

WILLIAMS LAKE CONSERVATION COMPANY
A REGISTERED NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOUNDED 1968
www.williamslakeecc.org

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2007

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2007 7:30 PM
CAPT. WILLIAM SPRY CENTRE

Everyone sharing our mandate to preserve the health of Williams Lake is welcome..

Acting President Melanie Dobson will report on the year's activities, we will elect the Board of Directors for 2007-2008, consider new business and discuss our various concerns. The Board needs your ideas so please mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend. You can also add items for the agenda by calling any of the Board members (phone numbers below).

Suggestions for the incoming Board of Directors are welcome. Is your area represented? Contact any member of the Board for further information or to put forward a name.

Engineering Study

Thanks to the very generous financial support of members and friends we were able in 2005 to commission a study of the dam at the eastern end of Williams Lake. It revealed what many suspected: the original wooden structure underneath all the subsequent repairs with concrete and rock is washed out. The study indicated what has to be done to create a structure that would meet today's standards. The estimated cost would be several hundred thousand dollars.

We continue to explore alternatives to such a major undertaking and to look for sources of funding. We are waiting for a reply to our request for an extension to our application to renew the water licence, which expired in December 2006. The licence authorizes us to maintain the dam and spillway and requires us to ensure that the overflow channel is not blocked and the water level not exceed 61.2 ft.

2006 Annual Clean-Up

Spearheaded by President Andrew Ross, the WLCC held its annual clean-up of the lakeshore area in September 2006. With enthusiastic participation from the younger generation and under the watchful eye of the "gnome" a number of bags of debris were collected and prizes awarded for the "best," the most and the weirdest. Many thanks to all who took part or supported the event in other ways. And thanks to all who pick up rubbish during the rest of the year.

Water testing and water levels

As in previous years, the WLCC took water samples last summer at three different locations on Williams Lake and also from Colpitt Lake to be tested for coliforms. The results for Williams Lake continue to show it safe for swimming, etc. Colpitt Lake is somewhat affected closest to adjacent development but overall well within acceptable limits. We will continue to record summertime water levels in Williams Lake, noting the correlation between rainfall, or lack thereof, and water levels. You can find graphs of coliform data, water levels and precipitation on our website.

Remembering Ron Hanson

The WLCC sympathizes with Mrs. Hanson on the death of her husband, Ron Hanson. For many years Ron was alderman/councilor for our area, supporting our efforts in a variety of ways. He spoke of his affection for Williams Lake, once saying that as a boy in Halifax's north end he and his friends used to swim across the Arm, climb the hill, and spend the rest of the day swimming in Williams Lake!

Website

The WLCC website has been updated with new photos and information. Many thanks to Stewart Cameron for keeping it current. Look us up at www.williamslakeecc.org !

Governor's Brook Development (Kimberly-Lloyd)

In April 2005 the WLCC dropped legal appeals against a development planned by Kimberly-Lloyd Developments for 156 acres of land lying between MacIntosh Run and Colpitt Lake. We subsequently met with representatives of Kimberly-Lloyd to discuss changes to the development agreement which Chebucto Community Council had approved despite our objections. We focused on changes providing greater protection to both the MacIntosh Run and Colpitt Lake/Williams Lake watersheds. We discussed ways to minimize blasting, to reduce alterations in water flow and quality and how density within the site could be varied to provide better buffer zones for the watersheds.

We are pleased that the developer has agreed to the complete removal of the 48-unit apartment building that was to have been built on the highest point directly above Colpitt Lake. An amendment to

the development agreement was recently presented at a public meeting and will soon be put before CCC for approval. We hope to agree on additional improvements in our ongoing discussions.

Ravenscraig Development

Anyone familiar with the Williams Lake Road will be aware of the development progressing on the western side of the road on the site of the old sand/salt depot.

In 1995 Halifax City Council initiated a community-based planning process for these 53 acres of municipal land, known locally as the Fleming Park-Williams Lake Road Lands. In 1998 a committee of local residents, including WLCC board members and then Council representative Graham Read, supported by HRM staff, was formed. This committee completed an environmental planning study of the municipal land and two adjacent private parcels and collected ideas for the site through a community survey and public meetings. The committee recommendations, including a concept plan, were presented to Chebucto Community Council in 2000. Council accepted this report and referred it to HRM staff.

The concept plan called for rezoning the privately held lands from R-2 to R-1 and for the city property along Williams Lake Road previously zoned R-2 to be rezoned as P (Park and Institutional). The plan included an active recreation area and trails connecting it to the remainder of Fleming Park and adjacent neighbourhoods. It also suggested exchanging less environmentally sensitive parts of the municipal land for environmentally sensitive portions of the adjacent private land where this would provide greater protection for Whimsical Lake, Williams Lake and the Frog Pond.

In 2004 HRM began negotiations with Polycorp Developments, who had purchased the major private parcel adjacent to the municipal land along Williams Lake Road. Later that year HRM held a public information meeting concerning the proposed rezoning of the municipal land, and an initial plan for the Polycorp land was presented. Many in the community were concerned about aspects of this plan. However, the developer willingly worked with the committee to agree on a revision that was closer to the community plan. This was presented to the public in Feb. 2005 and later approved by HRM following further amendments.

The first single family houses have now been built; Ravenscraig Drive, connecting Joyce Avenue with Williams Lake Road, has been paved: sidewalks are being installed. Most of the earth work. is done. The quarry face is nearly gone and the final sculpting of the hill should take place soon. The work to control runoff is almost completed. The upper pond adjacent to Williams Lake Road has been redirected to its original, natural route (after draining for years into the roadside ditch along Williams Lake Road). We hope this engineered wetland area will slow runoff and allow it to settle and clear before entering Williams Lake. HRM has promised to assume responsibility for the long-term effectiveness of this wetland.

Although Polycorp had planned to install the active playing surface at the base of the quarry, HRM intends to do this themselves, covering the cost out of next year’s budget. The trail system with a link to the main part of Fleming Park on the far side of Purcell’s Cove Road as envisaged in the Community Concept Plan also remains unrealized and will require further effort from our community.

MEMBERSHIP—PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR JOIN THE WLCC

WLCC membership remains \$20 per household. This is our only regular income. Memberships can be paid at the AGM or by returning the attached form. Heather Watts’ history of the Williams Lake area is available for \$5 when renewing or joining; additional copies are \$10 each. **The mandate of the WLCC is to protect the health of Williams Lake, for the benefit of all. Everyone who shares this goal is welcome as a member.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2006-2007

Stewart Cameron		Redwood Avenue
Melanie Dobson	477-0688	Wyndrock Drive
Jane Gallinaugh		Litchfield Crescent
Kathleen Hall	477-4159	Hall’s Road
Alison James		Williams Lake Road
Martha Leary	420-1520	Redwood Avenue
Andrew Ross	477-7906	Wyndrock Drive
Kay Singleton		Birchview Drive
Anne von Maltzahn	477-3353	Wenlock Grove

MEMBERSHIP \$20.00 (\$80.00 for 4 years)

TO: WILLIAMS LAKE CONSERVATION COMPANY, c/o A. von Maltzahn
15 Wenlock Grove, Halifax, NS B3P 1P6

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ e-mail*: _____

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