed to protect the integrity of the ecosystem in the Area.

1. **We are part of Nature, not the owners of Her.** We acknowledge and respect the trees, the birds, the fish, and all our relations with whom we share the Wilderness Area. We are grateful for their important role in maintaining a balance in our natural world.
2. **We will assist in healing previous damages.** We will use the tools of science and technology to assist the Wilderness Area in healing former injuries and work to restore fish and wildlife to their former abundance. We will try to restore their habitats when we discover losses or degradations in them.
3. **We will consider the impact of our present actions on future generations.** We, the current generation, will think and live in a manner that will ensure that inhabitants seven generations into the future will continue to benefit from the Wilderness Area as we do.
4. **We will pay attention.** We will refrain from decisions and actions that would knowingly harm the Wilderness Area. We will work with authorities to ensure that any proposed alteration is thoroughly reviewed, and will only proceed if the ecosystem is to remain the same or benefit from the change.
5. **We will cause no net loss of habitat.** We will use the best practices available to ensure that, as we benefit from the resources in the Wilderness Area, we can ensure the restoration or creation of habitats to compensate for any damage we may cause to the land, the water, or native species.
6. **We will work together.** We shall be patient and work together in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation for the social, economic, and spiritual well being of our Wilderness Area's friends and neighbors.
7. **We are accountable.** We understand our responsibilities to the Wilderness Area, and to its inhabitants and users. Our actions will be transparent. We will measure our progress. We are prepared to be judged by our peers and by future generations for our actions.

René Lavoie

Adapted from *The Spirit of the Lake Speaks*
Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI)
2011

COALITION MEMBERSHIP

The five organizations that played a decisive role in protecting the Five Bridge Lakes area under the Wilderness Areas Protection Act will be the founding members of the Coalition (see below). Any other community group that formally subscribes to the **FBLWA Guiding Principles** and undertakes one of the **Roles of the Coalition** may, with the consent of the Coalition Council, become a member of the Coalition.

ROLES OF THE COALITION

The Coalition will promote awareness, use, stewardship, and management of the FBLWA especially in matters pertaining to education, research, conservation, and recreation. More specifically, the Coalition will

- (a) Act as the eyes, ears, and hands of the community
- (b) Keep the community informed of the benefits of, threats to, and opportunities regarding the FBLWA (Education)
- (c) Assemble baseline data, track change, identify threats, and report findings (Research)
- (d) Enable, encourage, and facilitate access to the FBLWA; foster compliance with “Leave No Trace” principles (Recreation)
- (e) Identify and undertake remediation projects (Conservation)
- (f) Encourage compliance with the NS Wilderness Areas Protection Act
- (g) Recommend improvements to FBLWA boundaries
- (h) Promote HRM’s Western Commons as a contiguous Park extension of the FBLWA
- (i) Foster cooperation between government and community agencies
- (j) Promote membership in the Coalition

COALITION COUNCIL

The activities of the Coalition will be coordinated by a **FBLWA Stewardship Council**. The Council will

- (a) be comprised of one or two representatives of each member of the Coalition and two representatives of Nova Scotia Environment
- (b) choose a Chair and a Secretary from among its members
- (c) meet at least once every three months
- (d) decide all matters by consensus
- (e) develop whatever terms of engagement it may require to fulfill its roles while respecting the principles of brevity and simplicity

ROLES OF THE COUNCIL

The Council will

- (a) initiate projects
- (b) establish goals, objectives, and priorities
- (c) coordinate activities among Coalition members
- (d) identify sources of human and financial support for Coalition activities
- (e) serve as a channel of information among Coalition members & the public at large
- (f) serve as the link between the Coalition & Nova Scotia Environment (NSE)

THE FIVE FOUNDING MEMBERS

- Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Rails to Trails Association (BLT R2T)
- Five Bridge Wilderness Heritage Trust (FBWHT)
- Safety-Minded ATV Association
- St. Margaret’s Bay Stewardship Association (SMBSA)
- Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization (WRWEO)