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Sandy Lake - Sackville River Regional Park Coalition News May 28 2025

Hello Coalition member groups
Please share this newsletter with your membership

We received terrible news. The recent news is heartbreaking for Sandy Lake, but it's NOT OVER!!
Sandy Lake needs your help more urgently than ever.

The Provincial Government took a step in the wrong direction on Friday, May 16th by deciding to move Sandy Lake SPA into the next step toward planning for housing development, called Secondary Planning.

The same day, they released Stantec's Land Suitability Reports, which did not allow for public feedback. That is the shape of democracy in Nova Scotia in 2025, and it is also bad news for Sandy Lake Regional Park and the Sackville River. BUT IT IS NOT OVER.

Visit the Save Sandy Lake website, send a letter to the Premier and request/print a sign.
ACT NOW ➡ <https://www.sandylakecoalition.ca/take-action>

Please link, share and repost on Facebook, Instagram and others

- ➡ It's time to act. [#savesandylake](https://www.sandylakecoalition.ca/take-action)
- ➡ This is not over! IG: [@sandylake.sackvilleriver](https://www.instagram.com/sandylake.sackvilleriver)
- ➡ It is a step in the wrong direction. X-Twitter: [@sandylake_park](https://twitter.com/sandylake_park)
- ➡ Do you know media folks? Send them to us or share the information
- ➡ We need you to push back.

Suggested points to make in your letter:

- 🌳 The Province must listen to the complete science and good urban planning.
- 🌳 Housing at Sandy Lake comes at a very high cost to environment, the people's park and to the city's long-term servicing costs.
- 🌳 Sandy Lake is an immense ecological treasure too precious to sacrifice for housing.

Background:

Suddenly, everything changed: With the Provincial announcement last Friday, the Sandy Lake area is in grave need of your help. Sandy Lake Regional Park has been planned since 1971, when it was chosen by a joint municipal-provincial-federal program as an exceptional ecological unit for both wilderness protection and recreation, worthy of preserving for all time. That much hasn't changed.



So far, 1,100 acres of the area is protected as Sandy Lake Regional Park (light green area in adjacent map), but housing development in the wilderness next to the park threatens to damage the existing park (red line on map). The three main tributaries that feed the lake are within the red area proposed for housing development. The Sandy Lake – Sackville River area functions as an ecological unit. It is a key area for wildlife corridors and is invaluable as an intact, interconnected wild area with huge capacity to help with the crises of climate change and loss of biodiversity. Scientists and park planners advise protection of the area of still-wild land around the

park. (yellow line on map)

But the provincial government instead picked the Sandy Lake area as one of the places to fast-track for a major housing development the size of Truro. This would damage the ecosystem right through to Bedford and Sackville and could also increase flooding downstream in the Bedford and Sackville River area.

Yes, Nova Scotia needs more houses, but it makes no sense to put them in an area needed to protect this precious Regional Park.

The facts are in. We need the political will to do the right thing. We urgently ask you to please stand up for Sandy Lake and Sackville River! Please do all you can to generate a clear message to the Province.

Please also speak to your MLA. <https://nslegislature.ca/members/profiles>

Ask that the Sandy Lake Special Planning Area be removed from their housing development list and instead be protected as park.

The links to the government media release, some of our immediate media work, as well as the report itself, are here:

Government Press Release re Secondary Planning Sandy Lake and Highway 102, May 16 2025
<https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2025/05/16/minister-designates-new-special-planning-area-two-major-studies-complete>

Response to Secondary Planning release - Karen McKendry Global News at 6, May 16 2025
<https://globalnews.ca/video/11184499/global-news-at-6-halifax-may-16-2025/>
starts at 8:16

Saltwire May 16 2025 Sandy Lake Secondary Planning
<https://www.saltwire.com/nova-scotia/nearly-20000-housing-units-proposed-for-sandy-lake-highway-102-west-developments>

Background studies for the Sandy Lake Special Planning Area are technical studies that include a land suitability assessment, watershed study, transportation study, and review of water and wastewater infrastructure. These studies can be found here:
<https://www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/34569/widgets/179445/documents/152796>

Other news:

Welcome to our new Coalition member group, **Scott Manor House, Bedford**, for joining the effort to Save Sandy Lake from housing development.

Many thanks to the **Kingswood Ratepayers Association** for the project to place large 4x4 Save Sandy Lake road signs in Lower Sackville and Hammonds Plains Road. See the picture below for the new messaging.

And thanks to other Sandy Lake-Sackville River Regional Park Coalition groups that have assisted the Kingswood project: **Lucasville Community members, The Neighbourhood Association of Uplands Park**, and the **Sackville Rivers Association**.

Also, appreciation to groups, such as the **Halifax North West Trails Association, Bedford Horticultural Society, Fort Sackville Foundation** and more, who have featured Save Sandy Lake issues in their Annual General Meetings. Thank You all!

Did you post a Save Sandy Lake sign last year? Please check to see if it/they are still up.

Please continue to write letters and post signs where MLAs across the province may pass by.



Photo: W Regan

Our clear message to supporters is “This is not over! It is a big step in the wrong direction. Please push back.”

- Co-Chairs Karen Robinson and Walter Regan, Sandy Lake-Sackville River Regional Park Coalition

