

News from the Sandy Lake – Sackville River Regional Park Coalition

May 20, 2019

Hello Coalition Member Groups.

1. Welcome to the new groups that have joined the **Sandy Lake – Sackville River Regional Park Coalition**:

Kingswood Ratepayers Association
Lucasville Community Association
McIntosh Run Watershed Association
Mountain Bike Halifax
Nova Scotia Salmon Association
The Neighbourhood Association of Uplands Park

Welcome!

2. The Coalition's Steering Committee met on May 9th and charted the next steps. We have an amazing Steering Committee!
3. Please send us the number of members that your group represents.
4. The first big news is the Steering Committee's decision to change the request park's name to include the entire area we are trying to protect. The name is **Sandy Lake – Sackville River Regional Park**. By adding Sackville River to the name, we clearly include all of the area in between Sandy Lake and the Sackville River as an ecological unit.
5. We have an **updated request map** (Attached) and a revised pamphlet is coming soon. If you want pamphlets let us know.
6. **The Ecology Action Centre and the coalition are teaming up for a series of walks at Sandy Lake – Sackville River Regional Park starting in June.** Stay tuned for details soon! We hope to see you there!
7. Please encourage people to join **Friends of Sandy Lake** either by contacting us through www.sandylake.org or by submitting names and contact information using the **attached sign-up sheet**.
8. In February, we were in touch again with the developers, Clayton, to reaffirm that they **remain willing to trade** for other land, but they are not looking for trades themselves. We plan to bring some options to them.
9. Also, the city's **Director of Planning sent a letter** to the developers saying that the city sees no need to develop at Sandy Lake for at least 15 years. While this is very good, we must also recognize that decisions can be overridden by council, and also it is not wise to wait 15 years in hopes that the developer will still be willing to trade then!
10. We await an **in-camera report** being done on Sandy Lake by city staff.
11. We had a very good **meeting with the Mayor and Director of Planning** last month. We may be a step closer to support that could include having city staff seek an acceptable trade, but we aren't there yet.
12. Therefore, in the meantime, a very knowledgeable **planner in the private sector has volunteered to help us** fine tune our request with well-supported ecological rationale, and to create a report to fortify our request for 1000 acres. The planner may also help us identify possible trade options for the developer and city to consider.
13. Last week we met **with the Minister of Lands and Forests and staff**. We have been assigned to a staff person to follow up and explore possibilities for trade. Despite challenges, similar things have been accomplished.
14. The SRA, with assistance from the Steering Committee, sent a **letter to the Department of Natural Defence** (attached) to see if the Rifle Range lands could follow the lead of the Shilo, Manitoba, base. Their wilderness lands became part of the Federal 17% goals for protected areas. The DND lands here lie next to the Sackville River and the existing 1000-acre park.
15. We plan to **meet with Federal politicians soon** to broaden the general awareness and seek support.

16. A new **coordinator for Our HRM Alliance** has been hired to replace Jenny Lugar and to encourage the city to implement the Green Network Plan.
17. An Our HRM Alliance meeting will happen soon to discuss “hot spots” that need addressing within the plan. The **Sandy Lake area has already been identified as an “area of conflicting values” (a hot spot) since it is valuable to the GNP but also is slated for development.**
18. Our team has been working on improving **Face Book and other communications** and is presenting in malls and at public events – a poster board is available if you will include it in your event.
19. Please help make people aware of the need to protect this unique and long-recognized ecological gem that is at risk.

Here is a link to an interesting article (one of many) by David Patriquin: <http://nsforestnotes.ca/2019/02/04/if-an-old-growth-stand-blows-down-is-it-still-old-growth/#more-22562>

And links to the coalition website, plus:

SLRPCoalition website: www.sandylakecoalition.ca

SLCA Website: www.sandylake.org

Sandy Lake and environs website: www.sandylakebedford.ca

Dr. Patriquin's talk for SRA : <http://goo.gl/ipYCR2>

Drone video: www.sandylake.org





Photos: D. Patriquin



Red-spotted Eft photo: Karen Robinson