

Soil & Water Conservation Society of Metro Halifax (SWCSMH')

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Ref.: bwab04_02_01 (6 pages total)
To: Chairman
Bedford Waters Advisory Board (BWAB)
HRM, City Hall, Halifax
From: S. M. Mandaville B.E., Post-Grad Dip., Professional Lake Manage.
Chairman and Scientific Director
Date: February 17, 2004
Subject: Overview archives and associated events dating as far back as July-1987

Kindly forgive any typos/grammar!

This is written to avoid any possible future misunderstandings and I hope you will include this informal missive atleast as an Info Item in your agenda package so that all the present members of the BWAB are aware of it. This is in no particular order!

NOTE: I especially thank and salute the BWAC under its past Chairman, Mr. Clarke Bedford, for having supported our lake development capacity recommendation re Papermill Lake and see his letter to the North West Community Council dated November 20, 1996 (see <http://lakes.chebucto.org/WATERSHEDS/PAPERMILLK/PAPERMILL/papermill.html#bwac1996>)! I am aware nothing pragmatic has transpired on the part of HRM since then, alas!

Over the years this pragmatic scientific society (SWCSMH) and other groups/committees that I headed have had several dealings with your predecessor, the Bedford Waters Advisory Committee (BWAC), as well as with the elected Town of Bedford Council itself when I made a 30-minute overhead presentation which was arranged for by the then Mayor of Bedford, the Hon. Peter Christie CMA. HRM Councillor, Len Goucher, was present as well since he asked me an extremely intelligent question (call me if you want to know what it was).

I will summarise only a handful of select events here; to list all of them with detailed archives will probably cover a 100 pages!

This even goes back to August of 1987, yes that far back!

[!] The long defunct Sackville Rivers Advisory Board (SRAB), an adhoc committee of the Halifax County and history with BWAC:

The SRAB never had any formal support of staff (e.g., secretarial) unlike the support that all three present boards of the HRM receive. All appeals to both the Planning as well as the Engineering Departments went unheeded during the late 1980s, alas!

During the summer of 1987, I became the Chairman of the said SRAB only **by default**.

I never wanted to be Chairman but I was the only member of the board left for various reasons and if I had not taken the responsibility (and the accompanying headaches), perhaps nothing would have transpired at the Sackville Rivers since there was ZERO PRAGMATIC INTEREST in Sackville at that time.

The BWAC was extremely concerned with the perpetual (alleged) soil pollution from Sackville although BWAC never gave me any scientific data to back up their severe allegations! I used the term `soil' above since the term `silt' is incorrect unless one has a geotechnical gradation of the soil particles carried out!

Indeed, we may have been the only volunteer group to ever monitor the river for various parameters, not just for TSS and the like (and I verified that recently with my friend, Walter Regan, the immense force behind another group, the Sackville Rivers Association-SRA).

Some of the work actually commenced under a Federal-Provincial agreement initiated on the personal intervention of the **Hon. Don McInnes** when he was the minister of the NS Dept. of Environment for a short while. I had appealed to him at the Legislature personally on May 24, 1988!

We are still involved (as SWCSMH) in the watershed of the Sackville Rivers but that is more in advanced limnological parameters (see <http://lakes.chebucto.org/WATERSHEDS/SACKVILLER/sackviller.html>)!

BWAC used to complain all the time to the media and I may still have some articles in my archives in storage areas away from my place of residence.

On the invitation of the BWAC's Chairman (Grant Walker?), I attended a formal BWAC meeting on February 24, 1988.

Although the minutes may not reveal the whole truth (since minutes are never verbatim), a few members of the BWAC then literally jumped on me and gave me hell which I thought was extremely unprofessional and unethical! No one with a scientific background ever behaves that way, especially with some one who is trying to do something on a pragmatic level rather than act as a back-seat adviser! This is ofcourse past history but I felt the need to mention it for certain reasons and as archives.

You can also see the real conservative (yes I used to be a strong Conservative then in more ways than one) press release I gave in response to a scathing criticism of the BWAC which was reported by Mr. Paul O'Connell of the Sackville bureau of Halifax Herald Ltd. on August 12, 1987 (see my web URL, http://lakes.chebucto.org/WATERSHEDS/SACKVILLER/PIC/bwac_1987_08.jpg). I am also inserting this article on page-5 here.

I do not have the BWAC's press release with me here but I will find it and when I do, it will also be added to my web page on the Sackville River archives (<http://lakes.chebucto.org/WATERSHEDS/SACKVILLER/archives.html>). Reporter, Mr. O'Connell had interviewed me as a result of the scathing criticism by the BWAC!

Kindly note that all our URLs are case-sensitive and will not work on your web browsers if not inserted properly; alternately, they are all accessible from our Master Homepage (<http://lakes.chebucto.org/>)!

[II] This independent scientific society, the Soil & Water Conservation Society of Metro Halifax ('SWCSMH') and long relationship with the BWAC (select examples only):

This society was formed at the end of December 1989 by the key members of the Sackville Rivers Advisory Board (SRAB) as well as by a handful of professors in limnology from Dalhousie University and elsewhere. We formed this since we were fed up with accusations and counter-accusations and we felt an-arms length scientific group that is beholden to no one would be the best.

We held an inaugural semi-scientific seminar at the Cobequid Multi Service Centre on January 27, 1990 (see <http://lakes.chebucto.org/HISTORY/PIC/INAUGURAL.jpg>). I have also inserted the invitation on page-6 here.

ALL THE THEN EXISTING THREE (3) FORMAL MUNICIPAL ADVISORY BOARDS WERE INVITED AND THEY INCLUDED THE DARTMOUTH LAKES ADVISORY BOARD (DLAB), THE BEDFORD WATERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BWAC), and the HALIFAX LAKES & WATERWAYS COMMITTEE (HLAWC).

I followed it up with personal phone invitations to atleast Mrs. Audrey Manzer of the DLAB as well as to the Planning Department of the Town of Bedford since I was not familiar with the Chairman or Vice Chairmen of the other two municipal committees.

NO ONE RESPONDED TO ATLEAST TWO (2) RSVPs.

Even my aforementioned phone calls went unanswered!

I do almost every coordination single-handed and I don't have secretaries or assistants.

This scientific society (SWCSMH), unlike many other varied groups, has no offices, no regular hired staff or workers; it is totally run by 100% volunteers from personal homes! Indeed, a handful of us even pay some of the overhead from our own pockets since we feel our scientific research is needed as any authentic LIMNOLOGIST knows!

Even in our advanced limnological research, first ever in this area of Canada, all the research is spearheaded by me! If not, it does not get done.

Hence, people cannot expect me to be everything!

If anyone wants to know something, all they have to do is send me an email and/or call me.

Indeed that is the very thing one of your present members, chemical scientist, Sandy Ray PhD, did last year for which I admire him. We even met at his residence. He sent me an excellent humble Christmas card which I will be having mounted at Staples soon!

I had also made several presentations to your BWAC and attended a few other meetings.

Important Note:-- In addition, I had invited your longtime chairman and a good acquaintance of mine, Microbiologist, Marvin Silver PhD, as well as his successor, Bob Kerr, several times (in total) to participate with us, on a scientific level, but none responded.

It seems people are more impressed by walkways, etc., and I can understand that as scientific research is not `visible'! It is pages and pages of graphs, regression relationships, etc., and can ofcourse be boring to a non-scientist!

NEITHER I NOR ANY MEMBER OF MY GROUP HAVE EVER OPPOSED ANY DEVELOPMENTS TO DATE (not even gravel pits)! WE CARRY OUT ADVANCED LIMNOLOGICAL STUDIES, AND THAT IS OUR PRIME FUNCTION!

Yes, I as the scientific rep of my group, do give press releases now and then since that is the only way to get the message across. In addition, in the past, the Press did attend some of our whopping forty (40) public and private presentations and I am real greatful to them for reporting on same. I know some of it creates controversy, indeed any articles on ecosystem problems seem to create controversy, alas!

After all many respected professors at Dalhousie University also make all sorts of Press Releases (e.g., Prof. Dr. Ransom Myers, Prof. Dr. Jeff Hutchings, Prof. Dr. Martin Willison, and many others) which lead to even more severe controversies but no one seems to give them hell!

I ALSO WANT TO EMPHATICALLY STATE THAT I INVITED YOUR BWAC AT OTHER TIMES AS WELL TO MY SEMI-SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATIONS AND I NEVER HEARD FROM ANYONE. ONE CAN INVITE ONLY SO MANY TIMES!

The only exception to the above is when Dr. Sandy Ray and some other person attended the presentation I made at the Keshen Goodman Library on November 24, 2001; Dr. Ray complimented me quite heavily then and he did not do that just because we were both born in the same country (we argue as well, hahhahaha)!

Cc: North West Community Council NWCC, HRM
David Briggins, Manager, Water & Wastewater Division, NSDEL
John Sheppard PEng, Manager, Environmental Services, EMS, HRM
His Worship, Peter Kelly MBA, Mayor, HRM

Water board willing to talk

By Paul O'Connell
Sackville Bureau

There may not be much to say, but the new chairman of the Sackville Rivers Advisory Board (SRAB) says he is willing to talk to his counterparts at the Bedford Waters Advisory Committee (BWAC) about the condition of the Sackville River.

Shalom Mandaville was responding to a recent invitation to meet with members of BWAC, who are planning a cleanup of garbage in the river, but are worried about silt runoff into the river from construction sites upriver in Sackville.

Mr. Mandaville said silt is not flowing directly into the Sackville River, but some is probably flowing into the Little Sackville River, which runs through some of Lower Sackville's most dense development.

The smaller river joins the Sackville River near the Gate of Heaven Cemetery. The Sackville River then runs through Bedford, emptying into Bedford Basin.

Though the silt can cause a problem, there is not much that can be done about it, Mr. Mandaville said.

He said the county has been strict in recent years with developers building near the Little Sackville River.

But he said the board does not have the right to ask the county to stop development along the river, as long as there is no law against it. And, he said, if the board were to protest against development, no one would listen anyway.

"If you always complain, people never listen to you. Then you lose your credibility."

Mr. Mandaville, who recently took over the board from longtime chairman Anne Merritt, said he would like to see a protected walkway established alongside the Sackville River.

He also said he would like to see rehabilitated salmon stocks in the river. Though thousands of salmon fry have been released into the river in the past two years, it is still unclear if the river can support them.

August 12, 1987
Mail-Star.

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY OF METRO HALIFAX

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Date: 20 December 1989

A N N O U N C E M E N T

A working session with respect to volunteer involvement relating to health of lakes in the greater metropolitan area of Halifax (with special reference to those in the County of Halifax, Halifax City and the Town of Bedford) will be held on Saturday the 27th of January 1990 in the main board room of the Cobequid Multi-Service Centre, 70 Memory Lane, Lower Sackville at 9.15 AM sharp. You are cordially invited to attend and you are welcome to invite any of your friends who might be interested in participating actively 'In Harmony with the Regulatory Agencies'.

It is not necessary to be members of our voluntary association.

There are also no demands placed on you and you could offer to participate either on a short term or long term basis depending upon your preference and interest on a quasi-technical level. The actual involvement could be tailored to fit one's free time and combined with your choice of lake and your relationship as well as concern regarding same.

All throughout, the work will be carried out under the supervision of respected limnologists (specialists in fresh water quality) in co-operation with the Nova Scotia Dept of Environment, Dalhousie University and might involve Bedford Institute of Oceanography depending on how all of us participate.

In the long run, we can see immense benefits to us and the future generations of Nova Scotians. In the short run, it will give you some idea about the health of the lake of your choice and possible remedial measures may result. This is a far better approach (and scientifically credible) rather than imagined personal opinions and the entire process would be a co-operative approach.

Similar public involvement approach has proven productive elsewhere in North America and in addition could form a basis on which to negotiate with relevant authorities.

This method also tends to impress the technocrats who ultimately advise elected leaders of our society.

Since this is being organised by a volunteer, we would appreciate if you could kindly drop a note to the Dartmouth address or leave a message on the answering machine re names and numbers of people at the earliest.

Thanking you

Shalom M.Mandaville