

# Action is Our Middle Name

## WILDERNESS

Nova Scotia continues to be threatened by the growing gold mining industry. Atlantic Gold's request to increase the tailings dam wall at their mine at Moose River was approved by the province without an environmental assessment, further risking a dam breach. Another company, Anaconda, was granted approval to open a gold mine at Goldboro. We continue to advocate against these destructive mines and push for government processes that truly prioritize the environment and communities.

The government has made little progress on further implementing recommendations from the "Lahey Report" on forestry practices, or on designating more protected areas. These were commitments in the Progressive Conservation election platform in 2021, and were enshrined in legislation in EGCCRA.

To reconnect people with nature, we partnered with Our HRM Alliance to host guided hikes at three locations in HRM's fledgling greenbelt. There are still places worth fighting for in Nova Scotia.

## TRANSPORTATION

The ever-popular Pop-Up Bike Hub (PUBH) was on the road again all summer long, the program partnered with over 19 communities across Nova Scotia to provide 20-minute tune-ups. The PUBH mini, our new electric cargo bike version visited five HRM communities on a weekly basis. Between the two programs over 450 bikes were repaired.

Our Youth Active Transportation and Art project is now complete! School groups designed, printed, and distributed their designs and posters to share their stories about active transportation successes in their communities and the Active Transportation challenges they faced.

We had three successful Bike Buddy cohorts with 40 participants throughout the Spring and Summer. Many buddies continue to meet up and arrange their own group rides post participation!

The Nova Scotia Active Transportation Future dashboard has been updated! Federal funding has been approved with quarterly updates to follow through June 2024. This dashboard enables us to track the province's active transportation infrastructure goals.

## MARINE

We worked closely with our partners at Dalhousie this summer on our pilot eelgrass restoration project, studying the potential for restoring damaged eelgrass meadows and the role that eelgrass plays in sequestering carbon.

We also launched our Kelp Kurious project this summer, and our new Seaweed Farming Education Centre is up and running in Mahone Bay. Kelp Kurious is helping folks learn about opportunities in the seaweed sector - supporting small-scale seaweed farming and small-scale seaweed product entrepreneurs.

In September, with contributions from our coastal community partners, we submitted comprehensive recommendations to the province to reform Nova Scotia's system of regulation for aquaculture. We also teamed up with the Healthy Bays Network to launch "Salmon Wars" — an explosive exposé on the sea-cage salmon farming industry. With award-winning journalists Doug Frantz and Catherine Collins, we hosted six events across Nova Scotia to demand a transition away from open-net pen salmon farming.

## FOOD

The Food Team continues to develop the JustFOOD Action Plan for the Halifax Region, a municipal food strategy co-developed by the Halifax Food Policy Alliance and HRM. Public engagement for the plan is complete and has been captured in a What We Heard Report. We will present this report to Regional Council in the new year, where we will ask Council to sign on to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.

As a member of the Nova Scotia Coalition for Healthy School Food, we continue to advocate for the province to deliver a federally supported school food program that is adapted to the community context, culturally appropriate, and locally sourced.

We're also working hard to ensure there are strong policies to support farmers under the newly announced Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP). The Food Team is lobbying the province to develop climate-friendly cost-share programs that will be delivered under this framework.

## ENERGY & CLIMATE

The Energy & Climate Team has been busy! The Faithful Footprints program has successfully engaged with over 20 congregations across Atlantic Canada to significantly reduce energy use and operating costs in churches. We've leveraged needs assessments from indigenous communities to identify how energy efficiency can best serve community members.

We provided detailed submissions to the federal consultation on the clean electricity regulation, emphasizing the need to send a clear market signal to transition to renewable electricity generation.

In July, we released the Atlantic Loop report, detailing specifics on how Nova Scotia and New Brunswick could build out energy supply and increase regional coordination in decarbonizing the electricity sector.

In June, we successfully lobbied for an Atlantic Canada-wide feasibility study for electric school bus deployment. We are currently engaged in discussions with the federal government to lower EV wait times by establishing sales targets for smaller provinces within a federal EV supply mandate.

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Built Environment Team has continued to be a voice for sustainable growth across Halifax Regional Municipality. During summer and fall of 2022, we collaborated with Our HRM Alliance to deliver the 'hike the greenbelt of Halifax' guided hike series. Over 100 people came out to learn about the Halifax Greenbelt, a network of green spaces in HRM that provide free and public access to nature and help direct growth into existing urban areas. The Built Environment Team engaged with every opportunity for public input in the Municipality's review of the Regional Plan, the HRM's highest level planning document that sets the vision and strategy for future growth. This included formal written submissions and presentations at public hearings. We continue to push for more livable and resilient complete communities through advocating for implementation of the Municipality's priority plans for integrated mobility, protecting our natural assets, and economic prosperity.

## COASTAL

The Coastal & Water Team continues our work with Nova Scotia Environment & Climate Change staff in finalizing the Coastal Protection Act (CPA) and pushing for follow-up legislation to address gaps in on-site septic system and well regulations. We are hopeful that the CPA will roll out in early 2023.

Throughout this fall and winter, we will be working with three Dalhousie students - one in planning and two in law - on research projects related to our new coastal access initiative. Understanding and improving coastal access in Nova Scotia is a critical part of improving our relationship to shoreline ecosystems, and adapting to a changing ocean.

We also continue to advocate for stronger wetland protection across Nova Scotia, and are actively working with other organizations as we plan for World Wetlands Day on February 2, 2023.