

# The Blue Mountain NEWS

Vol. 19, Fall 2023  
Fox Lake Look Off

## CALL FOR NATIONAL URBAN PARK CORPORATE PROJECT LEAD AT CITY HALL

Friends of BMBCL is calling on HRM to treat the National Urban Park project as a “corporate project” and assign this critically important initiative to someone to steer it at City Hall.

HRM can establish a project team for major corporate projects in the interest of effective project delivery. In the past, HRM has used this approach for initiatives such as the 4-pad arena construction in Dartmouth.



In March 2023, Parks Canada contributed \$1m to support some infrastructure initiatives relating to BMBCL and staff funding to help HRM work through the National Urban Park designation process. However, no team lead was hired to deliver an optimum national urban park product within a predetermined timeline.

Friends of BMBCL believe establishing a national urban park within HRM and the coordination of three levels of government warrants this approach. Help us convince the City to utilize sound project management tools to ensure this park will be the best it can be.

**Contact your councillor** (click the link to find contact information) and ask them to make the BMBCL NUP a corporate project to ensure efficient, effective, and deliberate park planning.

## REGIONAL PLAN MISSING NATIONAL URBAN PARK POTENTIAL

Friends monitor several planning and policy initiatives at all levels of government. Recently, our planning committee drafted a submission to HRM's Regional Plan Review.

Friends calls on HRM regional plan process to recognize the full potential boundaries for the BMBCL National Urban Park and not limit the park to what is currently preserved. [Click here to read our submission.](#)



## CLEARING BEGINS

Although HRM commissioned a study of the Stevens Group land and the whole 300-hectare corridor between Highway 102 and the wilderness area, changes are happening.

Ideally, when that study is complete, council would decide whether to initiate a planning process to allow development there. However, the Stevens Group has begun clearing the land it owns on the edges of the BMBCL area.



Located between Highway 102 and Susie Lake, the property developers have identified this area for building well over 3,000 dwellings. The current Stevens land proposal submitted to the Regional Plan would see the population more than double the town of Truro with no planned community centres, schools or other community infrastructure. Although the clearing doesn't indicate that the building of the 3,000+ dwellings is imminent, clearing the land makes Friends of BMBCL more nervous and reinforces the call for park planning to keep ahead of development.

Currently, the **national urban park planning process** focuses only on the land owned by the provincial and municipal governments and the Nova Scotia Nature Trust. That's 1,767 hectares of provincially protected wilderness area, plus 317 hectares owned by HRM and 220 hectares owned by the Nova Scotia Nature Trust. However, it omits the critically important wilderness around Susie and Quarry Lakes. This popular area deserves protection to safeguard the ecology and beauty of the southern area of our future National Urban Park.

## FUNDING TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

In early October, Ottawa announced funding to help Nova Scotia protect and conserve habitat and species within the province. More specifically, the announcement highlighted the importance of collaboration with Indigenous peoples, all governments, industry, and community stakeholders.



Lena Metlege Diab, MP Halifax West, on behalf of the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, and the Honourable Timothy Halman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change for Nova Scotia, announced that Ottawa will invest up to \$28.4 million over the next three years to protect nature across the province.

According to the press release, "This will support the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia's leadership in conservation, increase protection of sensitive habitats and recovery actions for species at risk and migratory birds, and protect and conserve new Crown and private land in Nova Scotia. With the support of this Agreement, Nova Scotia aims to increase the amount of protected and conserved areas within the province by 82,500 hectares by March 2026."

The funding will help implement the new *Nature Agreement* with all partners working toward clear outcomes, including support for Mi'kmaq-led nature priorities and initiatives. According to the release, the Agreement with the Province will help support Mi'kmaq leadership in the conservation and care of nature, Indigenous knowledge integration, capacity building, and identifying, establishing, and recognizing Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.

It remains to be seen if any funding will be used to support creating a national urban park in the BMBCL Wilderness area.

## A NIGHT OF ENTERTAINMENT WHILE SUPPORTING LOCAL THEATRE AND BMBCL

Friends of BMBCL is thrilled to be chosen the November Charity of Choice for the Bedford Players performance of *Looking*, a Norm Foster play.

\$1 from every ticket sold will be donated to Friends of BMBCL, along with any door donations and tips from the canteen. Show dates run from November 2 to November 18. Enjoy a night out to support Bedford Players and BMBCL

[Visit BedfordPlayers.ca to order your tickets](http://BedfordPlayers.ca)



## 1,100+ STRONG

This past summer, Friends of BMBCL were busy promoting awareness of BMBCL and encouraging people to lend their voices. We now have over 1,100 members. And with each voice joining, the call for protecting nature and making BMBCL a national urban park is getting louder.

So, if you are getting this newsletter and are not a member...JOIN. And if you are a member, pass this along and encourage people to lend their support.

Joining is free. You gain early access to guided hikes and events. Free newsletter and, more importantly, knowing you are part of turning BMBCL Wilderness into a national urban park. [Click to visit our website and join](#) or scan the QR below.



Summer BBQ: L-R: M. McGrath, Chair BMBCL, MP L. Diab, and MLA B. Clark



October hike to Blue Mountain summit



Scan QR to visit our website

## TICK NOT

Many of us are out hiking or walking in the fall leaves. And for many, we often think that we don't have to worry about ticks with the cooler temperatures. But that's not the case. The NS Government is rolling out a fall tick awareness campaign. They are installing signs in parks around Nova Scotia as cases of Lyme disease continue to rise.

According to provincial information, Nova Scotia has several kinds of ticks. However, only blacked-legged ticks can cause illness. The provincial website shares that "Nova Scotia has high rates of Lyme disease. It's also seeing more cases of Anaplasmosis, and there have been a few cases of Babesiosis."

So, what should you know? Ticks are found in long grass, shrubs, and woody areas to name a few. This includes BMBCL.

Nova Scotia health officials suggest the following tips to

reduce the chance of getting a tick-borne illness:

- Wear long pants and long sleeves.
- Wear light-coloured clothing so that it's easier to see ticks.
- Wear enclosed shoes and tuck pants into socks.
- Walk on well-travelled paths and stay away from long grass and vegetation.
- Use Health Canada-approved insect repellents on exposed skin and clothes.

And after being outside,

- check yourself and your family for ticks
- have a bath or shower within 2 hours of coming inside (makes it easier to see ticks and wash off unattached ticks)
- remember to check:
  - around ears
  - behind knees
  - in hair
  - between the legs and in the groin area
  - around the waist

For more information on tick safety, visit <https://novascotia.ca/ticksafety/>

## Tick Check Basics

Check your body and clothing for ticks after spending time outside.

Ticks like warm places on the body.

In hair and hairline  
Cheveux et contour de la chevelure

Back of neck  
Nuque

Elbows  
Coudes

Back of knees  
Derrrière les genoux

## Conseils relatifs aux tiques

Vérifiez votre peau et vos vêtements après avoir passé du temps à l'extérieur. Les tiques aiment les endroits bien au chaud.

Behind ears  
Derrrière les oreilles

Armpits  
Aisselles

Waist  
Taille

Groin  
Aïne

Between toes  
Entre les orteils

- Don't forget to check your pets
- A bath or shower within two hours of being outdoors makes it easier to spot ticks

- N'oubliez pas de vérifier vos animaux de compagnie.
- Il est plus facile de voir les tiques si vous prenez un bain ou une douche dans un délai de deux heures après avoir passé du temps à l'extérieur.

For more information, including how to remove a tick safely, visit [novascotia.ca/ticksafety](https://novascotia.ca/ticksafety)



Pour obtenir plus d'information, y compris sur la façon d'enlever une tique de façon sécuritaire, consultez le [novascotia.ca/ticksafety](https://novascotia.ca/ticksafety) (en anglais seulement).

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: DON GORDON

After exploring BMBCL Wilderness area for decades, Don Gordon joined Friends of BMBCL three years ago. Gordon was quickly tapped to join the Planning Committee because of his knowledge and belief in preserving this wilderness. He has been lending his expertise and voice to the Friends advocacy efforts since.

In 1965, Gordon moved to Halifax to start graduate studies in oceanography at Dalhousie. It didn't take him long to find BMBCL and begin exploring its beauty by canoe and skis, especially the Nine Mile River watershed. "I was immediately impressed with having such a wonderful wilderness area just outside the city and felt that someday it should become a park. Now, almost 60 years later, this is becoming a reality," says Gordon.

Gordon continues to visit the interior of the wilderness several times a year for hiking, skiing and canoeing. "My wife and I own a large acreage with a seasonal home on Coxs Lake, which borders on the provincial wilderness area. Except for winter, we visit our retreat weekly. We strongly believe this area should become a national wilderness park. It would be a wonderful asset to HRM for years to come," adds Gordon. "It is an exceptional wilderness area with forest, streams and lakes just outside Halifax."

For over 30 years, Gordon was a member of the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board, and he and his wife currently support the Ecology Action Centre and Nova Scotia Nature Trust. He continues to serve as an emeritus scientist documenting oceanographic history after working as a research scientist at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography, where he studied the impacts of human activities on marine ecosystems.

"Over the years, I've led numerous water quality studies of HRM area lakes. The most recent (2021) was a water quality survey of all BMBC lakes," says Gordon. "Preserving the watershed and water quality in BMBCL is so crucial to the HRM citizens. We don't realize how important it is. It's one of those hidden natural assets many take for granted. All the more reason to support Friends and lend our voice to their advocacy efforts."



## END OF YEAR GIVING

It is hard to believe that we are just weeks away from the end of 2023, and what a good year it has been for Friends of BMBCL.

We're thrilled to see more and more effort being made to preserve BMBCL and turn this amazing wilderness into a national urban park. There is a buzz in the air, and more and more people are seeing the immense benefit to our economy, health, and combined future



cherish  
beauty  
in your  
backyard

SUPPORT BLUE MOUNTAIN BIRCH  
COVE LAKES WITH AN END OF  
YEAR DONATION.  
YOU CAN HELP MAKE BMBCL A  
NATIONAL PARK.

[DONATE TODAY](#)

 @blue\_mountain\_friends



of having this wilderness in HRM.

But to keep this momentum, we can benefit from your voice and financial support. So as the year ends and you think about end-of-year donations, please consider donating to Friends of BMBCL. Every little bit helps.

**To donate, click here and select Friends of BMBCL in the pull-down menu.**

**CONTACT US:** Let us know what you think.

Send comments or pictures to [info@bluemountainfriends.ca](mailto:info@bluemountainfriends.ca)

All previous editions, starting in 2018, can be viewed [on our website](#).



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