

Ecology Action Centre

Annual Report 2003-2004

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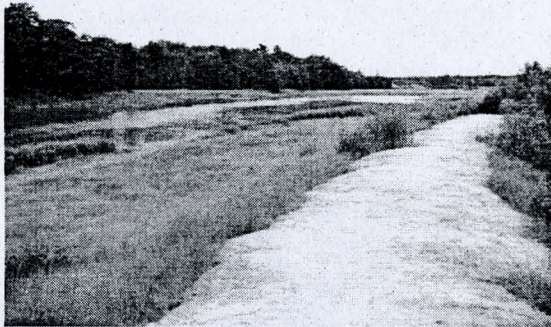


Photo: Salt Marsh Crew

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EAC's Vision

A society in Nova Scotia which respects and protects nature and provides environmentally and economically sustainable solutions for its citizens.

EAC's Values

- EAC members, volunteers, and staff believe that the environment is tied to the well-being of society.
- EAC supports a climate of innovation.
- EAC comes from and supports the "grassroots".
- EAC aims to engage the public in dialogue for environmental improvement.

EAC's Purpose

EAC is an independent organization that strives to work with partners to:

- Provide up-to-date environmental information;
- Pursue researched solutions; and
- Act as a watch-dog for the Nova Scotia environment.

Board and Staff April 2003-March 2004

Board Executive

Co-Chairs: Trudie Richards
Gregor MacAskill
Secretary: Mike Milloy
Treasurer: Maggy Burns, Interim Treasurer
Lianne Giswold (term concluded)
Carla Vandenberg (June-December)

Board Members

Jennifer Graham
Jayne Roma
Heather Paquet
Sue McKinney
Cathy Kinsman
Kasia Tota
Judy Lipp
Maida Murray
Kevin Blair
Aaron Booth (resigned)
Michael Oddy (term concluded)
Tricia MacLeod (term concluded)



Carla Vandenberg, Mark Butler, Troy Swan, Susanna Cheng and Janet Barlow with Valentine to Mayor
Photo: Tooker Gomberg

Office Staff

Brenda Hall, Office Manager (up to Dec. 2003)
Carla Vandenberg, Office Manager (Dec. 2003-present)
Mark Butler, Internal Director
Emma Boardman (consultant)

Membership Staff

Troy Swan, Co-ordinator
Seela Amaratunga (summer 2003)

Coastal Issues Staff

Jerry MacKinley, Harbour Project Co-ordinator
Tony Bowron, Salt Marsh Co-ordinator
Philip Clement, Salt Marsh (summer-fall 2003)
Nancy Chiasson, Salt Marsh (summer 2003)
Allison Parker, Salt Marsh (up to October, 2003)
Dawn-Marie Duffy, Tidal Barriers Audit
Jennifer Graham (consultant)

Energy Issues Staff

Howlan Mullally, Co-ordinator
Phil Thompson (consultant)

Marine Issues Staff

Mark Butler, Co-ordinator
Penny Doherty, Communications Co-ordinator

Marine Bioinvasions Staff

Gretchen Fitzgerald (after October 2003)
Jennifer Ford (up to October 2003)

Transportation Issues Staff

Janet Barlow, ASRTS
Robynn Moody, ASRTS (up to January 2004)
Rebecca O'Brien, TRAX
Angela Bischoff, TRAX (August 2003-present)
Alexandra Fischer, TRAX (up to August 2003)
Susanna Cheng, TRAX (consultant)
Dan Walsh, U-Pass (consultant)
Luis Perez, U-Pass
Jeff Bell (consultant)
Camille Dumond, Bike Again! (consultant)
Rob Maguire, Bike Again! (consultant)

Wilderness Staff

Raymond Plourde, Public Lands Co-ordinator
Chris Brackley, Public Hikes (summer 2003)
Pamela Langille, Sustainable Forestry

Co-Chairs' Report

The Ecology Action Centre continues to amaze. Thanks to extraordinary talent and commitment, and in spite of limited finances, our organization has had a most productive year. I am regularly in awe of the people who toil away such long hours, for so little financial reward, because they want to do everything they can to protect our fragile planet.

EAC is deservedly proud of our involvement in the creation of a sustainable farm operation in the Valley - an initiative spearheaded by the Food Action Committee, and by Jennifer Scott in particular with the wise counsel of co-chair Gregor MacAskill. I hope that once the operation is truly up and running, all of you will take advantage of the opportunity to visit, and explore.

Our work continues in many areas: to wean people of their addiction to cars, to encourage politicians and citizens to respect wilderness space, to labour away through the court system in our ongoing attempt to convince DFO that dragging on the ocean floor is like clearcutting - there's nothing left once you're done. And other key committee work is ongoing: protection of sea corals and restoration of our coastal communities, to name just two.

This year EAC decided it was time to get serious about membership. There are so many supporters in Nova Scotia; all of them should belong! So Troy Swan joined us as Membership and Outreach Coordinator, and we're hoping to reach 1,000 members by year-end.

Troy's presence means we now have three full-time staff. Internal Director Mark Butler epitomizes everything EAC stands for: he works tirelessly, and always manages to inspire. We are so very lucky that Carla Vandenberg offered to assume the position of Office Manager. Our former treasurer, Carla has transformed the workings of the Centre. Our auditors this year were in and out in three days - surely a significant achievement by anyone's measurement!

Thank you so much, Mark and Carla.

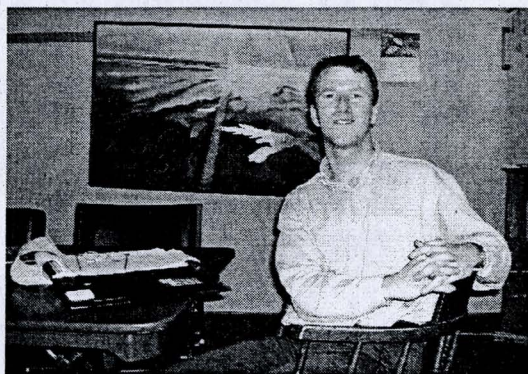
Gregor MacAskill, the co-chair of EAC, and an indefatigable optimist, impressed us all (himself included, no doubt) by winning the contract from HRM to monitor and grant or refuse applications for pesticide/insecticide use this summer. He has had to temporarily step down from his position as chair until the contract ends.

I too have indicated I would like to step down as co-chair. After two years, I believe I can now contribute to the Centre in different ways.

This has been one of the most satisfying and enriching volunteer positions I've held in my life, and I look forward to a lasting connection with EAC. We all know our work will never be done.

I'd also like to acknowledge the passing of Tooker Gomberg, a lifelong environmentalist who made lasting contributions wherever he worked. Tooker died this winter, and all of us mourn his passing. So fine a person, he left us too soon.

-submitted by Trudie Richards



Gregor MacAskill



Trudie Richards

Internal Director's Report



Mark Butler (right) being interviewed at a rally.
Photo: Margo Ellen Gesser

For inspiration and guidance on how to capture all that has happened at EAC in the last year I asked staff and volunteers to give me one word. There was no coaching involved and yet all the adjectives are remarkably similar: Stupendous, dynamic, success, forward, hydra, full-throttle, exciting, kick-ass, hectic (x2), innovative, inspired, on the ground, active, purple (?), and evolving.

It has been another action-packed year for the organization. Projects and programs continue to multiply at EAC with much of the inspiration and drive coming from volunteer-led committees. For example, the totally volunteer run Food Action Committee has been one of the most active committees at EAC with projects ranging from the Farm Conservation Centre to a Harvest Festival celebrating local, organic food to be held this fall.

We have met some of our goals for the EAC. We have a wonderful, new website designed entirely by a volunteer, Chris Szymiec, which provides

users with the opportunity to become a member on-line. Ben Lorincz developed and updated our membership database, and upgraded our entire IT network. Thank you for all your hard work. We hired a full-time Outreach Coordinator, Troy Swan, this year whose job is to raise memberships, support volunteers, and support BTI (EAC's magazine). We continue to tackle some key challenges for the organization: finding a permanent home, raising membership to 1000 and increasing core revenues. We have been looking for a permanent home for two years. This year, we abandoned the hope of purchasing a home, due to rising house prices. Thus we are focusing on creative and collaborative solutions, such as obtaining an under-utilized municipal building which could serve as a demonstration site for energy efficiency technologies and green living. This initiative has the potential to really capture the imagination and volunteer energy of a lot of people.

There have been sad and tough times at EAC. We lost Tooker Gomberg. Only after his death did many of us realize what an incredible citizen of the earth he was and the extent to which he was suffering from depression.

After a hard winter we look forward to spring and summer. What makes this job worth the hard work is being able to look around Nova Scotia and point to successes, ecological and socio-economic, which we had a hand in. As you enjoy Nova Scotia in the coming year—thank all the groups big and small that work to conserve its ecology and communities.

Thank you Trudie Richards, our retiring (in only one sense of the word) co-chair. You carried us through a rough patch for which I will always be grateful. Thank you for staying on the Board and agreeing to tackle membership. Thank you Michael Oddy and Aaron Booth for their contributions and time on the Board.

Thank you to all our volunteers, members and funders. Funders, whether you gave us \$10,000 or \$15, we value your donation and this vote of confidence of the work we do.

-submitted by Mark Butler

Treasurer's Report

The Ecology Action Centre has prepared audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2004. Our audit was completed by Grant Thornton LLP and the financial statements have been reviewed and accepted by the Board of Directors. The following are the financial highlights for the year that ended March 31, 2004:

- The Ecology Action Centre had another very busy year in 2003/2004. We had twenty projects on the go and received project funding of \$643,821.
- 65% of our project funding was from private sources and 33% was from government sources, both provincial and federal.
- The core operations of the EAC were supported by membership & donation revenues, project contributions, and significant fundraising revenues, particularly the Garden Party and organic Christmas trees sales.

For the year ended March 31, 2004, the Ecology Action Centre finished in a deficit position with expenditures exceeding revenues by \$2,813. The

surplus from previous years will be used to cover this loss. This deficit is a result of the continuing growth of our core operations - in large part the addition of more staff.

Project funding is expected to be strong in the upcoming fiscal year. However, the Board also recognizes that we are facing a financial challenge resulting from our own growth and success; a challenge common to many organizations. Consequently, we have committed to strengthen core funding for the EAC. We will be investigating new funding options for the core operations, and we have embarked on the development of a third annual fundraiser.

Carla Vandenberg and I would like to extend a special thank you to Lianne Giswold for all her help with the preparation for this year's audit.

A separate attachment is available that contains a copy of the audited financial statements and notes.

-submitted by Carla Vandenberg and Maggy Burns

Restructuring Committee

This ad hoc restructuring committee was started in December 2003 as a follow up to discussions held during the Annual Retreat. Over the last few years, the Centre has rapidly expanded its program areas and activity level. Our individual projects and committees are thriving and continue to grow. This growth creates exciting opportunities for the Centre as a whole to consolidate its reputation and credibility as Nova Scotia's foremost voice on environmental issues.

The restructuring committee was created to assess the strength and effectiveness of the EAC in carrying out its broader environmental mandate and in supporting Centre projects and activities.

Specifically, this committee was formed to examine the core positions of the EAC (Internal Director, Office Manager, Outreach Coordinator) and discuss the roles, job descriptions, and what other services/functions are needed to keep the EAC a smoothly running, fiscally sound, happy place. The committee is soliciting input from staff, board members and volunteers and making

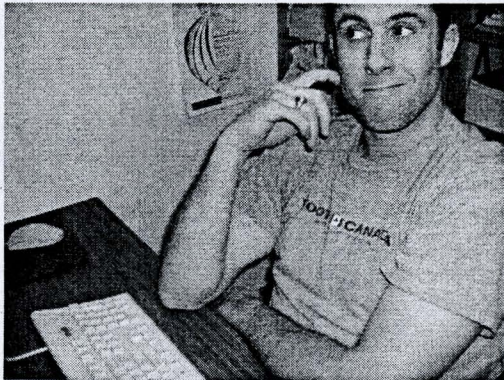
recommendations on any changes to these positions.

In February, the ad hoc committee created a sub-committee specifically to look at IT. With the growth of the office, and the computer system, EAC has survived on an improvisational IT system and piecemeal technical support. Dedicated volunteers have been an incredible help at getting the computers networked and designing the membership database. However, there are still problems with internet connections, networked files not being backed up on any main computer, email issues, and more. All staff should know how to post things on the web and should be using the web to communicate project successes and ideas.

The IT subcommittee is designing an IT plan focusing on the Centre needs and priorities for the next five years. Some of these suggestions have already been incorporated into the next (April 2004) budget.

-submitted by Jen Graham

Membership Committee



Membership and Outreach Co-ordinator, Troy Swan

Since the Ecology Action Centre began, it has sought the support of its community. Thus far the response has been good, but not outstanding. This past year we have seen our membership hit levels not seen before in EAC history, reaching over 700 members at one point. The membership committee continues to put forth new and creative ideas to engage our existing members and seek out new ones. We look forward to the coming year as we attempt to reach new heights.

The membership committee has employed a number of activities designed to educate the public about the organization and recruit new members as a consequence. These activities include:

- Staging information booths at a variety of events, including: Oxford Theatre's screening of *Winged Migration*, the Nova Scotia Wilderness Festival and the Halifax Farmers Market;
- Appearances in various local media including: CBC Radio's Information Morning and ATV's Breakfast Television;
- Letter writing and phone calls;
- Implementation of online membership renewal on our new website.

As we look forward to the coming year, the membership committee continues to come up with new and innovative strategies to engage our members, like making our website more interactive and asking for feedback from our current members in our renewal letters.

The Ecology Action Centre is a membership based organization and needs the support of the community if we are to remain relevant. Please consider pledging your support in the form of a membership and if you already have, tell your friends and family about the organization. We would love to hear from you. To contact the committee, please call the office or email us at membermail@ecologyaction.ca.

-submitted by Troy Swan

Between the Issues

This year was pretty much business as usual for EAC's quarterly magazine. Neil Fraser of Studio Verité, who joined us in 2001, continues to provide excellent service as design and lay-out person.

There have been a number of changes of personnel. This spring Penelope Jackson assumed the post of "editor-in-chief"; I remain as co-editor. Outreach Coordinator Troy Swan now manages distribution, including the dreaded Canada Post mail-out to our members.

An especial thank-you to Jeanne Ju, who in January retired as ecobrief illustrator after five years; we welcome Sharolyn Townsend, another student at the N.S. College of Art and Design, as our new illustrator. Congratulations to you both on your graduation. Other volunteers include Board representative Maida Murray, a big support all year; Lynn Brooks and Judy Cooney, who help with distribution; Dan Walsh, who is willing to write on any topic; Susanna Fuller, who does the Ecocalendar; and Bronwyn Hook and Gretchen Fitzgerald, for help with proofing. Thanks to you all, and also to our many contributors.

Hemlock Circus

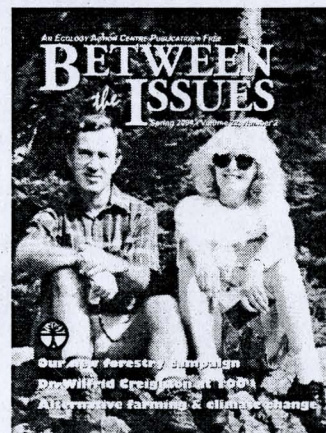
The year began with the production of the play, 'Dr. D. Kline', which advanced the hypothesis that extinction of the dinosaurs was due to misuse of fossil fuels, particularly use of SUVs. The play was met with rave reviews and even featured a cameo by Dr. David Suzuki when he was in Halifax at a fundraiser for the EAC.

Alongside this brush with fame, we have not forgotten our roots. Hemlock Circus performers were seen at protests throughout the year, including the Ecology Action Centre's Days of Fish and Fish Action in January. Captain Environment-sightings were also reported at a few venues.

The major component of the Circus' work is presentations to schools (all levels) and community groups. Our presentations are often a combination of a science-based presentation combined with theatre games and/or a skit or play. We have found this to be an effective way to engage students and to convey accurate information about conservation issues in the province.

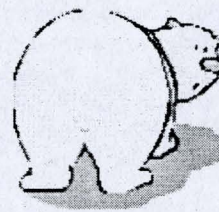
Between the Issues is the mouthpiece of the Ecology Action Centre, and for many members the only contact they have with the Centre. Extra copies are always available at the Centre, and you can find us on the EAC website.

-submitted by June Hall

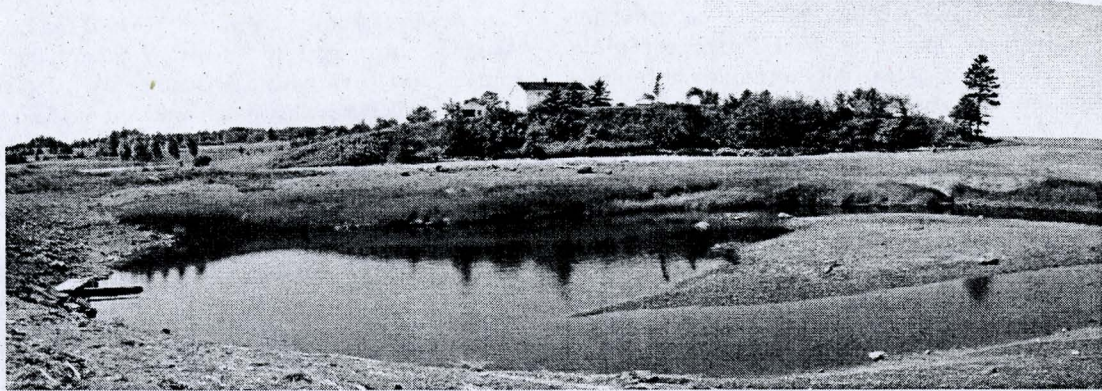


As it has been said, coordinating Hemlock Circus is like herding cats and for this, we would like to say a very warm thank you to Emma Boardman who stepped down as our co-ordinator in 2004. Emma has been diligent for the past three and a half years organizing our meetings, performances and workshops. As for Hemlock's future, we are currently creating a play for all ages...you will just have to wait and see! Hemlock Circus is open to all. Experience is not necessary, but, creativity, a sense of humour and a passion to educate through theatre is indeed an asset.

-submitted by Veronica Sherwood



Coastal Issues Committee



Cheverie Creek. Photo: Salt Marsh Crew

As in past years, the CIC continues to be driven by its projects - the usual suspects: the Salt Marsh and Tidal Rivers Restoration Project and the Halifax Harbour Watershed Restoration Coalition. The activities of the two projects are summarized below, following a brief look at the other key areas or issues that members of the committee dangled their toes into over the course of the past year.

Coastal Website Upgrade

Check out our cool new website (which is still under construction) by following the coastal link on the EAC's home page. We send our sincere thanks to Anne (Gregory) for all your blood, sweat, and tears that went into making this website a reality. We look forward to her continued effort to pretty it up and add new pages.

Coastal Policy for Nova Scotia

Coastal development, or sprawl, and the associated issues of habitat loss, access, sustainability, planning, and the need for greater community/municipality based management is rapidly becoming a major area of concern in many parts of NS. CIC has been advocating the need for the development of a coastal policy that is similar to the one being developed in New Brunswick, but that goes beyond just protecting coastal habitats to also address issues of sustainability, types of development, access for recreational activities, and greater local control over the activities that occur in their communities.

Many of our members have become involved in a range of activities addressing this issue. Folks

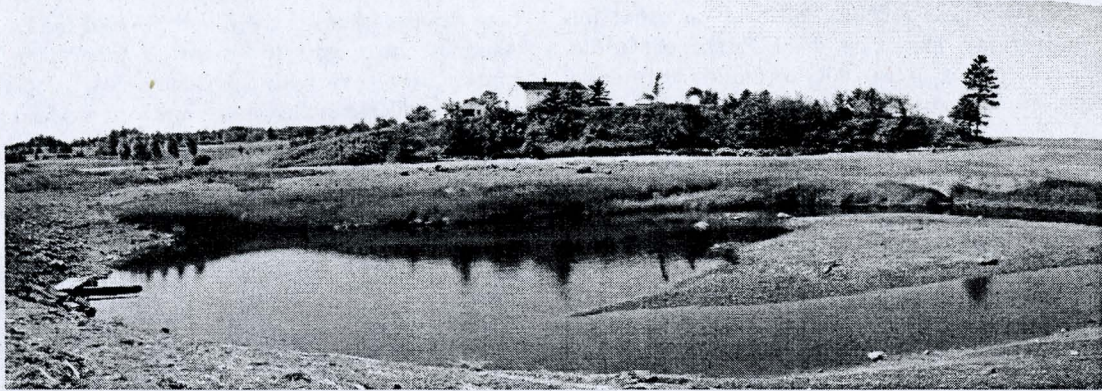
have conducted research, written papers, given presentations, participated in workshops and meetings, and just generally tried to contribute to and drive the discussion. Two of our volunteers are working on distilling all this information into an educational pamphlet that we will be sending out far and wide.

Another project idea that is in the works is the development of a new section to our website that highlights the threats to our coastal habitats and communities. These threats would be highlighted with real examples from around the province: the loss of habitat in Lewis Head, Shelburne County because of proposed development of a small coastal peninsula; the loss of salt marsh and tidal river habitat throughout the Bay of Fundy as a consequence of tidal barriers; wetland infilling near Big Island in Antigonish County; and the loss of habitat and access because of a development on the Kingsburg Beach.

Boat Harbour

We have been approached by Pictou County residents concerned about the Provinces' plans to re-introduce tidal flow to the main Boat Harbour Lagoon which has been part of the Scott Paper (now Kimberly-Clark) Pulp and Paper Mill's effluent treatment system. Allison Parker (DFO Science & Technology Intern) set this project in motion, and we are continuing her work by attempting to assist local residents with understanding the scientific research that has been conducted, as well as any potential ecological consequences of the project.

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Cheverie Creek. Photo: Salt Marsh Crew

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Bloodworm Harvesting in Hants County

Both CIC and MIC members have become involved in this issue over the past year. We have been offering support and scientific advice to the Hants Shore Concerned Citizens Group (composed of members of the community from Windsor to Noel) who are opposing DFO's exploratory bloodworm harvest management plan that has identified their entire coast as open for harvest. This commercial harvest is an exploratory one, meaning there is a lack of science concerning the impact and sustainability of the harvest, and is a harvest that is not supported by the local community. Despite almost complete community opposition to this harvest for the past 4 years, DFO (Fisheries) has continued to rule in favour of the harvest rather than conservation.

We have, and will continue to be supportive of the community's efforts to protect their coast. We are particularly excited about recent discussions concerning a community-based approach to managing their ecological resources in collaboration with DFO (Oceans Act), and a request to DFO to designate the Hants Shore as a Marine Protected Area.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

We have had the great fortune of receiving a generous grant from ESRI, which has provided us with ArcGIS software and learning resources. With this program, we now have mapping capabilities, for which we have, in the past, had to rely on the generosity and time of others.

Salt Marsh and Tidal Rivers Restoration Project

To address cumulative loss and damage of salt marsh habitat in the upper Bay of Fundy, our illustrious leader, Tony Bowron (Project Coordinator), managed our committee in its continued effort with restoration assessment and monitoring projects. With the help of Nancy Chaisson (Field Coordinator), the team managed to muster up the time and energy to study several salt marshes through out the year.

We have continued our work with our pilot restoration project at Cheverie Creek. This past summer (2003), we continued our monitoring work at the site and at our reference site, Bass Creek. Of particular interest, Phil Clement (Field Assistant) helped to complete several research

projects, including a comprehensive set of bird studies. We have since had word that the Department of Transportation and Public Works is now seriously considering replacing the poorly sized culvert sometime in the near future. This has, of course, brought a great deal of renewed energy and excitement, as well as work. We plan to continue with monitoring activities after the tidal flow has been restored, as a means of learning more about the restoration process in the upper Bay of Fundy.

In addition to our work at Cheverie, we also had an honours student (Anne Gregory) who kick-started monitoring work at another potential restoration site. Cogmagun Estuary is a freshwater impoundment built by Ducks Unlimited Canada as brood rearing and forage habitat for waterfowl. With failing dykes, the site will revert to salt marsh, eventually, and our honours student took on the task of initiating pre-restoration monitoring. We will continue to monitor the site as another restoration project.

In addition to our monitoring projects, we also continued our assessment inventory of tidal crossings in the upper Bay of Fundy. Through Environment Canada's Science Horizons Internship Program, we were able to have Dawn-Marie (Duffy) with us to continue our tidal barriers audit through Cumberland and Kings County. This invaluable resource outlines locations of tidal barriers and potential restoration sites. With her hard work, we now have tidal barrier coverage for the entire Nova Scotia side of the upper Bay of Fundy (Cumberland, Colchester, Hants, and Kings Counties).

On top of all the field research conducted, Jennifer Graham (Outreach Coordinator) was instrumental in the organization of numerous public education, community outreach, and school program events, which were an integral part of our work. We have hosted meeting and field days for the community (Cheverie/Hants Shore) at large. In addition to this, we have had the great fortune of finding some great allies who have helped us with their support and, in some cases, assistance in the field.

Halifax Harbour Watershed Coalition Project

HHWCP has been an ongoing project headed by Jerry MacKinlay. The following outlines the considerable work and progress that he has spearheaded over the past year

Membership

The Coalition has achieved broad representation in the Community. It currently is comprised of 22 community groups, 18 government agencies, 5 private business interests, and three academic organizations.

Projects

Six project proposals were approved by Environment Canada's Environmental Damages Fund. Three projects are underway. One will begin in the spring, once the weather warms up a bit. One is on hold pending signatures. Two proposals are competing for the last of the approximately \$4000.00 remaining of the monies received from EDF. Both have been forwarded to the Selection Committee.

Governance and Citizen Participation

A sub-committee was struck with representation from most government agencies and some of the community organizations to look into these issues. The first order of business of the sub-committee was to ask all agencies to provide the coalition with an up-to-date list of all appropriate Acts and legislation for the harbourshed. So far, all but two agencies have responded with a description of their mandates and an expression of interest in the Harbour. HRM has reiterated their commitment that the Coalition will be represented on the steering committee for the HRM harbour plan.

Funding

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has given a verbal commitment to providing one half of the Coalition's annual budget providing that

HRM formally supports the Coalition and takes a lead role. HRM has agreed to provide that support. Accordingly, the steering committee has approved a tentative budget for 2005 and this has been forwarded to officials at HRM. The Coalition will be applying to Foundations and Trusts for the other half of the budget.

Structure

Membership in the Coalition will be open to any and all groups with an interest in the Halifax Harbourshed. There will be a Board of Directors elected by the general membership and an Executive Committee devoted to the routine operation of the Coalition. An Executive Director will be hired to run the day-to-day operations. The Coalition will be applying for official registration as a non-profit community group.

Conduct a literature review and consultation process

A bibliography of literature related to the harbour and its adjacent watersheds has been produced and shared with the coalition. Sources were drawn from a graduate research thesis (Cameron Deacoff's Graduate Project: "Managing the Cumulative effects of Anthropogenic modifications to the Halifax Harbour Environment"), libraries at DFO, Environment Canada and HRM and through consultations with members of the coalition. The work and recommendations from the workshops entitled "Preserving the Environment of Halifax Harbour" held in 1999 - 2000 have been key in shaping the discussions and direction of the coalition.

-submitted by Tony Bowron



Nancy Chiasson counts grass specimens at a salt marsh site.
Photo: Salt Marsh Crew.

Energy Issues Committee



Alistair Covill, Judy Lipp and Mark Butler at an EIC protest. Photo: Stephanie Sodero

It has been a busy and exciting year for the Energy Issues Committee. We have been actively engaged in the community through meetings with community leaders, consultations for private groups and government officials, public workshops, and selling energy efficient products. Aside from our community involvement, we have also had a voice in larger issues and heard from other associations by attending numerous conferences. It has been a valuable experience and with each activity we learn how to better direct our efforts.

The provincial elections provided the first major forum for the Energy Issues Committee. We published an environmental-issues paper, which detailed major concerns facing the province and graded each of the major parties on their election platforms. This summer we also participated in the first of our many media interviews. Throughout the year interviews have been a useful way of communicating ideas to the general public. In March we met with the Chronicle Herald editorial board to provide them with information about energy related issues and we intend to step up our efforts by writing regular articles about different aspects of sustainable energy. We also communicate our views to government, an example being the response of several committee members to Nova Scotia's Green Plan and voicing our concerns about government approval for expanding NSPI's generation capacity without requiring them to undergo an environmental review.

In the last year we have held a series of workshops, presentations and meetings for and

with government and municipal officials and the general public. Among these was the "Bright Ideas for Homeowners" workshop that was held during Thanksgiving Weekend, and the presentation about climate change in the municipality. It is also important to learn from other organizations. Thus, we have participated in several regional and national conferences regarding energy concerns. These have been invaluable for building our knowledge base. Most recently a member of our team attended the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers conference on climate change impacts and adapting to these impacts. This was a valuable chance to give our input on the issue and look at the progress being made and push for improved performance.

Any organization worth its salt must practice what it preaches. Energy efficient lights were a hot item for the EAC this year and demonstrated the viability of the green market. Over the holidays we sold-out of our low energy Christmas lights, raising funds for the committee.

The Energy Issues committee has played an active role in the community and the region at large. We hope to continue to engage members of the public about the importance of sustainable energy. With energy playing such a central role in our lives there are many issues to contend with. We are always happy to have new people attend our meetings and get involved. We hope to see you on the third Tuesday of the month at EAC (meetings start at 17:15).

-submitted by Judy Lipp and Nick McLean

Marine Issues Committee



Ecology Action Centre supporters march at MIC's 'Days of Action'. Photo: Margo Ellen Gesser

Court Case

On January 26 and 27, lawyers representing the Ecology Action Centre presented their arguments to Federal Court Justice Elizabeth Heneghan. EAC was challenging DFO's decision to open Georges Bank to fishing by any means (and thus including draggers) under Section 35 (1) of the Fisheries Act, which states that "No person shall carry on any work or undertaking that results in the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction (HADD) of fish habitat." Arguing on our behalf, Margo Venton and Robert Wright of the Sierra Legal Defence Fund maintained that "work or undertaking" includes fishing activities, and that DFO thus has a legal obligation to consider HADD in its fisheries management decisions. We are now waiting upon Justice Heneghan's decision.

In advance of the hearing MIC organized 'Days of Action,' which involved an Ocean Parade and a panel discussion at Dalhousie University. The events received considerable media coverage, including an interview on CBC radio national current affairs show 'As it Happens'.

We believe that DFO, in part because of the legal challenge, is realizing it must address the impacts of dragging on fish habitat. In the media, DFO's spokesperson did not deny that dragging was damaging and instead attempted to reassure the public that DFO was taking steps to protect habitat. Despite this progress, DFO still refuses to

assess gear types and encourage more sustainable methods of fishing.

Sustainable Seafood Guide

We are developing a sustainable seafood guide and exploring options for working with organizations such as Seafood Watch, based out of the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Student intern, Janette Rodewald, developed a pamphlet entitled 'Hook and Line vs. Dragging: The Economic, Environmental, and Social Costs and Benefits'. Janette went on to start up her own sustainable seafood business which was an immediate success. The demand for sustainably caught seafood exists.

Large Pelagic Fisheries

As a result of limited staff and volunteer time, MIC is not effectively addressing conservation concerns in the pelagic fishery.

Oil and Gas

The Ecology Action Centre continues to call for a moratorium on oil and gas development in the inshore waters of Nova Scotia that is in line with rules for US coastal waters from Maine to Florida. We want a complete reform of the licensing process for oil and gas, such that areas are not opened to oil and gas without environmental assessment and a valid public review process. Finally, we want a complete re-

working of the way Nova Scotia regulates the oil and gas sector so that environmental concerns and the concerns of other marine industries are addressed, and the rights of First Nations people are upheld.

We continue to fight oil and gas exploration and development off Nova Scotia. This issue came to a head last winter, when the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB) authorized seismic blasting in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. If allowed to proceed, drilling will result in pollutants, drilling muds, and cuttings being discharged in a coastal habitat which government scientists have identified as being too sensitive and productive to be appropriate for this kind of development. The campaign to stop seismic in the Southern Gulf involved outreach through press conferences and media releases, calling upon independent scientists to inform politicians and the public about the impacts of oil and gas, and working closely with other members of the Save Our Seas and Shores coalition, politicians, and industry representatives to coordinate a cohesive opposition. The "Seismic Singers" made an appearance at Province House at one of our many demonstrations. EAC volunteers and members made numerous calls and wrote to politicians, expressing their opposition to the testing. We also provided our expertise to legal council who attempted to obtain an injunction to stop the testing on behalf of a First Nations representative.

Unfortunately, although we succeeded in raising the level of public debate surrounding the issue, seismic blasting went ahead and was completed on Christmas Day, 2003.

In the upcoming months, we will be organizing public education sessions in the communities of Cape Breton, producing outreach materials, and developing an awareness campaign. We will also be working to deepen our links with national and international groups working to stop oil and gas in sensitive coastal areas.

Endangered Species

MIC, with funding from the Habitat Stewardship Program, published a report by Penny Doherty entitled, 'A Review of Potential Threats of Oil and Gas Development on Leatherback Turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*) and Northern Bottlenose Whales (*Hyperoodon ampullatus*) with Relevance to the Scotian Shelf.' The report provides a literature review of potential impacts of the offshore oil and gas industry on endangered

leatherback turtles and northern bottlenose whales on the Scotian Shelf. The report also identifies mitigation measures that the industry could take to minimize impacts on these species.

Ocean Zoning

We continue to explore the utility and applicability of zoning as a management tool for the Scotian Shelf and Gulf of Maine. Last year Penny conducted research for this project through literature searches and interviews with a range of ocean professionals. Her report entitled, 'Ocean Zoning: Perspectives on a New Vision for the Scotian Shelf and Gulf of Maine' was published by MIC in the fall of 2003. The report suggests that most stakeholders thought zoning was a viable management tool that should be implemented on the Scotian Shelf and in the Gulf of Maine, although they also noted that zoning should be used in conjunction with other management tools.

Our interest in zoning arises from a realization that we must adopt a comprehensive approach to area-based management of our oceans both for ecological and socio-economic reasons. To provide a forum to discuss ocean zoning and its appropriateness as a management tool in the Northwest Atlantic, MIC along with several other organizations is planning an international ocean zoning workshop for May, 2004. The *Ocean Zoning: Can it Work in the Northwest Atlantic?* workshop will explore the concept and effectiveness of ocean zoning as a tool for integrated ocean management. International speakers will discuss zoning case studies, concurrent workshops will allow a variety of topics related to zoning to be explored, and a stakeholder panel and plenary will provide user groups with an opportunity to discuss concerns.

Other Projects/Work

Penny continues to produce *Coastlines*, a natural history column about coastal wildlife, habitats and traditional resource use, which is distributed weekly to eleven newspapers around the province.

Penny represents the Ecology Action Centre on several multi-stakeholder committees/projects, including the Atlantic Leatherback Turtle Recovery Team, Marine Invertebrate Diversity Initiative, and the Ecosystem Objectives Working Group established under the Eastern Scotian Shelf Integrated Management Initiative.

-submitted by M. Butler, P. Doherty and G. Fitzgerald

Committee on Marine Bioinvasions

The Committee On Marine Bioinvasions (COMB) continues to promote better policy, monitoring, research, and awareness of invasive species. Over the past year, we were extremely pleased to be part of some significant advances in Canadian policy in this issue. However, the arrival of two new invasive species, a fouling tunicate on Georges Bank and the deliberate introduction of smallmouth bass into the Margaree-Lake Ainslie salmon river system, indicates that much remains to be done to stem the tide of bioinvaders in this region.

Ballast Water

Ballast water is the single greatest vector of invasive species in the marine realm, yet its discharge is not regulated in Atlantic Canada. As a consequence, much of COMB's energy has been focused on encouraging regulation, research, and increased public awareness of issues pertaining to ballast water as a vector of invasive species.

COMB continues to sit on the Atlantic Sub-Committee for the Management of Ballast Water, a group that has formulated ballast water management rules and fostered research on ballast water discharged in this region. In the past year, COMB participated in two rounds of consultations on changes to the Canada Shipping Act, which initially involved adopting ballast water regulations for the Great Lakes region only. At the second round of consultations last April, we were gratified to hear our calls for national-wide ballast water regulations had been heeded, and Transport Canada officials committed to creating national regulations for ballast water in the upcoming year.

We were especially pleased to hear the designation of the Laurentian Channel as an alternative exchange zone for ballast water was removed from our regional rules due, in large part, to opposition spearheaded by COMB. In order to find an ecologically sensible solution to ballast water exchange for coastal traffic, COMB participated in a bi-national workshop last October whose aim was to designate a discharge zone for ballast that would ensure invasive species are not carried to coastal areas. The results of this workshop, which was attended by policy-makers, industry representatives, and scientists, was well reported on by local media, with COMB appearing on television, radio, and print media. We are also endorsing a risk assessment protocol to evaluate ballast unsafe for

discharge in sensitive coastal areas such as the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

COMB also submitted recommendations regarding the Canadian Green Ship initiative, which included necessitating high standards for treatment of ballast water, sediments and hull fouling organisms, adoption of ballast water treatment technology, and a commitment to research, monitoring and education on the part of ships granted Green Ship status.

Our work in the upcoming year will be to ensure that effective regulations are put in place - including regulations to deal with ships in partial ballast and hull fouling organisms - and that monitoring and research are performed to confirm we are decreasing the threat of introductions through ballast water regulation.

Education and Outreach

Last fall, COMB was honoured to be asked to speak at the tenth anniversary meeting of the North of Smokey Fishermen's Association. Through our discussions, we were able to explain the impacts of invasives, hear from fishermen about how invasive species affect their lives, and offer examples of how fishermen can participate in preventing the spread of invasive species. COMB has also forged links with the Junior Shorekeepers, a school education programme, and we hope to be helping them incorporate invasive species in their monitoring and education projects. In the upcoming year, we will to continue with this outreach, and to create greater links with local divers, recreational anglers and boaters, and aquarists in the region.

Policy Responses to Invasive Species

In spite of the gravity of the threat of invasive species, Canada has had no national strategy to deal with bioinvasions. After participating in the drafting of a national plan on invasive species over the past two years, COMB participated in consultations on a draft national policy on invasive species. We have also submitted comments to the Nova Scotia provincial government, asking them to incorporate invasive species in their "Green Plan."

Looking Beyond Our Borders

Bioinvaders do not stop at international borders, and neither does COMB's activities. We continue

to participate in the bi-national Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel, working with them to co-ordinate regional responses to invasive species. As staff to the Panel, COMB works to increase Canadian participation, creates a monthly information digest on invasives, and assists in Panel administration. COMB also continues to be involved in North American efforts to combat invasive species through our participation in the Commission for Environmental Co-operation, a group which this last year prompted Environment Ministers in Canada, United States, and Mexico to become active to prevent biological invasions in North America.

More Work To Be Done

With two new bioinvasions in the last year, the preceding year saw two new species introductions in Atlantic Canada. A fouling tunicate was found covering more than 90 percent of the benthos in some areas on Georges Bank, an extremely productive fishing ground for scallops. Smallmouth bass were introduced to the Lake Ainslie / Margaree River system, one of the last

reasonably healthy salmon rivers in Atlantic Canada.

-submitted by Gretchen Fitzgerald



Lovely COMB members (l-r) Lara Gibson, Jennifer Ford, Annelise Chapman and Gretchen Fitzgerald.
Photo: "some guy outside of Gus's"

Urban Issues Committee

The Urban Issues Committee (UIC) has been working on a number of issues this year, notably Halifax's Freshwater Brook (FWB), the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) regional planning efforts and upcoming waterfront development.

FWB work included ongoing communication and discussion with interested parties such as Dalhousie University planning and design staff/students, city staff and an ecological designer, regarding potential recognition, restoration or resurrection of FWB. The committee is working with students at the Halifax Grammar School to design a commemorative logo.

Also, the committee was heavily involved in the HRM interim growth controls (development moratorium), originally released on January 22nd. Along with several other EAC committees, the UIC worked hard to solicit support for Council; issuing press releases, encouraging people to call or write their Councilors,

submitting a petition of roughly 600 signatures, communicating with other interest groups such as health and resident, and presenting Mayor Kelly with a Valentine's card (praising the city's regional planning efforts). Committee members attended and spoke at the various public meetings that followed soon after. Several members then gave presentations before Council at the public hearing (March 30th) in support of the strictest of the interim growth control alternatives. The committee also answered enquiries from the press regarding the moratorium.

More recently, the committee has focused efforts on the Tower proposal for the Downtown Halifax waterfront. Committee Chair, David Aalders conducted an interview with ATV news regarding the EAC's position on the proposed development.

-submitted by Dave Aalders and Susanna Cheng

Wilderness Committee



Gully Lake, one of two properties set to be designated as Protected Areas in Fall, 2004. Photo: Irwin R. Barrett

Another year has passed, and the Wilderness Committee gets better and better. A fruitful year in all projects, the WC has been involved in the Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition (NSPLC), continued dialog with the Provincial government, has educated the public on matters of Off Highway Vehicles in Nova Scotia (ATV's etc.), has continued the Public Hikes on Public Lands project, and has embarked upon a new chapter in forestry in Nova Scotia: The Standing Tall Campaign.

Public Lands

The Public Lands Coalition, led by Raymond Plourde (the WC's esteemed coordinator) continues to be a strengthening bond between community and nonprofit groups of all sizes that are concerned with the care and protection of public places and wilderness. The past year has been marked with political promises of protection for Eigg Mountain-James River and Gully Lake areas, and the NSPLC remains committed to ensuring these promises are carried out and that land owned by the public is better protected. The designation of these two magnificent wilderness areas in the northern mainland is scheduled for public consultation in early summer and official designation as Protected Areas in the fall. The Coalition remains

committed to seeing the completion of the Protected Areas Network as promised in 1992 and reinforced in the government's recently released "Green Plan."

The EAC has remained in contact with the Provincial Departments of Environment and Natural Resources on issues of protection of public lands, through a number of meetings attended by EAC board members, staff, and committee volunteers. New efforts are being made to potentially open the lines of communication with the forestry industry in Nova Scotia with the hopes that better communication may result in better on-the-ground practices.

New legislation is imminent for operators of All Terrain Vehicles and Off Highway Vehicles (ATVs and OHVs), and the EAC along with other environmental groups across the province participated in an open process to delve deeper into the issue of these potentially harmful vehicles. The release of the interim report shows that our voice has been heard, but the contentious process remains fuelled with debate, and the effects of influential big business and powerful lobby groups who seek to stifle these rules and regulations. The WC hopes that at the

end of this planning process, strong legislation will be enacted to better protect wilderness habitat and vulnerable public lands.

Standing Tall – Preserving Nova Scotia's Acadian Forests

The Wilderness Committee is proud to announce the completion of the *Standing Tall Campaign – Preserving Nova Scotia's Acadian Forests* proposal, securing \$50,000 from the EJLB Foundation and \$120,000 from the Richard Ivey Foundation for the first 2 years of this project. During 2003-2004, volunteers Beth McAra, Mary Stanway, Lance Bishop, Veronica Sherwood, Ray Plourde, and many others worked to pull together a strong vision for sustainable forestry in Nova Scotia. Volunteer Pat Canning is credited for his work in securing funding for the North Mountain Old Growth Forest Society, linking projects through the development of a sustainable forest manual.

The Standing Tall Campaign addresses the need to reduce clearcutting (98% of current harvesting) and protect sensitive habitats, and promote a gold standard of forest stewardship that is environmentally, socially and economically sound.

In partnership with the Maritime Regional Standards Committee of the Forest Stewardship Council, the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition (NSPLC), and others, the two-year Standing Tall Campaign will be dedicated to improving forestry practices on the working landscape in Nova Scotia. The EAC hopes to communicate lessons learned to other sustainable forestry groups in the region. Thanks to retired Public Administration Professor from Dalhousie University, Paul Pross, who heads up the Standing Tall Advisory group with impressive participants and experts Jeff Amos, Lance Bishop, Bill McKay, Linda Panozzo and Wade Prest.

The Nova Forest Alliance

At the Nova Scotia Environmental Network Fall Gathering in September 2003, the environmental community was approached by the Chair of the Nova Forest Alliance (NFA), Bob Bancroft, to join the Nova Forest Alliance (NFA), a multi-stakeholder group representing groups/individuals who work together to make decisions about what kind of forest and forest policy Nova Scotians wish to work towards. While the NFA does not serve as the sole means for effecting policy change, it does have the capacity to influence policy through determining

which components of alternative policy will be tested, part of the greater process of forestry policy evolution. In March of this year, the Wilderness Committee was voted in as an NFA partner. Veronica Sherwood is acting as the EAC representative until a Standing Tall Coordinator is hired. The EAC and other ENGOs feel strongly that our voices will be heard to ensure that forest policy in Nova Scotia will change to better our provincial ecological and economic integrity.

Public Hikes

The Wilderness Committee plans to continue the Public Hikes on Public Lands hiking project, initiated by Chris Brackley in 2002. People who cherish something are motivated to protect it, and this project is particularly aimed at individuals with little or no hiking experience, in an effort to increase support for the sustainable use and protection of our Public Lands. Participants will receive a copy of the WIC's booklet, 'Public Land on the Chebucto Peninsula.' This year, we plan to work in association with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, a national non-profit organization promoting responsible outdoor recreation through education. Planning of the walks is still in progress, led by volunteer Mary Stanway. We hope to include seashore walks for families this year, as well as wilderness walks.

Forest Stewardship Council

The Maritime Regional Steering Committee (MRSC) of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has been involved in two major tasks this past year. First, the Maritime Regional Standard, which was approved with several conditions attached in 1999, is up for its 5-year review. The MRSC is gathering input from stakeholders to make the Maritime Standard more 'user friendly,' particularly in its interpretation by certifiers and those being certified.

One of the most contentious principles in the Maritime guidelines is its 'no biocides' clause. This was one of the principles given conditional approval. At this time, the national and international parents of FSC-Maritimes are working toward the harmonization of guidelines involving biocides among the various regions of Canada (BC, Boreal, Quebec, etc.) and North America (i.e., New England). We are waiting to hear how our standard will be received and integrated into the larger FSC program.

The second focus of this year's activity (more practical!) is the promotion of FSC-certified wood products. We are in an early period of establishing markets and creating mechanisms to connect certified wood users with certified wood producers. Efforts here involve connecting with architects, designers and builders, with mills, and with building suppliers. We expect this will be the major area of our upcoming work.

We appear to be in the early phase in the growth of FSC, both locally and internationally. The market in North America is nowhere as strong as it is in Europe. However, a number of related movements, including that of the Green Building Council (i.e., Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), have reached Canada in late 2003 or 2004. Some of these, like the GBC's LEED program, specify FSC wood products in their guidelines. In addition, several major independent reports on forestry certification systems have singled out the FSC as the only truly independent, third-party certification system worthy of consideration. We expect that demand will grow for local certified product and hope to provide the mechanisms that will allow

our certified wood producers to efficiently meet this demand.

From the Chair – Our Volunteers

In 2003, projects took off, as did membership in the committee. The WC is now up to approximately 20 members. I can't say enough about the enthusiasm, dedication and passion our volunteers have for conserving our forests, protected areas and wildlife. With the Protected Areas Campaign, Standing Tall, and the Public Hikes all underway we will be moving into the new year stronger than ever – still willing to take on new challenges. We encourage anyone that has a love of nature, advocacy, and environmental education to join us every third Thursday of the month. A final thank you to Bill Matheson for maintaining our listserv and to all WIC members for their time and effort.

For more information, or to VOLUNTEER, go to <http://www.ecologyaction.ca>, or contact us at wilderness@ecologyaction.ca.

-submitted by Mike Milloy

Food Action Committee

Our purpose

The Food Action Committee (FAC) was created in January 2003 with the objective to increase individual and collective food access and self-reliance in Nova Scotia. Our approach as a committee is to celebrate positive food initiatives and have fun with our actions.

Specifically we aim to promote the social, economic, and environmental benefits of locally-produced food; and to promote socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable ways of growing, processing, and distributing food.

Our activities

Over the last year we have been involved in four main projects. The first is the successful establishment of the Farm Conservation Project in Hants County. This exciting project has allowed the EAC to hold the first Working Land Conservation Easement in NS. The Farm Conservation Project will conserve NS farmland and heritage seeds, and preserve and promote ecologically sensitive farming as a way of life.

The second is our ongoing Farmer-Mentor project, in which novice farmers interview their mentors and document important local farm knowledge, using video and audio equipment. This project just received funding to support a new series of interviews, specifically around what NS farmers are doing to promote wilderness, habitat and biodiversity conservation on their farmland.

The third is working to complete the "Eating for a Better World" guide. This guide will be published in pamphlet form and on the web in June 2004. This will be a very valuable addition to our (small but growing) resource library at the EAC.

Our fourth project is organizing the First Annual September Harvest Festival to be held in early September 2004. The Harvest Festival will be a celebration of food that brings together producers and consumers of local, organic food. We will have a summer student, Julia Kemp, coordinating this project.

-submitted by Maggy Burns

Transportation Issues Committee

TRAX



Cyclists participate in a Space Demonstration on Car Free Day. Photo: Margo Ellen Gesser

TRAX staff and volunteers have been hopping this year on sustainable transportation issues ranging from urban sprawl to bike safety to public transit to car pooling and more.

Corporate Trip Reduction Programs

TRAX worked with three corporate and government institutions this year, helping them reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve employee health by supporting transportation options such as cycling, public transit, telecommuting, car-pooling, etc. Through luncheon workshops, events such as the Commuter Challenge, lotteries for transit passes, and communications, TRAX has supported thousands of employees in the HRM to reduce car-use and turn to healthier transport options. This year, for the first time, a province-wide government email was sent out promoting TRAX's carpooling and vanpool information.

Commuter Challenge

2003 saw the highest participation rates ever in the HRM, with over 700 employees from 47 workplaces taking part in this week-long challenge to get to work other than by single-occupancy-vehicle.

Policy

TRAX coordinated a submission from EAC to the HRM Regional Plan on climate change, compact urban design and sustainable transportation. We also built broad public support for Council's development moratorium on sprawl. We provided a detailed submission to Transport Canada on their proposed Sustainable Development Strategy. We organized a public forum on Climate Change in the HRM. We organized the fifth Vehicle Emissions Testing Clinic where 245 motor vehicles were tested over a three day period. And we contributed transport-related questions and analysis to the Environmental Report Cards submitted to provincial election candidates.

Cycling

TRAX helped organize Bike Week events, as well as the 2nd Corey Mock Memorial Bike Ride, to reinforce the need for improved bicycle infrastructure. Car Free Day, Sept. 22, was celebrated with a Space Demonstration, where cyclists hung frames the size of cars off their bikes to illustrate how little space bikes take compared to cars. We played a leadership role on the Bicycle Advisory Committee of Council. A Cyclists Rights Sub-Committee of TIC was formed to disseminate information on the legal rights of cyclists.

Public Transit and U-Pass

TRAX was key in developing the Urban Transportation Showcase proposal which received \$14 million from Transport Canada, the province and the HRM to support bus rapid transit infrastructure, including bicycle facilities and racks on buses. We were also key in promoting the successful U-Pass (bulk, mandatory purchase of transit passes) program at St. Mary's University, and in supporting similar initiatives at Dalhousie and Mount St. Vincent Universities.

Health

TRAX continued the Two Feet nursing program which brings together nursing students and corporate employees to improve transportation habits. TRAX also initiated a new program called ADAPT (the Association of Doctors for the

Advancement of Physical Transportation), a group of ten physicians aiming to advance the case for investment in infrastructure that encourages Active Transportation. The goal of the group is to become a registered section of the Medical Society of Nova Scotia.

Promotions

We more than doubled our website pages this year, adding content on a variety of issues

including bike/transit/pedestrian safety, car costs, sprawl, and more. See for yourself at www.trax.ns.ca. We purchased radio ads for the Commuter Challenge, Corey Mock Memorial Bike Ride, and promo of Metro Transit. Every public transit bus in the city had humorous and informative TRAX ads inside the bus, with 20 outside ads.

-submitted by Angela Bischoff

Active and Safe Routes to School



Active & Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) touched more schools this year than ever before as it walked and wheeled through the province. ASRTS is a partnership between the Ecology Action Centre, Go for Green and the Nova Scotia Office of Health Promotion, Sport and Recreation Division.

International Walk to School Day took place on October 8, 2003 and exceeded all expectations with a whopping 81 schools participating from 44 communities across Nova Scotia. This is over three times the number of schools from last year! An estimated 24,000 students participated on this day or sometime during International Walk to School Week (October 6 to 10, 2003).

Highlights of International Walk to School Day include special events at two schools. Sackville Centennial Elementary in Lower Sackville kicked off its new walking program where the Golden Shoe Trophy will be awarded on a monthly basis to the class logging the highest number of kms walked. Wolfville Elementary in Wolfville launched two walking school buses, which will continue operating on Walking Wednesdays on a monthly basis, with hopes to make it a weekly activity.

Over 100 schools province-wide benefited from ASRTS in 2003-2004 through presentations and support, International Walk to School Day and distribution of curriculum resources. ASRTS maintained a good presence in the media

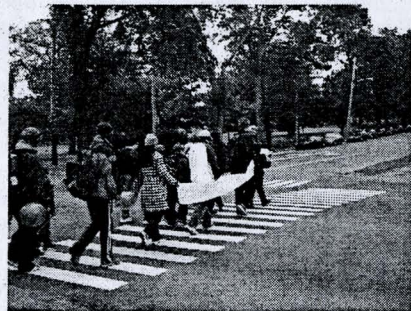
throughout the year, especially leading up to and including International Walk to School Day.

Key contacts and partnerships developed over the year with various provincial and local recreation, safety, health and environmental organizations to further the promotion of walking, cycling, etc. to and from school. As a result, regional committees formed to help direct pilot projects in schools within three regions of Nova Scotia that will take place over the coming year.

Two student volunteers from Dalhousie University took on special projects to further develop ASRTS. Sherry Huybers, a master's student, developed an evaluation plan for the program. It will be implemented over the coming year. Larry Phillips, an undergraduate student, developed a health promotion strategy. It will be incorporated into the three pilot projects (above).

Huge thanks go out to the many volunteers participating in Active & Safe Routes to School over the last year: students, school staff, parents, community members, university students and government and non-profit organizations.

-submitted by Janet Barlow



A walking school bus at Wolfville Elementary on International Walk to School Day

Pathways for People Active Transportation Tour

In 2003, the Pathways for People Active Transportation Tour took foot across Nova Scotia to promote active transportation, its benefits and how to incorporate it into communities. It was a partnership of the Ecology Action Centre's Active & Safe Routes to School program (ASRTS), Youth for Environmental Action (YEA) and the Nova Scotia Office of Health Promotion, Sport and Recreation Division. Based out of the Ecology Action Centre, the coordinators of ASRTS and YEA, Janet Barlow and Robynn Moody, made up the tour team.

The project occurred between February and December 2003, while tour 'visits' took place throughout the months of May to late October. The Pathways for People team met with youth, decision makers and community members. In total 11 communities were targeted, reaching over 700 people (three-quarters of which were youth) through meetings, facilitated forums, workshops and school presentations. Communities included Lockeport, Shelburne,

Yarmouth, Tusket, Mahone Bay, Bridgewater, Chester, Sydney, Glace Bay, Wolfville and Windsor.

With an emphasis on children and youth, the tour helped to focus attention on how these communities can take advantage of existing supports for active transportation and brainstorm ideas on new ideas and projects. It left communities with a starting point to plan a more active community.

A number of towns formed active transportation committees as a result of the tour. Contacts made in many more communities that did not participate are interested in pursuing projects in the future. Another spin-off of the tour is the Walking & Wheeling Quarterly e-newsletter, which began distribution in September of 2003. It is an information and networking tool for communities and those interested in furthering active transportation.

-submitted by Janet Barlow

Bike Again!

In its fourth year of existence, Bike Again! continued refurbishing and recycling of used bicycles during the spring, summer and fall of 2003-2004. Along with our weekly workshops in Halifax, we conducted a summer outreach project in West Hants, Yarmouth and Hants North. Bicycles were also collected from the town of Chester and contact was made with many of the waste reduction coordinators throughout the province to encourage them to divert bicycles from the landfills. Figure 1 is a summary of the number of bicycles reused by the Bike Again! project. We spent our winter Wednesdays reorganizing our workshop space and developing better systems of storing and sorting bicycle parts. Our Bike Art Project gave out small grants to produce functional items out of used bike parts. The final show was held on January 16th 2004 at the Italian Cultural Centre in Halifax. Over 200 people came to see the show of 21 pieces of art - lamps, shoulder bags, computer desks, patio tables and recycling bins - all made out of bicycle parts.

-submitted by Susanna Fuller

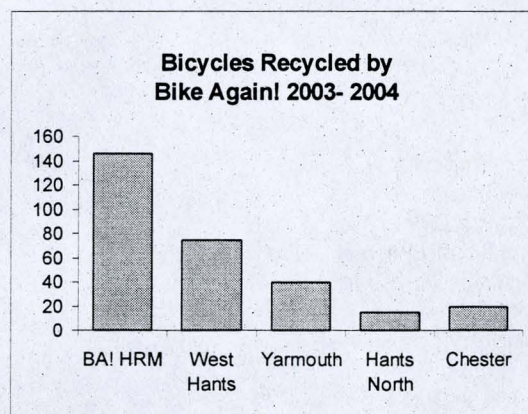


Figure 1

Pesticide Free Christmas Trees and Wreaths

Once again, the EAC helped people celebrate a chemical-free Christmas, through our annual tree and wreath campaign. Over 30 volunteers and staff worked hard to make the centre's second biggest fundraiser a success. Tasks included taking countless orders by phone and at the farmer's market, entering orders in a database, making and decorating wreaths, advertising and participating in the Pier 20 pick-up day, just to name a few. The beautiful trees and wreaths

were supplied by Sheldon Rafuse of Family Trees in New Ross. This year's effort raised approximately \$4000.00 to support the operation of the centre.

Thank you to all those who supported the campaign and hope to see you again next year!

-submitted by Jayne Roma

Garden Party – May 2003

The 5th annual EAC Garden Party and Auction was held at St. Mary's Boat Club on Sunday, May 25, 2003. The usual cast of performers, John Dunsworth (auctioneer par excellence) and Olga Milosovitch (emcee extraordinaire) gave stellar presentations that entertained our audience while maximizing the values of our auction items. Fabulous music was provided by Ian MacKinnon and Brian Bourne. Beverages were supplied by Major Sponsors- Just Us Coffee Roasters and Sparkling Springs. Catering and carrying were efficiently and effectively organized by Penny Doherty (volunteer co-ordinator).

The event was another record-breaker in that those attending had the most fun ever. And of course we made some money: \$13,000. The annual auction is a superb example of how individuals and businesses can make a huge difference by donating time and or items.

EAC therefore offers a sincere thank-you to the Garden Party Committee Chair, Wendy MacGregor and Committee members for unflinching organizational skills and attention to detail.

-submitted by P. Cameron and W. MagGregor

Major sponsors for the Garden Party (donating items or services valued at \$300 or greater):

Avon Emporium
Shaw Brick
Bergman Concrete
Nova Scotia Potters Guild
Haliburton House Inn
Metro Transit
Raspberry Bay Stone
The Herald
The Miller Group
Just Us Coffee
Oceanstone Inn and Cottages

Sparkling Springs
Bebbington Industries
Lakeland Plant World
Home Grown Organic Foods
Shining Waters Country Inn and Cottages
Tree Works
Ski Tuonela
Bubby Mooers
Carsand Mosher
Flight of Fancy
Edmonds Landscaping

Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Ecology Action Centre. A list does not come close to demonstrating the scope of hard work and sacrifice that many of our volunteers, as well as the staff and board (who regularly go above and beyond their call of duty), devote to the organization. Without their dedication, much of our work would not be possible. For that, we are truly grateful. We also would like to apologize in advance to the valuable volunteers we have undoubtedly missed on this list.

Aaron Booth	Emma Boardman	Leah Lefler	Ramey Adams
Aarti Ratha	Emily Austin	Leif Vernest	Randy Mosher
Alexander MacDonald	Erin Lecky	Lianne Giswold	Ray Plourde
Alison Cude	Frank Fawson	Linda Tam	Richard Ward
Alistair Coville	Fred Harrington	Lisa Bugden	Rob Hansen
Amanda Barry	Freideman-Brauer	Lisa Kretz	Rob Maguire
Amanda Dainow	Freiderike Kirstein	Lisa McCuaig	Rob McLean
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