

TIME LINE of SANDY LAKE - SACKVILLE RIVER (Marsh/Jack Lakes) Regional Park 1971 to August 22, 2022

1971

1971, April, P.B. Dean, Wildlife Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service entitled Natural Environment Survey: A Description of the Intrinsic Values in the Natural Environment around Greater Halifax –Dartmouth. Identified 7 important natural areas to preserve as Regional Parks.

1971, December, MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Committee) Recreation Work Group Report. A joint project of the Province and municipalities proposed 7 Regional Parks for Hfx-Dartmouth. (McNab Island, Long Lake, Chain Lake watershed, Hemlock Ravine, **Marsh and Sandy Lakes, Sackville Flood Plain**, Admiral Cove, Lake Williams & Lake Charles canal complex, Cole Harbour). Jack Lake area belonged to CMHC and was slated for a publicly-owned housing development.

1972

1972, 7th Day Adventists purchased McLellan property for a school site. (Peninsula has old growth hemlock)

1972 MAPC Water Quality Survey for Selected Metropolitan Lakes. Description of lake and water quality.

1973

1973, Peerless Subdivision and Atlantic Acres Business Park are begun. Verge's Marsh at base of Bluewater Road is infilled. Area still floods the road.

1974

c.1974, Mrs. Pender (Pender sawmills) offered gift of 500 acres west of Sandy Lake if the park would be named in her late husband's honour. Ira Settle, County Warden, reportedly wanted the taxes from the Twin City Dairy's proposed move to Sandy Lake instead. (changed to Farmers Dairy Co-op, now Agropur) (These lands eventually became Armoyan/Clayton lands)

1974, Twin Cities Dairy clear-cut the 50 acres the plant now sits on and created the huge infill necessary to build the road from Hammonds Plains Road. This infill turned the lake deeply muddy for at least two years. (Secci disc readings rarely showed water visibility deeper than 18 inches.) There were two large pipes installed—one to pump water up to the dairy from the lake for use in processing and the other to dump the foul water back into the lake after cleaning the processing tanks. This would have flooded the lake and Sackville River with milky water. Concerned landowners on and near the lake formed the Sandy Lake Area Ratepayers Association (SLARA) and began press coverage, published a newsletter, and hired ecologists from Dalhousie Biology to study the effects of the road construction over the brook and the proposed pumping of waste into the waterway. These efforts coincided with a general dawning of public awareness regarding the environment and, in the end the dairy curtailed the planned pumping of watery waste into the lake and established holding/treatment ponds. When the enormity of the long-term effects of their actions surfaced, the dairy readily modified their plans to accommodate best practices of the day and are good corporate neighbours ever since.

1974, 7th Day Adventists' school opens.

1975

1975, A Halifax landfill was proposed for 110 acres of Jack Lake lands. Two years of public protest stopped it. So, Jack Lake area (owned by CMHC) was slated for a public residential development.

1975 Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Development Plan. The parks were embedded in the Regional Plan. It defines and separates regional parks and development areas and has a map of the region, including the same 7 proposed regional parks: Hemlock Ravine, Schubencadie Canal system, McNab's island, Admirals Cove, Cole Harbour/Lawrencetown Beach, Long Lake/Chain Lake, and the **Marsh and Sandy Lakes, Sackville Flood Plain.**

1976

1976, Twin Cities Dairy moves from Windsor St. Built between 1974 – 1976. (Farmer's Co-operative Dairy Limited was created in 1983) As mentioned, the plan to dump dairy residue into the lake is stopped by lake residents, but the large pipe is still there. Two treatment ponds are built along the dairy road.

1976, Water for Twin Cities Dairy goes to the dairy as part of Peerless Subdivision construction.

1979

1979, Bedford becomes a town (Mayor Francene Cosman 1979-1982, Keith Roberts 1982-88, Peter Christie 1988-91, Peter Kelly 1991-95. HRM amalgamation April 1996)

During the building of the dairy, one result of the increased awareness of the uniqueness of Sandy Lake and area was the realization that the shoreline and woodlands surrounding the lake still remained, for the most part, untouched. To try and protect this recreational potential from development Bedford Mayor Francine Cosman made presentations to the city and the province to support protecting Sandy Lake as a regional park.

1979, July, Hfx Dart MAPC Regional Parks Report, by Parks Advisory Group, identifies 7 proposed Regional Parks – the same as in 1971 but with more detail (including a conceptual plan for what activities would be suitable where) and **Marsh and Sandy Lakes, Sackville Flood Plain park** name changed to **Sackville River Regional Park.** It includes Sandy, Marsh and Sackville river corridor as before, but with a protective buffer around the area. Also, the boundaries and conceptual maps contain half of Jack Lake as part of the buffer area.

1981

1981, August, Sandy Lake Ratepayers Association forms. (D Sarty, Grantor...)

1981, Aug 24, Bedford Town Council minutes: Residents group formed to consider park boundaries issues around lake residents' land. Minutes acknowledge need for improved communications between NS Dept. of Municipal affairs, Bedford, and lake residents. Lake residents concerned that no one was answering their questions, such as, "If my property is within the park boundary can I will it to my heirs?"

1981, Oct 19, public meeting on Regional Park boundaries. Some lake residents voiced concerns over losing control over their property rights if their land falls within the park boundary. Meeting was recorded. Residents reported their questions were never answered.

1981, Oct 26, Bedford Town Council minutes: Report on public meeting, decision to create a typed transcript of it, councillor frustrated at the length of time it is taking to settle this Regional Park issue. Mayor to request from Municipal Affairs asking what action is planned since the public meeting.

1981, Dec. 14, Bedford Town Council minutes: Twin Cities Dairy is removed from the proposed park boundary.

1982

1982, Jan 11, Bedford Town Council minutes: another request to go from Mayor to request from Municipal Affairs asking what action is planned since the public meeting.

1982, Jan 18, Public hearings for proposed Municipal Development Plan. **Pender lawyer proposes the Pender land be acquired for the park**, this time requests town and province take steps to reimburse Mrs. Pender for her lands lying within the proposed park, or rezone for industrial. **CMHC requests Jack Lake lands remain outside new Secondary Development Plan** as they plan to develop them as first-class residential. **Giles family requests their lands be left outside park boundary and voices opposition about the new zoning regulation for RR** (5 acres on public road, with road built prior to October 9, 1991). **Authorities clarify there is no plan to expropriate lands for the park.** **Sandy Lake Ratepayers Assoc. (Granter) expresses concerns about future control of pollution and lake protection.**

1982, March 9, Special town Council. Report on Public Hearing on Sandy Lake Regional Park. Same as at proposed Municipal Dev. Plan hearing, except that Prof. Granter of SL Ratepayers Assoc. said **members of this lake association accept the principle of their properties being inside the park boundary. They would like the right to bequeath to next of kin, right to sell at market value, opportunity to negotiate access roads, assurance that they will not be harassed to sell at any time. (These were also outlined in the group's briefs of Aug 1981 and Oct 1981)** Municipal affairs had not communicated with the town yet. Councillor Legree said Sackville River Assoc suggests changing the park to McCabe and Webber Lakes. **The minutes are hard to understand, but it looks like a motion to rezone the Sandy Lake park lands away from P (park) to Secondary Development passed.** (There is an amendment map inserted in the 1982 Zoning Bylaws and Municipal Development Plan showing the Sandy Lake, Marsh and Sackville river corridor were all changed from P-1 Park to SDA Secondary Development Area). **Submission from Academy: the school did not mind being within the park. Passed motion to remove Giles and Brown property from park boundary on Town's Regional park plan and request that Province do the same from their Regional Park plan. In discussion: Is Town still interested in having a Regional Park if Province still wants to proceed, now that the town rezoned the lands?**

1982, Aug, 16, Bedford Town Council minutes: **Province chooses to keep park boundaries etc. as originally outlined.** Giles and Brown families' position is "the same as it has been for the past 7 years". Motion passes to ask Province to approve Municipal Plan with the boundary amendments, plus.

1982 September Town Council passes Zoning Bylaws and Municipal Development Plan. Sandy Lake area changed from Park to Secondary Development Area (SDA, or urban Settlement = no permit to build unless five acres on a public road that existed prior to Oct 9, 1991. Also see 2016 Halifax land use Bylaw Bedford). (Unclear why it also appears as being passed in Sept 1983. See below) In a way, this zoning has protected the lake from development ever since because it prevented in-fill. **The community believed this to be a solution to protect the lake. However, the change in zoning opened the area up to interest from developers for future larger housing development.**

1982 (Date unclear) Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Development Plan states concerns about urban sprawl, and **a shift from "development at any cost" toward quality of life.** Metro is not harmed by industrial revolution, has clean lakes and clean air. Page 20-21 describes Regional Parks using similar descriptive words as in the 2014 RP. **The seven proposed regional parks are again listed, along with several minor parks. Text lists "Flood plain around Sandy Lake, Marsh Lake, and the Sackville River", and maps show its Regional Park designation. However, one map, an amendment map, shows them as Amended Urban Mix designation. Contains Planning Act Statutes of 1969 and amendments of 1975.**

1982, Sept 29, Special Session Bedford Town Council minutes: SL Ratepayers Assoc (D. Sarty and Grantor, established 1981, 50 members, with goal to establish landowner rights within the park and environmental concerns, and thanks Town for their efforts to work with the Province over boundaries.)

1983

1983, March 28, **Changes in the Planning Act; Province removes the Regional Park designation. Withdraws from regional park-creating plan city-wide.**

1983, Sept 26. Mayor Cosman champions the park idea still. As begun in 1982, **to preserve the area from development in hopes that a park plan would evolve eventually, the zoning bylaw was passed to restrict any new construction to a minimum 5-acre lot on a publicly serviced road that exists prior to Oct 9, 1991. This zoning has protected the lake from in-fill development ever since. Bedford continued to purchase land around Sandy Lake toward this future park purpose. (examples: see 1985, July 22, town and Province jointly funded purchase of 236 acres, and 1992, 6 acres deeded from Farmers Dairy specifically for public parkland, plus attached map from 2013 Municipal Planning Strategy for Bedford.)**

1983, Water quality study of Sandy Lake. (seeking this document)

1883, Sept 26, Town is proceeding with a Detailed Area Study of Sandy Lake area and will stay in touch with SL Ratepayers Assoc.

1985

1985, July 22, Bedford Town Council minutes: Proposes purchase of land at Sandy Lake and Admirals Cove Park. 50/50 Province and Town purchase \$700,000 worth of land from McCulloch and Co. 236 acres for Sandy Lake (where?), 61 at Admirals Cove Park.

1986

1986, June 23, Bedford Town Council minutes: Prof. Granter requests rezoning a piece as public road to develop his property. It is sent on to staff for consideration.

1986, Sept., *Jack Lake Environmental Evaluation Final Report*. CMHC and NS Dept. of Housing. Preparation for housing development on Jack Lake land assembly. Refers multiple times to the **coming Sandy Lake Regional Park** and also refers to it as "the Town's park land on Sandy Lake" (included Sandy and Marsh and Sackville River) They did flora and fauna studies of Jack Lake area. Contains extensive recommendations on how to mitigate environmental damage when doing the Jack Lake housing development.

1986, October 20, Bedford Town Council minutes: Granter applies to develop his 5 acres on Sandy Lake. It is not on public road. Council denies motion to change that bylaw and denies the application for subdivision.

~1986 **CMHC gives ~ 1000 acres around Jack Lake to the province.** The public housing development apparently did not happen largely because of the need for 2 expensive highway interchanges and for detailed mitigations to prevent environmental damage to Jack, Sandy, and Marsh lakes.

1987

1987 Aug news clip park boundaries amendments coming

1987 Oct news clip Oct park boundaries public meeting. (3 hours, ending in a councillor's suggestion to remove Sandy Lake from the Regional Parks plan, that the town would be better off negotiating with CMHC and NS Housing Commission than having province buy out residents of Giles Rd. This is confusing - didn't the 1982 similar disagreements at public meetings already remove Sandy Lake at the town council level? Need clarification.)

1988

1988, Feb 29, Bedford Town Council minutes: 7th Day Adventist Lands, Sandy Lake MPS plan amendment to hold public meeting re a plan to change Regional Park Designation of the church owned lands on the Generalized Future Land use Map to Secondary Development Area and to include special care facilities on the area.

1988, May 16 Bedford Town Council minutes: Changes to 7th Day Adventist Lands approved. Mention of a Sandy Lake Park plan which may be the newly anticipated Lions Club Beach Park.

1988, Sept 19, Bedford Town Council minutes: 7th Day Adventist church (49 acres) receives its development designation in return for access to the new Sandy Lake Park (Lions Club) and green buffers.

1990

Over the 1990's Kingswood South was developed below Hammonds Plains road. (Kingswood North developed ~2006-2010)

1990, April 23, Reconvened session Bedford Town Council minutes: Recreation Advisory Commission requests "environmental study of the Sandy Lake watershed area" before use of the Bluewater Lot is developed. And change Lot 1-E from park to Industrial. No decision.

1990, August 14, Sandy Lake Area Residents Association requests Town to request Dept. of Environment to examine situation prior to Town issuing permit to business suspected to cause potential environmental problems. Invalid.

1992

1992, March 9, 6 acres including roadway and underground pipe to lake are gifted from Farmers dairy to Bedford with a covenant requiring that the land only be used for public parkland. There are to be no buildings on it, and there is to be no travel over the lands or parking or motor vehicles of any kind.

1994

1994, Nov. 22, Bedford Town Council minutes: \$8,000 to \$10,000 approved for survey of Smith's Road for Lions Park.

1994, Rhea Dawn Mahar thesis, *Towards the Identification of Environmentally Sensitive Areas for Environmental Management: A Case Study in the Sackville River Watershed, Nova Scotia*. Sandy Lake is rated as the second most valuable Environmentally Sensitive Area between Bedford Basin and Mt Uniacke. The Sackville River quarry 4th.

1995

1995, April 11, Bedford Town Council minutes: Tender call of Topographic and Boundary survey for Lions Club Park.

1995, Sandy Lake Vegetation Survey and Trail Design, for the Town of Bedford to aid in and complete the trail design and layout for the area, conducted in April by Basic Elements Ecological Enterprises. (seeking this document)

1996

1996 April, Halifax Amalgamation

Late 1990's prison proposal. Province kept 50 acres when 1000 Jack Lake acres were turned over to the municipality. (for proposed prison, community learned later). Date is unclear when a Forensic prison slated for Jack Lake lands. 50 acres were cleared. Bedford public protests so prison went to Burnside. Province gave Jack Lake lands to city for park. See 2006 for Jack Lake lands becoming park in RP.

2001

2001, March 22, HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY: Approval of phase 1 of Lions Club Park. (roadway, parking. Phase 2 will be washrooms) Promised Sandy Lake Area Residents Association (SLARA) a public hearing. Katharine Mott from

SLARA thanked them for comprehensive review to date and promised hearing. Lions voiced concerns since they have been working on this since 1986. Public meeting will go ahead. Walter Regan/SRA supports full environmental study.

2001-2002, 6 reports by Dalhousie University DalTech and NSCAD Environmental Planning (for new Sandy Lake Watershed Association - SLWA):

1. Issues of Urban and Rural Fringe
2. Sandy Lake Community Profile
3. Suggestions for managing Development
4. Environmental Inventory of Sandy Lake, Marsh Lake and Jack Lake
5. "A Water Quality Analysis", Dalhousie team under Dr. Bill Hart
6. Policy Review and Recommendations (document location unknown)

Also, SLWA works successfully to protect the lake and wildlife from possible harm: Prevent the adding of sand to the shoreline at the new Lion's Club park's sand beach expansion and prevents destruction of protective berm along beach, prevents motorized boat launch, prevents cutting of large area of old growth Acadian forest for septic field by successfully proposing Park's Canada trailhead toilet system.

2004

2004 Bedford municipal Planning Environmental policies ~2004 Town of Bedford Municipal Planning Strategy Environmental Policies:

"Policy E-18:

It shall be the intention of Town Council to identify the Sackville River as a conservation corridor because of its importance as a salmon fish habitat and its significance as a natural amenity to the community, and to work towards improving the quality of water in the Sackville River, in cooperation with appropriate agencies.

Regional Watersheds

Policy E-19:

It shall be the intention of Town Council to enter into an inter-municipal planning strategy or to seek coordination of municipal planning strategy policies with adjacent municipalities in order to establish site construction and land use practice standards within regional watersheds, specifically the Sackville River, Kearney Lake, Sandy Lake, Rocky Lake, Marsh Lank, Paper Mill Lake and Anderson Lake watersheds, to protect regional water resources.

Policy E-20:

It shall be the intention of Town Council upon the adoption of this plan to undertake an in-depth environmental study of the Sandy Lake watershed which will include input from the N.S. Department of Environment as well as area residents, and shall examine present water quality, watershed land use practices increased rates of sedimentation, and the development of a recovery and protection program for Sandy Lake if warranted by the study."

2004 Bedford West development Subwatershed Management Plan

2006

2006 First Regional Plan. Sandy Lake listed as urban settlement area. Regional Plan identifies six areas for future growth (housing) in HRM: Bedford South, Morris-Russell Lake, Bedford West, Port Wallis, Sandy Lake and Highway 102 west corridor adjacent to Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes Park.

2006 - Successful lobby to make the newly traded ~1000 acres of Jack Lake lands a Regional Park. Still listed so today, but not being managed as an active park.

2006-2010 Kingswood North is built west of Sandy Lake. Developers are land-banking.

2009

Developers submit applications for developing Sandy Lake west.

CBCL Cost of Servicing Study to proceed.

Oversized sewer pipe proposal by developer. (RP still calls for park at SL, so community unaware.)

2011

2011 HRM Municipal Strategy, with 1996 amendments: Despite the 1983 changes to the province's regional park designation plan, "Town council shall continue working towards the establishment of major town parks at Admiral's Cove, Sandy Lake, and within the Waterfront Development Area (Policy P-6. Policies P-8 and P-9 indicate Town Council's intentions to designate future parkland within the Jack lake assembly as per the concept plan contained in the 1986 Jack Lake Environmental Evaluation Final Report and any updated report or revised concept plan..." p.126

"With changes in the Planning Act in 1983, which eliminated the provision for regional park designations, the focus of the Town became to acquire large parcels of unique sites in the Town which had been identified as future regional parks. Efforts were directed to acquiring lands in the Sandy Lake area and in Admiral's Cove. While interest still remains in acquiring parcels of land in these areas, the future development of existing open space is now seen as a higher priority than the acquisition of additional open space. Exceptions to this would be land acquired in relation to subdivision development, land for neighbourhood parks, specialized land for linkages or unique sites, and Sandy Lake." P.128

"To provide funding for the development of parkland, the second Town Council adopted a policy which provided for the establishment of a special capital reserve fund. ...one quarter of the deed transfer tax shall be placed in the capital section of a special reserve fund." P.128

Note that p. 125 states, "Residential growth demands and Paper Mill Lake environmental concerns dictate that Sandy Lake should be developed within the next several years." (Confusing: This could be easily misunderstood to mean "developed" for housing, but the heading for this section is "PARKS & RECREATION")

2012

~ **2012/2013**, the city gives Sobeys/Crombie 50 acres of the Jack Lake lands (~across from the BMO) as a trade to protect Morris Pond. Park land traded to protect other park land. Community unaware.

2012, July 3, Council agrees to \$2.1 million financing deal for enlarged sewer line for future Armco suburban development at sandy Lake. Council votes 17-6 in favour. Armco will pay \$1million. Originally Armco was willing to pay all or almost all in exchange for no environmental requirements and no public process in their proposed Sandy Lake development. A memorandum of Understanding was made between Armco and Halifax Water for Armco to contribute \$1mil of the \$3.1mil estimated cost of upsizing the wastewater pipes of Bedford West to accommodate possible future development at Sandy Lake. Item 5 of the MOU states, **"Armco shall make the above-noted upfront payment recognizing and accepting that the decision to approve a secondary planning strategy for all or a portion of the Sandy Lake lands is ultimately in the sole discretion of HRM Regional Council."** Community is unaware of all this.

July 3, Council Report, Wastewater Oversizing for Future Development of Sandy Lake Lands. “HRM is not a party to the proposed Armco-HWRD contract. As such, the terms and conditions do not commit a future council to any planning approvals in either Bedford West or the Sandy Lake lands.” p.1

2012 order for Sandy Lake Watershed Study (Current Sandy Lake Conservation Association not in existence yet. Community unaware of many things happening because no one knew the previous organization members had either moved away or retired from 30+ years of working to protect the lake.)

2013

2013 June to August, Armco clear cuts trees off 300 acres Sandy Lake west without forestry or development approval. Originally it was thought to be 200 acres.

2013 July – Aug. SLCA forms, and contacts Armco multiple times, meets with Councillor, MLA, SRA/Walter Regan... Fact finding re: regulations regarding tree cutting on private land (virtually none, although other cities do have tree-protection bylaws), learn Sandy Lake Regional Park had fallen “off the table”, and that previous SL community groups had been inactive for some time. Councillor Outhit has no knowledge that a regional park was ever planned for this area and says no staff he has talked to recall any such plan. SLCA directs him to older staff for confirmation, and SLCA finds excitement among them at the prospect that this special area may still be protected.

2013 July, D Donnelly, Our HRM Alliance Compensation Opinion. Legal opinion – landowners who buy land on spec have no legal right to expect compensation if it doesn’t work out. (SLCA unaware of this until 2016)

2013 July 10, Sandy Lake Conservation Assoc. (SLCA) attend Goetz Brook RP+5 open house. Learn Sandy Lake zoned Urban Settlement since 2006 Regional Plan. Learn that staff and community advisory committee reps believe landowners at Sandy Lake want housing development of the lake (!) (“Landowners” = developers who own land there. No one was asking other landowners’ opinion.)

2013 Aug 22, Last resort community protest at roadside to stop tree cutting. (Citizens from Granter Rd, Hammonds Plains Rd, Farmers Dairy Lane, Giles Road, Councillor Matt Whitman, and EAC. Media coverage.)

2013 Sept 19, SLCA meets with Armoyan who agrees to “stoppage and cleanup”. Offers residents to be on selection committee for in company chosen to design development, will work together. (More trees were cut in the “clean-up”. Isolated stands were removed to community’s dismay, but not close to the lake at least.)

2014

2014 RP+5. Sandy Lake, Marsh Lake, Sackville River still Urban Settlement. Jack Lake is open space, regional park. The new regional plan has changed from all previous ones. **The development portion of the plan is heading toward allowing development on lands outside the Jack Lake regional park boundaries. Intent is stated to determine new boundaries for Jack Lake Regional Park. The parks section of the Regional Plan still states lands to be acquired for park at Sandy Lake.**

2014 Nov. AECOM Sandy Lake Watershed study final version.

SLCA formal **response to AECOM Watershed report** with professional assistance by Dalhousie professor/researcher.

2014, Nov 17 NW Community Council, SLCA and community submit **petition for park reinstatement.** NWCC decision directs the community to include the subject of the petition in the greenbelt process.

2015

2015, January, Halifax Municipal Strategy for Bedford. The wording is exactly the same as in 2011 version, but the pages are 122-125. "...shall continue working towards the establishment of major parks at Admiral's Cove, Sandy Lake, and within the Waterfront Development Area (Policy P-6)" ...Policies P-8 and P-9 indicate Town Council's intentions to designate future parkland within the Jack Lake assembly..."

..." the future development of existing open space is now seen as a higher priority than the acquisition of additional open space. Exceptions to this would be land acquired in relation to subdivision development, land for neighbourhood parks, specialized land for linkages or unique sites, and Sandy Lake."

Stated RP goals for a park in Sandy Lake area are different from the RP's development goals. There is a conflict.

2015, Feb. AECOM Watershed Study of Sandy Lake accepted by NW Comm Council. SLAC report is later added to the HRM website with AECOM report.

2015, Aug, proposal for purchase of 160 acres Armco land beside Marsh Lake. Deferred.

2015 Oct HRM purchase of 160 acres from Armoyan. Strong proposal from staff for Sandy Lake, Marsh Lake, Jack Lake and part of Sackville river to be reserved for park. Developers lands west of Sandy Lake are not included in the staff conceptual map, and private residents' properties are also excluded from park area. **"In keeping with the Regional Plan, the Marsh Lake lands are highly desired for regional park purposes...At the September 15, 2014 meeting of North West Community Council, a petition was received from the Sandy Lake Conservation Association supporting that the municipality expand the park lands surrounding Marsh Lake and Sandy Lake to create a regional park and wilderness area. Staff responded with an Information report to Community Council indicating that planning and land acquisitions for the Regional Park were continuing...This land will serve as a positive move to protect and preserve high value ecological lands associated with the Sackville River Corridor."** (Item No. 8.1 Halifax Regional Council, Oct 6, 2015)

2015, Our HRM Alliance, Sandy Lake part of Hike the Greenbelt program, blog post.

2015 Armco sells west Sandy Lake ~550 acres (including clear cut 300 acres) to Clayton Developments who begins land-banking in the area. SLCA discouraged from meeting with Clayton by Councillor Outhit. No reason given.

2016

2016, Feb, Groups session with O2 on Green Network study. Community is concerned that Sandy Lake and area is not yet "on the map" of various GN value maps.

SLCA sends detailed follow-up letter to O2 and city planning department, and it is well received. They appear to now have an interest in this area. The Province's environment maps are known to be very poor.

2016, March, O2 public meeting, unveils Green Network study. A city parks staff person showed SLCA members on map 23 that Sandy Lake has a high value now as one of few natural links for "connectivity" of the Chebucto Peninsula to the rest of NS, in particular to Pockwock region. Connectivity of the Chebucto Peninsula is a priority in green network plan. Staff person says that the barriers from Hammonds Plains Rd and Kearney Lake Rd "pose a problem, but staff is interested in exploring options".

Nov 13, 2016 SLCA met w Richard Harvey and Councillor Outhit. RH very interested. Calls Sandy Lake "Unfinished business." Asked for all the historical documents we can provide and also our top #1 and #2 option maps for our envisioned park.

2016 Bedford Land Use Bylaw (1983 5-acre Bylaw that to build must have 5 acres on road that was publicly serviced by Oct 1991 is the ongoing bylaw.) Also, archaeological sites identified on west Sandy Lake lands (Clayton lands).

2016 Sandy Lake championed by Our HRM Alliance as one of 3 top areas to be preserved, along with Purcell's Cove Backlands and Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes.

2017

2017, March 10, SLCA sends detailed historical reports from the 1971 Dean Report-on to Richard Harvey as requested. Also, the SLCA Map A and Map B options for regional park expansion.

2017, April SLCA and SRA write formal request for park, including Request/Ask map, and arranges meetings with NW Comm Council members. But cancel when Councillor Outhit asks SLCA to give him a couple weeks to review the request documents. SLCA plans stall after no response comes.

2017, June Dr. David Patriquin begins visiting/documenting Sandy Lake and environs. Dr. P expressed being too busy for two years to look at SL, but would take a quick look that week end. He expressed being "gobsmacked" by what he found, and returned 27 times that summer/fall with various experts (water, old forest, lichen, fungus experts, etc) His surveys continue to date – 2020.

2017, June, Clarence Stevens conducts extensive review of birds. Finds species list virtually unchanged from the past. Rich wildlife. Even Barred Owls and Oven Birds in the forest. Reported moose tracks.

2017, June 12, Sandy Lake Conservation Association and Sackville Rivers Association send joint submission to the Halifax Green Network Plan implementation public process.

2017, October, Drone footage taken of Sandy Lake and area by Skyline Studios.

2017 – 2018 SLCA and SRA begin creating Sandy Lake Regional Park Coalition. The Turtle Patrol and Halifax Field Naturalists and Agropur Dairy are the first to join. Sandy Lake is one of only 3 lakes in HRM that still have snapping turtles of the 22 that traditionally had them. K Robinson and D Patriquin elected Coalition co-chairs.

2017 - 2018 Exit 3 is upgraded to help relieve traffic on the Hammonds Plains Road. Community learned later that Clayton and Armour Group paid for the design and the Province paid for the construction.

2018

January 12, 2018, follow up meeting w Richard Harvey and Councillor Outhit. Ben Sivak attended as new Green Network Plan head. No progress evident since meeting of Nov 2016, despite the comment that the historical and scientific reports and information we provided since that meeting were extremely valuable. SLCA had lost ground because city didn't pursue the cottage lot that came up for sale, and also didn't tell us they weren't. So, we had no chance to buy it ourselves.

January 17, 2018 HRM releases 2018-19 multi-year parks and Recreation acquisition report. Sandy Lake is not in it. Why?

January 22, 2018 SLCA president sends letter to Mayor and Council praising them for BMBCL announcement.

January 28, 2018 SLCA Park Committee letter to Mayor and Council backing and expanding on SLCA president's letter of support for the BMBCL purchase, and stating our Sandy Lake park request, providing initial information and requesting their support for this park expansion as well. Need to gain attention for parks and Recreation acquisition budget.

March 7, 2018 Op-Ed article in Chronicle Herald: Green Network Plan Op-Ed featuring Sandy Lake. Two days later Councillor Outhit (CO) calls SLCA Park Committee Chair/one of article's authors. CO very angry at article, yelling. Clayton had seen article and contacted him about their plans to build – CO asserts secondary planning application is now coming 2 years earlier than planned. CO asserts this article ruins his (never-before-expressed to any in SLCA) plan to wait quietly and hope that so many restrictions would be placed on the development that the developer would decide not to build. Why was SLCA not informed of this plan before in meetings since 2013? SLCA keeps being told to do nothing, to wait.

April 22, 2018 Earth Day launch of Sandy Lake Regional Park Coalition (SLRPC) at walk guided by Bob Guscott. (Three councillors attended: Craig, Outhit, Whitman. Ms. Blackburn sent regrets over conflicting events)

June 1, 2018 SLCA first meeting with Clayton reps Kevin Neatt and Richard Butts. Mr. Butts “not thrilled” to be faced with doing this for another community, but is willing to work with us and the city to protect the lake/park by trading for other developable lands. Wishes we'd met with them sooner, but at least they are still in the paper stage. Suggests we get organized, find a champion in city hall, get city support, find a win-win with them all. Until then, Clayton will proceed with plans to develop.

June 15, 2018 KR/SLCA sends email summary of meeting with Clayton to local councillors and requests support. Councillor Outhit responds with an email: *“I will remain your contact with HRM Council, Development, Parks, and Park Planning. There is no role for my Community Council colleagues at this time, but it is going to be a very long, frustrating and of possibly expensive process. Your association has my support for its vision to expand the existing park, but some of your actions have already made my role more difficult and also have resulted in Clayton expediting their requests for Secondary Planning. Clayton has made it very clear to me and to HRM that they are not a willing seller of their land. HRM will soon make it clear that it will not trade one piece of park land for another piece of park land. In my opinion, we are potentially at an impasse that will require a lengthy period of negotiation, creativity and planning. When appropriate, I will update my colleagues, and I will continually update you and the group.”* This went to SLCA, local councillors and both Clayton reps. SLCA at a loss for what to do now.

(Note: In all of this, the SLCA reps are: a chartered accountant, a respected businessman and president of NS Salmon Association, a CEO of a national charity and consultant to provincial and federal governments, and a former NS Deputy Minister of Tourism and one of Canada's 100 most powerful women in 2014.)

June, 2018 Halifax Green Network Plan is released. Sandy Lake identified w at least 3 important wildlife corridors that link the mainland to the Chebucto Peninsula. It is also important to the health of the Sackville River system. However, it is an area of overlapping values. That is, it is a valuable ecological area that is also slated for housing development.

June, 2018 SLCA pamphlet released

June, 2018 HRM Flooding Study (National Disaster Mitigation Program) Base of Bluewater Road is one of three areas listed as needing mitigation for significant flooding.

August 14, 2018 Halifax Green Network Plan is passed unanimously by Halifax City Council

August 14, 2018 Sackville River Floodplain Study Phase 2: W. Alexander replies to question that the city must not be planning to develop Sandy Lake area for 100 years because it was not included in the scope of this study.

September 17, 2018, SLCA and Councillor Outhit chance meeting at BMO centre. SLCA is poised to meet with lake landowners to identify possible sellers. CO proposes a coordinated approach - wait. First time SLCA learns Clayton had asked to trade Jack Lake lands for Sandy Lake lands. (We learn later, in December, they had sent a letter to the city months before SLCA met with them. It was not mentioned in our meeting with them.) We agree with CO it is not right to “trade parkland for parkland”. He says again that the city “can't buy land that is not for sale”, which is puzzling since

SLCA knows Clayton does not want to sell. We need the city to look for a trade though. We explain Clayton told us not to expect to hear them say publicly what they advised us to do in our meeting, but is willing to trade.

Twice CO said for us to do what we think we should and he will do what he thinks he should do, and we will stay in communication.

October 16-18 2018 In-camera report requested and passed in Council – SLCA has no details, but to expect result in February 2019. SLCA grateful to CO who also requests this be kept to ourselves until it comes out in February.

October 23 2018, SLCA and Clayton set a second meeting date for Nov 1 or 2nd. Unexpected SLCA family events, reschedule.

Oct 23 to Nov 5 SLCA and RH, CO and city staff resolve issues over hunters and hunting blind photographed by SLCA member in Marsh Lake area. City posts signs alerting hunters where parkland starts. They are allowed to hunt on private land but cannot carry a gun across park land. SLCA posts signs at park entrances “Caution: Hunters in the Area”

Nov 5, 2018 to 23rd Neatt and KR emailed questions and answers. Reconfirmed Clayton does not want to sell and are willing to trade. They have not identified any land they are interested in other than original Jack Lake request. It is up to the city to present options.

November 2018, Richard Harvey confirms the city’s currently-owned areas at Sandy/Jack/Marsh lakes are all designated park land, including the newly acquired 160 acres. Also, he clarifies PID questions, Marsh Lake is owned by CMHC and the prison area is likely owned by the province.

November 12, 2018, Karen and Councillor Outhit meeting at Sunnyside to exchange details of SLCA/Clayton meeting, reasons for SLCA 1000-acre request (Watershed fragility, Green Network connectivity, natural recreation, plus), to clear up misunderstandings, and chart a way forward. CO repeats he can’t buy land that isn’t for sale. K restates Clayton is willing to trade and asks will he request staff to look for possible trades/options? No, he will not ask staff to look for land trades for 3 years. (why 3 years?) “You won’t get 1000 acres”. Did not appear to realize it is a regional park request, that two of 4 other NWCC councillors also have territory in the proposed regional park. Will read the GNP information K left with him. SLCA is to do as we see fit and he will proceed his way. It was a positive exchange and will work to communicate better and coordinate.

November 20, 2018, SLCA attempted setting another meeting date w Clayton. Was offered Dec 14th. Snafu again within SLCA. canceled attempt. Plan to meet January. Kevin Neatt reconfirmed they are still willing to trade. They have acquired nearly 600 acres and more coming. They have no need to identify possible trades but have not applied for secondary planning.

November 23, 2018, Our HRM Alliance meeting to plan action to have Green Network Plan implemented by city. Sandy Lake still one of top 3 areas to be protected. Competing layers of value leave it vulnerable but the wildlife corridors for connectivity to Chebucto Peninsula and Sackville River corridor are strong.

December 11, 2018, Sandy Lake Regional Park Coalition Steering Committee (now with 18 group members including Agropur, and with several more unofficially partnering, and more coming) meets to organize.

December 17, 2018, CO informs us of letter from Director of Planning to SL developers (Clayton only or all?) saying the city sees no need for more housing at Sandy Lake for at least another 15 years. SLCA not allowed to see the letter’s wording or to whom it went - SLCA shocked at being accused of not believing CO that the letter exists.

2019

January 21, 2019 Coalition sends letter to Mayor and Council requesting that part of the \$7million allocated in the budget for park land acquisition be spent to acquire land at Sandy Lake/Sackville River park. Also reintroduces the rationale for protecting this area for all time.

January 21, 2019 Coalition requests meeting w Mayor Savage. April 24th selected. Mayor's office invites CO who invites R Harvey and Director of Planning. Coalition requests the other councillors with jurisdiction also be included. Request declined. Coalition asks CO to have them included. Request declined.

February 13: Phone meeting between K Neatt of Clayton and KR as rep of SLCA/Coalition. Misconceptions dispelled. Neatt reconfirms willingness to trade and mentions Jack Lake lands are the only area identified by them to date. KR agrees w CO/city no trade of park for park. Neatt reviews and reconfirms his email of June 14 2018 still stands, saying it is *"to encourage the city. That if the city really wants to get behind this and really thinks these are special lands, & how about X, Y, Z, then sure."*

April ,2019: Upon request by SLCA, the city posts "No Motorized Vehicles" sign at entrance to Jack lake area. Motocross vehicles had found the area, adding to the damage already being done by ATVs. Signs vandalized within 2 weeks. April 24 2019, morning, Coalition reps met w Mayor and K. Denty.

April 24, am, SL-SRRP Coalition's Regan, Robinson and Patriquin meet with Mayor Savage and Director Denty. (CO and RH didn't arrive) Mr. Mayor strongly supports greening of the city and says he would like to do this. Was unaware of this area (although we have sent several letters etc. to his office and Council since 2013) and will discuss with CO. (That this is a regional issue, not local Bedford seems still not clear). We can meet again.

April 24, pm, Mayor speaks at press conference announcing purchase of Barrett and Armco land for Blue Mt Birch Cove Lakes.

May 9, 2019: New name: **Sandy Lake – Sackville River Regional Park** better describes actual lands and waters. Coalition has 23 member groups. Learned that city staff have direction to buy land at BMBCL but not at Sandy Lake. Work to have city recognize values at SL-SRRP apparently not succeeding yet, but work continues. Friends of Sandy Lake is growing, community awareness growing.

May 16, W. Regan, H Ward, K. Robinson meet with Lands and Forestry Minister Rankin and 6 staff, including Deputy Min. Towers. We are seeking a follow up meeting to develop a process that better fits this situation for finding a trade. Discuss possible 3-way trade options, possible ecological evaluation and protection of SL-SR, to transfer prison 50 acres to HRM. A staff person was assigned to follow up on these with us. The coalition submission and documents are to be circulated in the department.

May 17, SRA sends a letter to the Fed Min of Environment requesting the DND rifle range 500 acres be considered for wilderness protection under the federal 17% goal, as was done at Manitoba's Shilo Base. She replies they will assess the area for consideration.

Spring, Summer 2019: Increase in ATV and motorbike use of trails causing significant trail damage. City posts 2 "no motorized vehicles" signs, but they are vandalized within days. SLCA and city parks begin ongoing cooperation to stop the damage.

August 21, 2019: \$1-million federal commitment to the Halifax Wilderness Park project, which will conserve 153 hectares in the Purcells Cove Backlands surrounding Colpitts Lake and bordering Williams Lake.

Summer, cottage lot owner cuts 150 small trees along the old woods path/road to the cottage lots and repairs the path so vehicles can use it. By-Law T-600 protects public trees. He had general permission to cut a few branches. Overstepped. Parks looking into it.

Ongoing meetings w councillors, MLAs, MPs Geoff Regan, Samson. MPs helping w rifle range and CMHC.

Late August, Sandy Lake closes for about 24 hours due to an algae bloom that turned out to be non-hazardous.

September 2019: Clayton purchases 28 acres on Hammonds Plains Rd for 3.7 million. SLCA knew it was coming since June 2018 meeting w Clayton reps – were asked not to mention it. Important land for their road access plans.

September, K Robinson invited to join Our HRM Alliance Steering Committee.

September, a Salmon grilse jumped in Sandy Lake – Fisher reports caught and returned 9 in the last 2 years.

September 24, public hearing to add the HGPN Map 5 amendment to a planning section of the RP passes council unanimously.

October, 2019, Lands and Forestry determined **prison lands belong to city**, and a large part of Marsh Lake belongs to CMHC.

October, Patriquin reports recent deep-water tests at Sandy Lake indicate marginal O2 levels. Very sensitive to tipping over the edge.

October, Series of emails Robinson, Neatt, CO. It is the first time anyone mentioned this: CO says that a formal letter requesting a trade was supposed to come from the developers to the city. SLCA would have asked for one in the beginning - SLCA thought Clayton's initial email saying they would trade, that 4 local councillors plus Clayton CEO and SLCA reps were copied on, was enough to start things.

For 2nd year, city parks division posted "no hunting" signs around park and partnered with SLCA to post/educate on line.

Nov 7, Patriquin and Robinson present to Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee. Are told things are "going on behind the scenes"

November 2019: Coalition works with MP Geoff Regan on several aspects including CMHC lands within park and OCEM Federal 17% wilderness goals for neighbouring DND lands, similar to Shilo base, Manitoba.

Nov 18, Letter to Canada Lands Co. Chris Miller re Anderson Lands. No reply.

Nov 26, W. Regan, Robinson McPhee meet w Dept of Env. Very supportive. Will assist with several points.

Dec 12, 2019 Letter to CMHC asking for 50 acres at Marsh Lake for the park.

December, 2019, City Capital Projects Budget contains line item for acquiring property at Sandy Lake and BMBCL.

2020

Jan 15, 2020, Meetings w. Nature Conservancy of Canada. NCC very aware of quality at Sandy Lake. "Compelling case at SL-SRRP. Conditions for success are here. Convince staff/city to do whatever it takes to acquire the watershed. Meet w developers. The highest, best use for this property for the citizens of HRM is parkland."

Jan 16, phone meeting city planner & Robinson. City and CMHC in discussions re: Marsh Lake. City is using the 2015 Conceptual Map as the boundary for SL-SRRP. KR informs PI it was drawn only to acquire the 160 acres, not to be a real boundary. PI: Get "light shone on that" with a staff report request. Staff can not work on land outside that boundary.

Jan 20, Shaw Wilderness launch event. Clayton's rep. says "You'll get some but you won't get it all."

Jan 23, SLCA reps Robinson and Sarty meet w. W George of city parks to discuss where city might put No Motorized Vehicles signs. WG advises park perimeter. Police will assist w enforcement. By-Law P-600 no motorized vehicles in city parks.

Jan 25, professional park planner's report arrives. New request is 1800 acres including important ecological areas and to add park access. Johnson's Brook watershed is essential to the health of Sandy Lake and Sackville River system. Clayton owns 550 acres. 390 owned by United Gulf Developments and 103 by numbered co, important bits owned by 4 other developers.

Jan 27- Feb 14, Coalition's Valentines Awareness Campaign. Ends Feb 14 with delivery of hand made valentines to Councillors Blackburn, Mason, Russell. Also, over 350 electronic valentines went to each. Fine meetings with each, except Councillor Outhit refuses to meet, refuses his valentines, accuses reps of questioning his honesty and integrity in the meeting w. Counc. Mason, and "washes his hands of" our group for asking the other councillors if they can tell us anything about the 200-acre discussions. Denies telling Walter R and Karen M about these discussions. (January 27. When WR requested more detail, CO apparently concluded WR was doubting his word and said he would have Clayton's Mr Neatt call WR to confirm. Within minutes Mr. Neatt called WR and confirmed that they were discussing 200 acres. Mr Neatt did not say anything about trades not being on the table still, but he did confirm discussing 200 acres w Mr Outhit. Again, no details were given. On January 29, Karen M in City Hall foyer after budget speech, that he is discussing w. Clayton a deal re: 200 acres beside Sandy Lake – something about the right to build high density on Hammonds Plains Rd. That our activities could ruin the deal he is working on with Clayton. No details again.)

Feb 24, 2020, Regional Plan review announced. Clayton request for Sandy Lake Secondary Planning process is in Schedule D. We later learn in a June meeting with Clayton reps that they did not intend that their letter sent in 2017 to the city be taken as a formal request for secondary planning (sp), and this item in Schedule D was a surprise to them. However, they were intending to apply for sp in the summer 2020.

March 14, 2020, *Avian and Species at Risk Surveys of the Proposed Sandy Lake-Sackville River Regional Park*, Prepared by Natural Wonders Consulting Firm. The 3-year Species of Interest survey includes ground-truthing of wildlife corridors large and small, and a map of remaining links to BMBCL provided. In total, there are 15 Species-At-Risk in the proposed SL-SRRP! Dr. Patriquin asks, "Is there any other equivalent area in HRM?"

<http://versicolor.ca/sandylakebedford/species-lists/avian-sar-report/>

March 24, 2020, SL-SRRPC letter goes to Mayor Savage updating since April 2019 meeting: Includes Planner's report, 3-year bird report, and an alert to 2015 Conceptual Map being used by the city for unintended purpose – Requests city have an independent scientific/biological study done to identify appropriate park boundary instead.

March 27, 2020 Letter to Mayor Savage in response to three events on Jan 27 and 29. The letter expresses concern over a possible mistake: Requests details and clarity whether city is discussing trading 200 acres beside Sandy Lake for the right to develop high density on Hammonds Plains Rd, requests that the public be included in discussions if they are happening, and points out the planner's and scientists' reports indicate the 200 acres would not be enough to adequately protect the park's existing assets. The letter also thanks city for the Oct 2018 in-camera plan. However, we continue to be told nothing about other than "things are going on behind the scenes". We understand it has to do with actions to expand SL-SRRP, but we have not been told what that means exactly.

April 24, 2020, Sandy Lake-Sackville River Reg Pk Coalition (SL-SRRPC) submits the first of its Regional Plan review submissions. <https://www.sandylakecoalition.ca/rpsubmission> It provides historical, biological and community information along with the rationale for reverting to the plan to protect the entire park (The questionable value to protecting some and building housing on the rest) and requests that:

1. That the SL-SRRP be expanded by additional 1,800 acres (see Map 1). The SL-SRRP boundary be researched in the RP+10 process so that new boundaries based on science are established to encompass all remaining essential watershed to be protected and managed as a regional park for all time. That would mean finding “win-win” solutions that serve both the community and present landowners needs.
2. That the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGPN) be included in its entirety in the RP+10.
3. That the requests in sections A, B, and C be addressed within the RP+10 review and implemented.

June 5, 2020, Clayton’s M Hanusiak and K Neatt meet with Crosby and Robinson of the Sandy Lake Conservation Association to outline their plans for development and request community support. They state not having applied for secondary planning in the RP’s Schedule D, but suggest their 2017 letter suggesting to the city that it might be time to start looking at development at SL might have been taken as a request for secondary planning. They reaffirmed the company was willing to trade if SLCA had succeeded in interesting the city in identifying a trade. However now, after 2 years, they are moving on with development plans. A trade of some sort for “backlands” may still be possible, along with an 80-acre gift along Sandy Lake and the dairy property, if the city will allow secondary planning and high-density development of the ~200 acres beside Hammonds Plains Road. They strongly expressed no interest in ever developing the “backlands” (west of Sandy Lake). They call the area along Hammonds Plain Road “Bedford West Annex”. Community reps were asked to keep details of the plan quiet until after SP is applied for in the summer (which was honoured, as requested, until Secondary Planning was submitted to the city.) That we would know when the submission happens because Clayton always does so publicly, and SLCA would get the map and details at that time. SLCA and partners are eager to look closely at this proposal in case it could save the overall ecological system of the area, depending on water quality protections and corridor protections.

July 2020, four breeding Painted Turtles are deliberately run over near Marsh Lake. SLCA and allies work behind the scenes with City Parks and Halifax Police in our ongoing cooperative work to discourage vehicle use inside the park (By-law P-600 prevents unauthorized vehicle use in city parks, but is hard to enforce). However, media requests have to be responded to when some unknown sources alerted media. As we had feared, public awareness has a double edge, and there is a marked increase in sport vehicle usage over the entire season. For the 3rd summer out of four the loon couple did not succeed in raising young. The young were reported drowned by boat wakes according to lake dweller’s who watch them.

Turtle death coverage: CBC TV Interview: <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/176341203563>

The CBC on-line report July 13 2020: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/painted-turtles-killed-sandy-lake-park-1.5647901>

The Sheldon MacLeod 95.7 news radio interview: Select Show 1pm (July 14) ... starts at the 3:10 (three minute 10 second) mark: <https://www.news957.com/audio/the-sheldon-macleod-show-2/>

An "Abbreviated Transcript" of the interview is here: <http://versicolor.ca/sandylakebedford/2020/07/14/four-breeding-age-female-painted-turtles-were-deliberately-run-over-near-marsh-lake/>

Turtle article, Halifax Today: https://www.halifaxtoday.ca/local-news/turtle-patrol-president-believes-someone-intentionally-ran-over-four-turtles-in-bedford-park-2563299?utm_source=Email&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=Email

May 8, 2020, the small cottage lot in-holding (one of two beside the Sandy Lake Beach) is again on the market.

June 2020, the derelict cottage on the other lot is removed by order of the city.

July 20, 2020, Clayton Development applies for Secondary Planning of Sandy Lake lands. (Note: We do not have access to this document.)

Throughout the summer and fall SL-SRRPC continues to seek facts to inform our position re: possibly merging some development with watershed and corridor protection. However, the overarching barrier to a decision rests in our request to have the city do an independent scientific study to determine the park boundary needed to protect the park assets and the corridors of the HGNP, and to prevent further flooding on the Sackville River flood plain. Efforts increase to achieve that.

August 6, 2020, Claytons reps Hanusiak and Neatt meet with W Regan and K Robinson of SL-SRRPC. Their map is more refined than in June but again we were not able to have copies. We learned they had applied for SP “a couple weeks ago” and now it is in the city’s hands as to when the public may see the submission. Most points were the same as in June’s meeting except the Sandy Lake area is now called Subarea 13 of Bedford West, it is clear that a traffic circle is in the map with an arrow indicating access into the “we have no plans to ever develop” grey area, and they divulged that the price they propose to sell the grey area (backlands) to the city for park land is post-development value of \$140K per acre. Given that the city has not been willing to date to entertain seeking a trade, which is usually a much less expensive option, it seems to us unlikely that the city will want to pay such a price. Our hopes of ending this struggle now by finding a win-win melt. Until the city can determine with an independent scientific study exactly what park boundary is needed to protect the park assets, and the corridors, we must continue to work to protect all 1800 acres.

September, In April 2020, with assistance from MP Geoff Regan it is determined that deeds were not recorded that show CMHC had transferred Marsh Lake to the Province and then to Municipal Affairs and Housing in the ‘90s. By September the Minister of MA &H had a staff person are working on divesting the department of Marsh Lake and “putting it in the right place”. Our group put parties in city hall and the Department in touch with each other and expressed that we see no central role for our group at this point, but we hope to be celebrating with all levels of government some time soon.

October 7, 2020, Steering Team meets with the city staff P. Duncan. Concerns over talk of housing deficit are thought to be largely to the pandemic and should straighten out afterward. We learn that only \$800K were spent of the funds allotted in the Armco deal for the upgrade to the wastewater pipes through Bedford West (to facilitate later development of Sandy Lake lands). We continue to search for confirmation of where the pipe ends currently.

October, 2020. Municipal Election. SL-SRRPC meets with several candidates and follows up with elected candidates. Councillor Outhit remains Bedford councillor by acclamation, but continues his silence toward the community group. Councillors finally recognize that three other area councillors have districts that contain proposed park land, land owned by developers, or are next door. Others are beginning to see this as a regional park of interest to all, as we have said all along.

November 6, Clayton’s Neatt tells Walter R by phone that our request to meet is denied until we stop calling for protection of 1800 acres, and instead promote both development and park. (Until proper ecological boundary studies

are done, we have to continue to request the full 1800 acres based on the planning study we commissioned and on the biological findings of scientists to date.)

November 6, letter received from Mr. Mayor on behalf of himself and Councillor Outhit in response to our 5+ letters to the mayor since September 2019 that have had no replies. The letter instructs us to ask any questions of Councillor Outhit. Apparently, Mr. Mayor is unaware that CO has chosen not to be our councillor since February 14th. We have been doing our best to work with other councillors, staff, and Mr. Mayor to find answers since February. None of our questions are answered in the letter.

Over the months we have emailed and sent several letters to Director Denty, Nalini Nadoo and others as well.

Nov 10, 2020, Nalini Naidoo replies by sending a copy of the Mayor's letter attached as a reply and sees no need to meet with us.

Nov 18, we receive a reply from Director Denty, "we are following the Regional Plan process" and they are reviewing the housing need. No mention of our request for the study to determine necessary park boundary to protect assets. Included is the city's account of BMBCL history, but with no guidance given for why this may be relevant to Sandy Lake-Sackville River.

November 22, 2020, the coalition is now 28 groups plus several unofficial partnering groups. A slow but constant letter campaign has gone on all summer and fall whereby each of the coalition groups sends its own letter in support of the April 24 RP+10 Regional Plan submission. These have been going to all councillors, Mayor, and key RP and HGPN staff.

November 25, 2020, Wildlife Corridor Design Charrette, under the auspices of the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust, SL-SRRP Coalition takes part with approximately 30 people including local scientists, provincial government experts, Nova Scotia Nature Trust, CPAWS and wilderness protection leaders to undertake a wildlife corridor design charrette to build on the wildlife corridor work found in the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGPN). This takes advantage of the incredible depth of knowledge of local groups and professionals engaged in wildlife protection work. The objective is to identify a continuous wildlife corridor option from the Chebucto Peninsula to the mainland area starting at the Herring Cove/Purcells Cove Backlands through the Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust lands, across Hwy 103 through the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Regional Wilderness Park and then into the mainland through the Ingram River Conservation Area and the Sackville River - Sandy Lake regions.

December 3, 2020, Dr. Patriquin's informative video talk to Bedford Lions about How Lakes Work: Sandy Lake- Sackville River: www.cutt.ly/ShAkAGM

2021

January 13, 2021, NS Environmental Network annual meeting with Minister of Environment Wilson. K Robinson represents SLCA and requests assistance to see Marsh Lake transferred from the province to the park, to seek possible options to save Sandy Lake with provincial land trade, and add Lewis Lake to the Provincial 13% wilderness protection program. He offers to get back to her soon. (That conversation happens, but nothing concrete comes of it regarding Sandy Lake)

February 2, 2021, Lewis Lake is announced in 13% program and public process begins.

Feb 4 2021, K Robinson and K McKendry present to the city's Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee (ESSC). Request and give rationale for the city to conduct an independent ecology/science-based study(s) to determine the actual park boundary needed to protect the park's assets. Also to determine wildlife corridors through SL-SR to

Chebucto Peninsula as outlined in HGNP. The talk starts at 5 minutes 30 seconds and ends at 33 minutes on this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=We-HFvGiPoY&feature=youtu.be>

February 10, 2021, Coalition Steering Committee and Community Association of Uplands Park meet to combine information on Upland Park Treatment Facility and possible affects on Sandy Lake. (Sources of info include AECOM report 2014, historical studies, & Dr. Patriquin's ongoing water testing.)

February 21, 2021, Steering Team meets with K Green's Regional Plan team including E. Lucic, online. We point out there is no park plan, no park boundary study, the 160-acre acquisition conceptual map of 2015 was not designed to be a park boundary plan and should not be treated as such, wildlife corridors need study and protection.... Staff replied that a boundary study could be done using existing studies (Dr Patriquin's for example) and we could possibly be part of the Terms of Reference drafting. They commit to discussing this with the Parks department.

March 1, 2021, Walter Regan becomes co-chair of the Sandy Lake-Sackville River Regional Park Coalition after Dr. Patriquin steps away for personal reasons. Dr. P. will continue his scientific evaluations of the area. SLCA volunteers conduct monthly and annual water sampling of Sandy Lake and tributaries under Dr. P.s guidance.

March 2021, (see Nov 2020) Nova Scotia Crown Share and Legacy Trust Wildlife Corridor Charette Report <http://sandylake.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/WildlifeCorridorCharretteReport.pdf> is released as a more in-depth exercise by government, university, and local experts in the areas between Timberlea, Five Bridges, Ingram River, Sackville River/Sandy Lake, Blue Mt Birch Cove Lakes, Purcells Cove Backlands and the Chebucto Peninsula. The exercise was to contribute greater depth of knowledge to the wildlife corridor work done in the Halifax Green Network Plan. (We continue to ask that it be attached to the Halifax Green Network Plan, which is still awaiting implementation.)

March 25, 2021, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia make an early announcement that Marsh Lake is a new Treasured Wetland in Nova Scotia.

March 30, 2021, road-worthy jeeps were photographed in Sandy Lake Park in the evening. We learned they circumvent the NS Power gate on the 102. Trucks carrying OHVs do the same, and park out of sight behind the rise. There can be 50 to 100 vehicles parked and their OHVs unseen and illegally using the park at any given time.

April 27, 2021, Coalition Steering Team meets via Zoom with Mayor Savage, S. McKinley, and Councillors Blackburn and Outhit. The purpose of the meeting is to request that Councillor B serve as the liaison with Council instead of Councillor O, as he "washed his hands of our group" based on hearsay on February 14, 2020. We have effectively been without Council representation since then. After hearing from the councillors and our members, the Mayor allows the arrangement and begins immediately to discuss with Councillor Blackburn how to attain the needed boundary study.

May 20, 2021 the city releases the Themes and Directions Report as part of the Regional Plan review process. Our groups are concerned that despite strong statements about the importance of protecting environment, the Sandy Lake lands are still on track for housing development. <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/211214rc1519.pdf>

May 2021, Our HRM Alliance updates its Our Seven Solutions handbook and circulates it. This document was well respected by the city during the Halifax Green Network development process and since.

June 7, 2021, Halifax Water's Kenda sends us maps and information on the missing sewer pipe, however our question as to where the pipe end sits remains a mystery. (Many communications have taken place with Halifax Water and other city staff and councillors over time and the mystery remains)

June 10, 2021, first on-line meeting of Sandy Lake area major stakeholders (“security committee”) to plan action to curb illegal activities in the park and neighbouring NSP and DND properties. (NS Power, Halifax Police, DND Rifle Range, SLCA, regrets city Parks.)

June 15, 2021, Steering Team attends on-line presentation and Q&A by K Green’s Regional Plan team on the Themes and Directions Report.

June 21, 2021, the cottage lot is again for sale. \$100K this time.

June, 2021, Our HRM Alliance releases its response to the Themes and Directions report. Saying in part, “We strongly urge HRM to reconsider proposed actions concerning Regional growth including moving forward with Secondary Planning for growth at Sandy Lake and Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes which should not occur until clear criteria for development are determined and ecological impacts of development have been understood. This is not the same as considering the environment at the neighbourhood-design level.”

June 29, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and the Province of Nova Scotia announce all four new Treasured Wetlands of Nova Scotia. “Managed with the support of community partners, these sites have been recognized for their ecological, cultural, and societal importance. Today, citizens are encouraged to explore and celebrate nature by visiting the following new Treasured Wetlands: <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2021/06/29/2255124/0/en/Ducks-Unlimited-Canada-and-the-Province-of-Nova-Scotia-announce-new-Treasured-Wetlands-of-Nova-Scotia.html>

June 29, 2021, Clayton applies to the city for Bedford West Subareas 1 and 12 to allow for high density build in the next part of the process. We are not provided a viewing or copies from either the developers or the city.

July 5, 2021, Ducks Unlimited Wetland Report was released. Reports and scores for WESP assessments completed at 6 sites in June – August 2020. Important area wetlands were identified, including Karen’s Brook, David’s Marsh and Walter’s Wetland. <https://sandylake.org/ducks-unlimited-wetland-assessment-report/>

July 16, 2021, Coalition submit second submission to the Regional Plan Review. The first was submitted on April 24, 2020. Both submissions are at: <https://www.sandylakecoalition.ca/rpsubmission>

July 18 or 19, 2021, about 25 road-worthy jeeps were photographed in Sandy Lake Park.

July 29 2021 media reports HRMs overall housing deficit at approximately 30,000 units...

July 29, 2021, on-site planning meeting Sandy Lake “security committee”. (viewed issues at 102 entrance, road, power plant, some to Smith’s road entrance) Selected sign locations and text drafts. (NS power, DND, SLCA, Sackville Rivers Assoc, City Parks, Halifax Police)

August 3, 2021, Coalition Steering Team meets with K Green’s Regional Plan staff for a second time. We request that the city delay decisions about proceeding with secondary planning west of Sandy Lake so that needed ecological and other studies can be done. (Boundary needed to preserve the park’s assets, wildlife corridor studies, floodplain studies and as Sandy Lake relates to Sackville River flooding)

August 17, 2021, Provincial election elects Tim Houston’s PC government. Redrawing of riding lines has put Sandy Lake/Sackville River regional Park, much of BMBCL, and the corridors between them in the new Bedford West riding. We begin communications with Braedon Clark (Liberal).

August, 2021, the Wetlands and Water Officer at the Ecology Action Centre releases “Can a Lake Die? A Tale of Two Lakes”. The article explores seasonal lake mixing and general lake health by comparing Dartmouth’s Oathill Lake to

Bedford's Sandy Lake. https://11722e7d-8c8c-4838-969e-bee1181ed9f8.filesusr.com/ugd/66e517_ba066d91cdbe47f887d1b3028ed57e6e.pdf?index=true

September 7, 2021, David Barrett of Barrett Lumber, Beaverbank, confirms sale of 45 of his acres between Sandy Lake and Sackville River is sold to the city for the park. This is prime Acadian Forest and includes shorelines of sections of March Lake, Sandy Lake and the Sackville River.

September 20, 2021, Federal election re-elects Liberal in another minority government. MP Geoff Regan (who has helped us a great deal) did not reoffer. Lena Metlege-Diab (Liberal) is the new MP. We reach out.

Sept 21, 2021, Sandy Lake park "security committee" meets at Rifle Range. (DND, Halifax Police, RCMP, SLCA, City Parks, Halifax Water, NS Power) Scope of illegal activities in the park and adjacent properties is understood now, and the risk to the public entering the DND lands. Both have begun being addressed through this committee.

Fall, 2021, Coalition learns through public records that the city has purchased 48 Smith's Road. The city continues to be secretive about lands around Sandy Lake. We can see survey tape on another property along the north lakeside, but have no way to find out if it is related to any of this. Groups express gratitude for acquisitions whenever appropriate.

Nov, 4, 2021, in an unrelated meeting with city engineers one of our Coalition Steering Team members asks the engineer if he knows where the upgraded Sandy Lake wastewater pipe ends, and learns \$800K was spent on upgrades to two pumphouses on or near Kearney Lake (we have the map) and upgrade in pipe size between them. So now we know the balance of the ~3Mil was not spent, and where the pipe ends.

October 12, 2021, Sandy Lake Conservation Association Co-president and President of the NS Salmon Assoc., M. Crosby, passes away suddenly.

October 12, 2021, MP Darrell Samson goes for a guided walk at Sandy Lake, with accompanying discussions of Federal issues relating to the area (OECM program...)

October 13, 2021, City Councillor Sam Austin goes for a guided walk at Sandy Lake. He understands the issues and is open to our concerns.

Oct 20 2021, Nova Scotia's new PC government announces a regional transportation group and a housing task force to "solve" the housing crisis. Housing is under the jurisdiction of municipalities, and the municipalities were not consulted on this decision. The municipalities' processes seem painted as cumbersome and inept even, and that the province could do a better job. It causes quite a stir among municipalities and citizens who were working within the system. Our groups fear Sandy Lake's proposed development could be fast tracked by the province without the benefit of citizens' years of effort to have the municipality change the area's direction. Values have shifted toward environmental protection, and the Halifax Green Network Plan lists Sandy Lake as needing resolution for the two conflicting values: Regional Plan momentum toward using the area for housing vs. the decades-old recognition of the area's outstanding ecological value.

November 9, 2021, Councillor Blackburn moves in Council that an independent biology-based study be done to determine the park boundary needed to make sound decisions to preserve the park assets. Three councillors try to second it. Councillor Outhit steps down momentarily as meeting chair in order to second the motion, and saying he had been planning to do this but was scooped and that the scoop is very well done. He seconded it and asked Kelly Denty if there is any problem getting such a study done in 3 to 6 months since we need it fast. KD replied it would more likely take 2 years, but would look into it. Councillor Morse adds that her previous work in the field and with the Nature Conservancy, it is possible to find well skilled independent consultants who are used to doing studies such as this, and that the winter timing is not so much an issue since so much work by reputable scientists has already been completed (or to that effect) She offers to help staff with this effort. The motion passes unanimously.

Over the next day, the Coalition Steering Team spreads the great news and gratitude to the Coalition and supporters who wrote letters and especially to Council and Councillor Blackburn in particular for the motion and for her assistance above the call of duty over these months.

Nov 25, 2021, PC Premier Tim Houston announces that former Liberal cabinet minister Geoff MacLellan will chair the newly created HRM Housing Panel, often referred to as the housing task force. Other members of the panel are:

- Kelly Denty, Executive Director of Planning and Development, HRM
- Peter Duncan, Director of Infrastructure Planning, HRM
- Stephen MacIsaac, CEO, Nova Scotia Lands
- Paul LaFleche, Deputy Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

December 15, 2021, the city releases the What We Heard Report as part of the public feedback process of the Themes and Directions Report of the Regional Plan Review process. It contains accounts of meetings with stakeholders, letters from the public, and applications from multiple developers or citizens with zoning or development requests. It contains Clayton Development's request (We knew it existed since July 2020 but have waited to see it) to annex Sandy Lake lands as part of the development of Subareas 1 and 12 of Bedford West. It requests permission to densify Subareas 1 and 12 of Bedford West and to amend the Regional Plan to annex the Sandy Lake Lands to proceed as part of Subareas 1 & 12 development, calling Sandy Lake lands Subarea 13.

The WWH report also contains other developer's requests including United Gulf's request to allow development of their 390 acres just above Clayton's properties west of Sandy Lake, directly beside park land. There are requests for several other properties contained in our proposed park boundary. Each will need our attention with regard to the future health of the park and its wildlife corridors.

Page 6 of the Clayton submission states, under the heading Open Space Contribution, *"You will note on the GFLUM, an area of land adjacent to Sandy Lake referred to as "Conservation" Lands. We are aware of a growing interest by community stakeholders to see most if not all of the lands within the Sandy Lake watershed preserved as conservation lands. We have inquired of the City as to its interest in acquiring our landholdings at Sandy Lake for park and open space purposes. We have also informally advanced land trades if the Municipality is so inclined. As of this writing, we are not aware of the Municipality's desire to purchase and/or trade for our landholdings."*

While we are aware of only some conversations with the city that are referred to, this is confirmation that the company had indeed been willing to trade its Sandy Lake holdings if, as they had told us on several occasions since June of 2018, if the city wanted to engage. We learned in the summer of 2021 that despite our two years of work to have this opportunity brought to the city, it was never discussed, even in-camera. City councillors confirmed that the councillor who had been entrusted by us with the task of having the city initiate trade discussions did not do so, for whatever reason. Our hope is that with this clear confirmation that the developers would have traded, possibilities may remain.

December 6, 2021, Coalition Steering Team meets with MLA Brad Johns (he has territory within a stone's throw of the proposed park boundary on both the city's 2015 in-camera map and on our planner's proposed map). We discuss mostly the concerns over how the PC Housing Task Force could affect the park, our list of ideas which we sent to the PC Housing Task Force by mail, but also if he could help foster the Province's clean-up of Montague Mines proposed housing and nudge the transfer of Marsh Lake into the park. He is willing to look into these and also see what he can learn about our request for the Amendment to s.237 of the Halifax Charter (which he had met with us about last year)

December 7, 2021, DND releases a Public Service Announcement on several platforms and directly to local city councillors and local politicians. (See below, in the Sandy Lake Park "security committee" summary)

December 16, 2021, Coalition Steering Team meets on-line with provincial Lands & Forestry staff, P. Geddes and L. Hickman. It is in response to our letters to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the resulting invitation from the Minister of Lands and Forestry, about our list of suggestions the PC Housing Task Force could do to increase housing stock. Sandy Lake could suffer serious consequences if the PC Task Force forces quick decisions rather than the fact-finding and checks & balances the municipality uses.

December 17, 2021, Coalition Steering Team meets with MLA Steve Craig (he has territory within the proposed park boundary on both the city's 2015 in-camera map and on our planner's proposed map). We discuss mostly the concerns over how the PC Housing Task Force could affect the park, our list of ideas for the Task Force, but also if he could help foster the Province's clean-up of Montague Mines proposed housing and nudge the transfer of Marsh Lake into the park.

December 31, 2021 Summary of some ongoing actions in 2021:

1. The coalition has 29 member groups as of December 2021.
2. We combined efforts with BMBCL and Purcells Cove Backlands to meet with and write letters to government to have the Halifax Charter amended to have section .237 allow 5 years for acquisition after a zoning change for parks and schools and such, instead of the current 1-year allowance. One year does not allow time to budget and process. The planners need a better tool with 5 years. Our HRM Alliance has joined our efforts and it is ongoing.
3. One of the two small cottage lots near Sandy Lake Beach has changed hands again for ~\$80K. in the fall of 2021 it went on the market again for \$125K and later reduced to ~\$85. We have kept Councillor Blackburn informed and she continues to follow up with the city's Real Estate department in hopes of acquiring it, a sensitive in-holding that will affect the park's quality.
4. We continue at every opportunity to ask government to transfer Marsh Lake to the city (or at least to the Dept of Environment where it will be protected). It currently is owned by NS Municipal Affairs and Housing Dept.
5. We continue to encourage the Federal Government's OECM program to proceed at the DND Rifle Range to protect the wilderness for the future as part of the Federal government's OECM program (Other Effective Area-Based Measures). OECM designation contributes to the federal government's 17% protected areas target, but would have no effect on the range's current activities or ownership. CFB Shilo in Manitoba is such an OECM territory.
6. iNaturalist has active participation ongoing in this richly diverse park.
<https://www.inaturalist.org/places/sandy-lake-bedford>
7. As a result of the deliberate killing of four nesting painted turtles in summer of 2020, and reports of road-worthy vehicle rallies within the sensitive park lands, the SLCA parks chair coordinated Sandy Lake-Sackville River area stakeholders (security committee) in 2021, to curb illegal activities such as use of motorized vehicles, hunting, lighting fires, illegal camps, tree cutting, and harm to wildlife. By-law P-600 covers this and other park-protective actions. This work is expected to continue. In 2021 the committee accomplished several joint actions:
 1. NS Power upgraded its gate on the 102 Highway to prevent illegal vehicle entrance.
 2. City Parks is installing more "No Motorized Vehicles" signs and other informative signs in various locations identified by the committee.
 3. Halifax Police and RCMP are actively enforcing the no parking and no motorized vehicles signs. City Police plan an education program and a Parks Patrol Program city-wide asap.
 4. Community members are encouraged to assist by reporting infractions, license plate #s, location, time, pictures.

5. SLCA rep met with NS Jeep club rep and they are helping inform other OHV groups that riding in the park is illegal.
6. The NS Department of Public Works augmented the work done by NS Power at their Highway 102 gate by adding “no parking” signs along that section of highway. This was because some had begun to park on the highway shoulder, something that is prohibited for safety reasons.
7. Dept of Lands & Forestry and Environment produced a report on illegal access points into the park and are assisting with enforcement.
8. It is expected that the steps already taken will combine with the next parts of the plan to further curb activities identified by the stakeholders, such as vehicle use and hazardous activities such as hunting, lighting fires, illegal camps within the park and on NS Power and DND lands.
9. December 7, 2021, DND released a Public Service Announcement on several platforms. PSA also went from DND to local city councillors and politicians to be circulated to citizens to reduce the risks of folks entering the DND properties and prevent the accompanying damage that occurs to the park. The DND properties have an extensive shared border with the park, and also follows a section of Sackville’s Old Sackville Road.

Public Service Announcement

Members of the public reminded of restricted access to Bedford Rifle Range property

December 7, 2021 – Halifax, N.S. – Department of National Defence / Royal Canadian Navy The Bedford Rifle Range is an operational, outdoor Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) small arms range located within the Halifax Regional Municipality. The 250-hectare property provides a safe, controlled area in which CAF personnel and authorized law enforcement agencies can receive qualification or requalification training for safe use of small arms (weapons designed for individual use). This range does not conduct any experimental testing of new weapons or ammunition for the Department of National Defence (DND).

Members of the public are reminded that the entire Bedford Rifle Range property is a controlled access area for reasons of safety and security, meaning that no individual may enter without first obtaining permission from a designated authority at the range. Trespassing on this property by foot or via an off highway vehicle for any reason, whether it be for recreational purposes or otherwise, poses significant safety risks to the individual.

Active shooting using live ammunition is the most prominent risk to anyone accessing range property without permission, as safety arcs vary for different weapons and ammunitions.

Additionally, there are various species at risk which inhabit range property and the neighbouring Sandy Lake-Sackville River Regional Park; by limiting range activity to that of authorized users only, we can minimize disturbances to these species and their natural habitats.

All Bedford Rifle Range activities are planned, conducted and managed in a safe and controlled manner in accordance with National Defence policies and standards. By avoiding unauthorized entry onto range property, community members can play their part to ensure our operations remain as safe as possible for our members and the greater community.

10. DND has also increased the number of “No Trespassing” and “Danger” signs around the fence perimeter. The fence itself has had repairs and increased monitoring which are expected to continue.
11. Local city councillors and area politicians circulated the PSA to citizens.

2022

January 25, 2022, Regional Council, Committee of the Whole. The city’s Kate Greene makes a ~45-minute presentation to Council about the What We Heard Report, the latest phase of the Regional Plan Review process. In the presentation she mentions that the Sandy Lake boundary study contract has been awarded, although no name is given.

In general, at various points in the meeting, councillors indicate interest in a shift in vision in the Regional Plan. That while we need housing, a similar priority on the importance of natural assets could improve the quality of life as well as mitigate climate change. Greene indicates that the Sandy Lake boundary study is potentially a new way of taking decisions - perhaps starting to look at things “from the inside out rather than the outside in”.

January 27 2022, HRM’s new staff, Emma Bocking (recently of Ducks Unlimited) and Emma Wattie (HRM’s new WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM COORDINATOR) contact K. Robinson/SLCA to set up a meeting to discuss including Sandy Lake in the 75 lakes to be tested this summer in the city’s new water quality monitoring program.

February 1 2022, meeting on changes needed to the Halifax Charter, hosted by Alliance, with invited former city councillor and provincial legislator, former city lawyers to identify important changes needed and elevate action for this Regional Plan review period. A major problem identified is that wording in city documents re environmental issues is "must consider" rather than "shall" or "will", causing development to almost always win over environmental concerns. Changing section 9.2 in Bedford Land Use By-law (8.2 Purcell's Cove, 10.2 in others, but all wording is the same) is essential to those interested in seeing environment on a par with development.

February 9 2022, HRM's Emma Wattie hosts organizational meeting with communities taking part in the new water monitoring program. About 72 lakes. Sandy Lake is included.

Feb 28 2022, Coalition Steering Team (ST) meets with Provincial Housing Task Force's (TF) Peter Duncan, Vicki Elliott-Lopez and Jeff Garber. Their stated mandate is to look at larger projects and "focus on projects that can be expedited", saying they don't interfere with the Regional Plan or HGNP & will not usurp HRM's processes. ST asks if Sandy Lake is on their list and Ms. Lopez said that is privileged information. Mr. Duncan says Sandy Lake is on the list. Also that there are many studies needed before it can proceed if at all. That the task force will be true to the HGNP and RP. ST asked about trading to protect SL. Ms. Lopez says she knows nothing about trades and that the TF role is to expedite development. However, that the TF could make Charter changes happen. Will send our provided list of suggestions to improve housing starts to TF.

March 3, 2022, NS Environment Network groups annual meeting (online this time) with Minister of Environment: K Robinson requests assistance in preserving the ecological values at Sandy Lake as an expanded park, and also assistance to move Marsh Lake into the park from the ownership of the Dept of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Mr Halman says it is not "in his lane".

March 7 2022, Coalition is contacted to take part in stakeholder meeting with McCallums re Boundary Study. The Coalition Steering Team (ST) had been told we would be contacted for our materials but this has never happened. ST rep Robinson works to have ST materials included now, to have the meeting virtual so the scientists with Covid concerns can attend, and to make the focus of the meeting primarily an opportunity for the scientists with on-the-ground experience at SL to discuss with McCallum scientists who are doing a mainly desktop report.

March 15, 2022, phone meeting between K Robinson & Leah Perrin city planner: Sandy Lake has been "decoupled" from the Regional Plan review. It now has "its own planning cycle" and is "rolling into phase 5".

March 26 2022: Provincial government designates nine areas in Halifax Regional Municipality as "special planning areas" for developments to help address the housing shortage. The special planning areas are: former Penhorn Mall lands, 950 units; Southdale/Mount Hope, 1,200 units; Bedford West 10, 1,300 units; Bedford West 1 and 12, 2,500 units; Port Wallace, up to 4,900 units; Indigo Shores, 150 building lots; Morris Lake expansion, 3,100 units; Dartmouth Crossing, 2,500 units; and Sandy Lake, 6,000 units (to be "shovel ready spring 2024"). The minister assumes authority for development approvals in those 9 areas.

Note: in the Coalition Steering Committee meeting with Task Force reps we were told clearly the province will not usurp the city's authority. Over the next months some city councillors speak out against this and some remain silent.

March 29 2022, The Sandy Lake-Sackville River Coalition groups launch a letter-writing campaign which sees well over 1300 letters and emails go to the MLAs, city, and Task Force over the next few weeks.

March 29 2022, Stakeholders online meeting to review draft McCallum report (Boundary Report). Present: 11 city staff, 3 McCallum staff, Clayton & United Gulf developer reps, 3 local city councillors, Dr Patriquin, Dr Beazley, SL Coalition reps.

Biologists' comments: Water quality is #1 issue. Where is it in this study? Road salts important to include. Big tree data is done but not yet posted on Versicolor website so not up to date in this study. Essential wildlife corridors 1 km minimum. Longer corridors should be wider. Look at regional context for corridors. Species at Risk data is poor. Needs systematic field study. 200 metres doesn't capture turtle nesting behaviour. Moose exclusion an error - Important species for this area and Chebucto Peninsula corridor. Hot spots are no-brainers but in fact there is little or none of this area that is not important to the overall connectivity. 50 metre buffer not adequate as riparian buffer, only for erosion. Salmon require

100 metre buffers. Put a protective area around the acid rock areas; acid rock is far from neutral. Right-of-ways being used now for hunting, poaching, illegal activities – this is an issue. “The whole area is a park, so go ahead and draw your boundary.” Need to include entire area south of Hammonds Plains Rd; human boundaries not relevant to watershed that affects park unit. Include projected wetland areas and WESP studies. Include ecological heads of the streams. The Corridor Charrette report contains new important info additional to the HGNP corridors and should be included. Aquatic corridors missing from HGNP O2 report. Significant old growth and multi-age Acadian forests worth including for multiple reasons. Pull out the aquatic values and highest scoring land values and increase their value weights. HRM needs to identify their top values. Buffer needs to be all around the park, outside the park proper. Boundary needs to be determined by watershed not roads. It is a crisis if the lakes are not protected. What is the city’s criteria for protecting water quality? Critical to do a flood plain study. This recognition of Sandy Lake’s ecological value didn’t start yesterday – scientists have known it for 50 years. The more people coming to Halifax, the more important it is to preserve the entire subwatershed.

Staff said this was important today to have scientists talk to scientists. Will incorporate today’s input

Coalition requests and receives a link to the 1986 Sandy Lake Master Plan which is listed as a resource by McCallum and we had previously been unaware of. No biologists are listed as being consulted. It is recreation focused, recommends removal of beach berm (The Sandy Lake community group of the time with biologists overturned this plan.) Overall, this old Master plan has very limited value – no recognition of the ecological values worthy of protection for multiple reasons. Rather, the Coalition continues to request that HRM create a Master Plan for parks city-wide. The current procedures are haphazard. A well thought out regional plan would help prevent situations such as currently at Sandy Lake. Better to choose what is to be protected before planning housing.

March 30 2022: Coalition ST sends “gaps” list to Kate Greene and councillors as requested for follow-up actions with the McCallum boundary report.

April 2022, Door to door campaign begins. Educates citizens about Sandy Lake’s history & value, what the Province’s Task Force is doing to develop it, what the Coalition is doing to protect it.

April 2, 2022: Ray Plourde’s Herald Op-ed regarding provincial take-over of development in their newly identified 9 special planning areas: “Let’s just call a spade a spade. ...the big metro developers made a spectacular end-run around Halifax Regional Municipality’s government, effectively rendering council and the various municipal planning strategies in place or in development, irrelevant. ...At the urging of the big developers, the provincial government has taken planning and decision-making authority out of the hands of our duly elected and accountable municipal representatives and placed it into the hands of a small group of insiders, which is neither. ...the biggest suburban chunks targeted for sprawl developments, which would consume huge tracts of nature (called “greenfield” development), are more problematic and require more study and consideration within the municipal planning framework. Areas like Sandy Lake, Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes and the Eisner’s Cove Wetland are squarely in the crosshairs. For citizens who’ve participated in open and transparent municipal planning processes in the belief they were helping to define the shape and character of their city, the message is clear: Developers will decide the shape of this city, so you might as well just stay home and shut up. The message to HRM councillors is even more blunt: Give us what we want, when we want it or we will go over your heads and get it anyway. Councillors, you have been dismissed.”

April 22, 2022, Councillor Outhit is interviewed about Sandy Lake by Todd Veinotte radio show: *“What I have been trying to do with the developers, with the province, with HRM staff, with my colleagues, is to ensure that this development (at Sandy Lake) comes with significant improvements to the Hammonds Plains Road which would be 50% funded by the developer, and there would be significant expansion to the park in exchange for some density at no cost to the taxpayer. ...when I say upgrading, that could be lanes, that could be a roundabout at Bluewater, the raising up of Bluewater for flooding, bike lanes, sidewalks, the kind of things we saw between the interchange and Gary Martin would now go further up the road. That has to be done, and it has to be at least 50% funded by the developer. That remains my objective. Now I won’t get a chance to vote on it per se, but behind the scenes that’s exactly what I am still advocating for with staff, with the developer and with staff on the Task Force.”*

May 2, 2022, Task Force minutes released with FOIPOP which was requested January 11 2022:

Sandy Lake is a Tier 2 development: *“The Sandy Lake Lands are one of the future serviced communities identified in the 2014 Regional Plan. The property owners have requested to begin the secondary planning process, so that serviced development can be achieved within the life of the Regional Plan as envisioned. The Regional Plan review will recommend a process for the development of these lands.*

KEY CHALLENGES: There is significant public interest in protecting the environmental values of these lands and Sandy Lake itself. Regional Council has directed staff to retain an independent consultant for the purpose of identifying an optimal boundary for an expanded Sandy Lake Regional Park based on environmental information about the area”.

May 10 2022: DND releases second PSA about no access to DND lands (they already upgraded security and added danger signs all around perimeter fence, removed 11 deer blinds last fall and do regular boundary security checks. The PSA references support of similar security for the park’s wildlife and habitats. See earlier PSA of Dec 7 2021).

June 1 2022: Sandy Lake Security Committee meeting: Large number of bats nesting behind rifle range target area, likely also in Sandy Lake Park and is good news their numbers are increasing again. City Parks post more No Motorized Vehicles signs for Halifax Police to enforce in the park. Halifax Water and NS Power maintaining their roads and entrances to reduce ingress by unauthorized vehicles. Little or no damage to wildlife and habitats reported so far this year.

June 2, Sandy Lake Conservation Association meeting launches participation in the Love Your Lakes national program offered by the Canadian Wildlife Federation and Watersheds Canada.

June 13 2022: SLCA member discovers map showing Shaw (Clayton) now owns both Bergman and Bowlin strips that run from Sandy Lake through Marsh Lake and all the way to Sackville River. They run alongside the Barrett strip that was recently purchased by the city.

June 15, 2022: Councillor Blackburn learns from staff that the Shaw purchase is a surprise to Council and staff. That the city lawyers had been in final stages of purchasing the Bergman and Bowlin strips. Shaw suddenly purchased them for 2 ½ times the amount the city had offered. Councillor Outhit reports speaks to Clayton immediately after learning this news today, and reports that Clayton supports expansion of the park. He reports that he is convinced Shaw bought them to donate to the park. He reports asking them to make a public statement of their intentions, but is unsure if they will. (To date, August 9 2022, they have said nothing.)

June 15 2022, HRM Regional Plan review’s Themes & Directions phase report is released. Sandy Lake is still listed as headed for development. Note: the Themes & Directions report defined “wilderness park”.

June 17, 2022, guided walk at SL with local Liberal MLA Braedon Clarke.

June 28, 2022: possible blue-green algae reported in Sandy Lake – not verified, but SL is now on the watch list of Dept of Env and city.

June 30, 2022, Task Force chair MacLellan responds to letter campaign writers with a form letter: *“Thank you for your email regarding the special planning area designation that accelerates development near Sandy Lake Park. Halifax Regional Municipality is in the midst of a housing crisis. The existing housing shortfall in HRM is estimated to be in the range of 17,000 units. Through the work of the HRM Housing Task Force, the province and city are working together to build more housing as quickly as possible. The proposed residential development lands near Sandy Lake Park were first identified as a growth area in HRM when its regional plan was developed in 2006. The regional plan was reviewed in 2014, and the Sandy Lake area was once again identified as a future growth area. The lands near Sandy Lake Park that are slated for residential development have been owned by the developer since 2014. Special planning areas must still undergo any required environmental studies or other permitting requirements. Once again, thank you for your email about the proposed residential development near Sandy Lake Park. Please be advised that future comments about special planning areas should be made at <https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/regional-community-planning/regional-plan/special-planning-areas>.”*

Many angry citizens reach out to Coalition - Some plan to respond to what they feel is an insulting letter; that no response would have been better than a form letter that essentially shows the task force does not respect citizen's options and has a single-minded focus.

July 2 2022, Richmond Campbell's Saltwire Op-Ed asks NS Premier Houston to act to preserve Sandy Lake. One suggestion is to offer the developers suitable trade.

July 8, 2022, McCallum's "boundary study" is released. It is named **Sandy Lake Ecological Features Assessment** our comments:

- Overall, we are encouraged by the quality and content of the report.
- The hot spots map is very good outlining the ecological values in the area, although the old growth trees have not all been included.
- The report does not identify a park boundary. This was the main point of this study as far as we were concerned.
- 100 m buffer around watercourses, and 50 m buffer around wetlands could adequately protect the watershed.
- There is stated protection for wildlife corridors and old growth forests but no specifics.
- This needs clarification: The report erroneously states that the "high value ecological components are largely found in areas of existing parkland and other adjacent lands" (p. 4 of the staff report, half way down) However, the highest scoring areas in McCallum's analysis (shown in bright yellow) are actually associated with lakes, streams, wetlands and riparian areas, and are all over the study area. Definitely not just in the existing park boundary, since the lakes, streams, wetlands and riparian areas are all over the study area.
- Note that McCallum stated at least twice that "The medium (orange) values represent areas of mature forest and habitat that are important to avian species at risk as well as important corridor areas and should also be considered for park and development planning" and "Areas beyond the concentrations of medium to high valued ecological condition may still be important for consideration and possible protection as supporting lands for the continued integrity of the areas of high ecological/environmental values. These lands may also have an important role for broader landscape and ecological connectivity, which also needs to be addressed." (P. 34 of their report under Summary & Recommendations, paragraphs 2 and 3). So, it's not just the highest scoring areas that are worthy of protection.
- We note the need for an amendment to strengthen the intent by adding "will be at least": "Based on the Ecological Features Assessment, important areas to be protected will be at least the suggested widths for corridors, as well as riparian and watercourse buffers and old growth and mature forest."

July 11 2022, SLCA President K. Robinson's Herald Letter to Ed re Richmond's July 2 2022 Op-Ed tells the public about previous developer offers to trade, and that the local councillor is working instead to allow high density development along Hammonds Plains Road in exchange for some park land expansion plus 50% of the cost of upgrading Hammonds Plains Rd. (Essentially trading the viability of a valued park for 50% of a road upgrade.)

July 12, 2022: Walk with NS Environment Minister Halman, his assistant and a D of Env Director. Coalition reps underlined the ecological values of the area, asked for assistance in preserving it, and also for his assistance in transferring Marsh Lake into the protection of his department from Municipal Affairs & Housing. We learn that the province is planning to make changes to the Halifax Charter.

July 12 2022, Council passes the final "boundary study" called Sandy Lake Ecological Features Assessment unanimously, after passing an amendment (3 against -Cleary, Mason & Mayor) that *"Review and use the findings of the Sandy Lake Ecological Features Assessment in the background studies being undertaken for the Sandy Lake Special Planning Area, including organizing the form and location of development to best protect at least:*

- a. the suggested widths for important corridors,*
- b. the suggested riparian and watercourse buffers, and*
- c. the identified areas of predicted old or mature forest."*

In her presentation, staff lead Kate Greene reports to Council that Clayton Developments called her before the meeting saying if the boundary report buffer recommendations are adhered to Sandy Lake may not be developable.

July 14, 2022, Clayton's driveway culvert is reinstalled (after 2013 removal when Armco owned it) and 2 machines are visible parked just inside the driveway.

August 14, 15, 2022, protesters at Eisner's Cove Wetland, Dartmouth attempt to stop Clayton machinery from removing trees. Eisner's Cove Wetland is one of the 9 Special Planning Areas and is, arguably like SL, a valuable wetland that citizens believe should not be sacrificed for housing. The media covers a citizen chaining himself to a machine, climbing on a moving machine, and another being pulled to safety as machine moves forward. Clearing of trees temporarily stops. THE citizens are asking for a "stop and swap", a trade, similar to the trades requested for Sandy Lake.

August 18, 2022, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, together with the Nova Scotia Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Honourable Timothy Halman, and the Nova Scotia Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables, the Honourable Tory Rushton, mark Canada and Nova Scotia's shared commitment to nature conservation. the two governments agreed to work together to:

- advance negotiations on a funded Nature Agreement that will focus on a number of nature-related opportunities, including protecting more natural spaces in Nova Scotia and **increasing habitat protection for** species at risk and migratory birds, to be finalized by 2023;
- complete the pre-feasibility assessment and **work toward the designation of the proposed national urban park at Blue Mountain – Birch Cove Lakes**, together with other key partners, including the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Nova Scotia Nature Trust, and the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq.
- seek new opportunities for connecting key areas of protected and conserved lands, including by completing a **pilot project in Nova Scotia under Parks Canada's National Program for Ecological Corridors**, by 2025, in collaboration with partners.
- **develop a funding agreement to conserve old-growth forests and address the hemlock woolly adelgid.**

Under the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund, Environment and Climate Change Canada has agreed to commit up to \$10 million, which will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing carbon sequestration, while also providing benefits for biodiversity and human wellbeing.