



Halifax North West Trails – Winter 2018

Recently, HRM purchased 197 acres of land, marking the first parcel to be acquired by HRM, since 2006. This is very exciting news indeed! This land will be combined with Provincial Crown land, already protected as the Wilderness Area, to create the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes Regional Park, as proposed in the Regional Plan. As HNWTA and others engage community and decision makers, help HRM listen to your ideas for the park. Watch for public events soon.

You can also participate in 2018-19 budget decisions by using the Budget Allocator at www.halifax.ca Or better still, talk to your elected officials to express your wishes. If you have walked or hiked in the proposed park area, you will be able to share your experiences. The sooner that safe and well marked trails are planned, the better for all users. It is anticipated that more funds will be needed over time for additional land purchases to plan and create the park. It will all take time.

With the varied weather expected until spring, urban trails and pathways may be covered in snow, ice or cleared for winter maintenance; walk safely. To participate in winter hikes and/or snowshoeing events, check out the regional lists posted by Hike Nova Scotia, www.hikenovascotia.ca

The Halifax North West Trails group is planning upcoming activities including simple maintenance and stewardship. We are reaching out to trail users to help monitor your favourite trail, we need you! Changes such as trees down, dumping of garbage, building debris or household waste including branches that interfere with public safety and appreciation of nature is where we need your help. Risk management of the trails in Mainland North will take many eyes on the ground. We are planning a Workshop in the early spring to help guide our Volunteer Ambassadors. The HRM budget for all parks and trails is slim; volunteers are their best asset on this topic! Contact us if you would like to participate...families or walking partners make a great team if using trails regularly. And recent winds brought down lots of trees, many across popular trails. Call 311 to keep the pathways open with help from HRM.

Volunteers are needed for other tasks as well...mapping, grant writing, communications, as well as helping with guided walks. Volunteer for a few hours in a work party or maintenance activity, or put your skills forward to support our small but mighty team as a committee member. Dog owners - we need you to adopt a Bag Dispenser; let us know and we will provide bags to help keep one of our 6 dispensers filled! And a reminder, the filled bags go in garbage pails, not on the side of the trails!

To add your name to our list of Volunteers, contact us through www.halifaxnorthwesttrails.ca or HNWTA.communications@gmail.com

Wendy McDonald, board member