

# Action is our Middle Name

## MARINE

After 16 months of cumulative work to establish the Local Catch Canada, our first in-person retreat was held in April in Vancouver. The Local Catch Canada is hosted by the EAC and is a growing, cross-country network of harvesters Indigenous and non-Indigenous, seafood businesses, non-profits and researchers working to build a more equitable, community-based seafood system. The retreat was a resounding success and brought together approximately 40 seafood harvesters and allies representing all three coasts and freshwater lakes to engage in learning, knowledge sharing and practical discussions about the seafood industry in Canada and Indigenous Nations and Territories.

With our partners at SeaChoice, we released our Conscious Avoidance report after months of analysis on major Canadian retailer's seafood sourcing practices. We found that even the most robust policies remain limited in scope, many "indirect" seafood products such as pet food, fish oil and prepared meals are not included in sourcing policies, and most are failing to address human rights issues within their seafood supply chains. To spur change, we launched a campaign encouraging our followers to write directly to retailers, which has resulted in over 1,600 emails sent urging retailers to act!

Our eelgrass mapping and monitoring work has been in full swing this summer. We have conducted nearly 20 surveys and offered kayak survey training to more than a dozen citizen scientist volunteers ranging from Pugwash to Canso to St. Margaret's Bay, Mahone Bay and Southwest Nova.



PHOTO: Nick Hawkins

## TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Team continued with the Pop-Up Bike Hub this summer, taking the trailer across Nova Scotia and visiting 20 communities. We successfully distributed 63 safe cycling accessories and fixed 516 bikes! The PUBH Mini was busy commuting across the HRM by e-bike, visiting 10 communities and repairing 276 bikes.

Through the Welcoming Wheels program, we gave away 34 bikes during the Kids Gifting Sessions. Three people participated in the Earn-A-Bike program, volunteering and helping fix bikes through our repair nights. The Bike Buddies program, where newcomers are paired with experienced cyclists, had 36 people participate as mentors and mentees.

The Local Activations project continued to support communities in identifying and eventually implementing projects that support active and sustainable transportation. Currently, the project is collaborating with the towns of New Glasgow and Truro, Eskasoni First Nation and the community of Spryfield.

We held our annual IWALK event where schools and youth groups across Nova Scotia participate in walks to/at school. This year we had over 8,500 students participate. As well, we held a Youth Mobility Audit with the Wasoqopa'q First Nation Youth Centre.

A Walk-shop was co-developed and led in partnership with Parachute and other local groups in Glace Bay, highlighting the active transportation features in their community with key stakeholders and decision makers.

Our team is collaborating with N.S. Walks on a series of mobility audits led by community walking groups across the province, and building a community of practice to support community walk leaders in bringing their findings to decision-makers.



## FOOD

The Food Team has seen a lot of change and evolution over the past months. In April, Common Roots Urban Farm came under the wings of the EAC. Both farm sites were able to re-open in the spring and welcome everyone back into the gardens! This season, 240 allotment plots were gardened, harvesting everything from edible flowers to African eggplants. Our two market gardens produced hundreds of pounds of vegetables to share with households struggling to afford fresh or culturally relevant produce. We wrapped up with the much-beloved annual Harvest Hootenanny and Pumpkin Smash, where hundreds of guests gathered to press cider, plant garlic and share a meal together in celebration of another growing season.

On the Food Team, staff have been dedicated to the advancement and coordination of the Halifax Food Council (HFC), through partnership with the HRM and other core partners. In the fall, staff wrapped up the Emergency Food Stormkit project and distributed 1500 kits containing local, shelf-stable foods to international students and community partners. The HFC ran its second year of Community Food Grants, this year adding on a Garden Grant stream, funding 14 grassroots, community food initiatives in the HRM. In June, staff also released the Growing at Home report, that highlights recent food system data in the province, including a stagnant local food consumption data, and advocated for support for struggling producers.

Through many partnerships and collaborations, staff are continuing to advance community food advocacy and programs to improve our food system!



PHOTO: Nicola Nemy



## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Built Environment Team focused much of its work on advocating for stronger environmental protections in the HRM's Regional Plan. We pushed for the full inclusion of the Halifax Green Network Plan and for firm 30-metre buffers around coasts, wetlands, and watercourses, which are still at risk of being weakened through development agreements. We also urged Council to push back against dramatic provincial overreach and have continued to submit letters, fact sheets and briefings to officials and the public to ensure these protections are carried into the next draft.

At the same time, we strengthened Our HRM Alliance, now made up of 64 coalition members - CAPE N.S. and Friends of First Lake Society both joining us in the last few months! We hosted a strategy workshop to help members prepare for Regional Plan changes and, for the first time, began planning how to engage with the provincial government. Sixteen Alliance members and volunteers spoke at the Regional Plan hearing in support of the 30-metre buffers and other environmental safeguards.

Beyond policy advocacy, we raised awareness of threats from Special Planning Areas at Sandy Lake and Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes through public explainers, social media and our Hike the Greenbelt program. Despite challenges from a temporary hiking ban, we adapted our events and continued to connect diverse communities to these landscapes while building momentum for a resilient Halifax Greenbelt.



PHOTO: Irwin Barrett



PHOTO: Simon Ryder Burbidge

## WILDERNESS

The Wilderness Team continues working hard to support environmental action—and activists—when it matters most. As communities grappled with issues like clear-cutting, glyphosate spraying, uranium mining and inappropriate developments, we called out unfairness, showed up for one another and highlighted better solutions.

We shared our love for the natural world through guided hikes at Sandy Lake Regional Park, World Environment Day in Kentville and the third annual Wetlands Appreciation Week—an event we hosted together with over a dozen organizations across the province.

We partnered on Bird Week Halifax to help bring guided bird walks to every district of the HRM, so councillors and citizens could learn about birds in their neighbourhoods and what they need to thrive.

Our staff helped amplify important issues in the media, tackling suburban sprawl, the Northern Pulp clean-up, the Environmental Assessment process and the provincial government undermining democracy. We continued to raise awareness about mining issues in Nova Scotia, including concerns about uranium mining, the Goldboro gold mine approval and the mining approval process itself.

We strived to deliver the information Nova Scotians need to advocate for nature and communities, including resources on landowners' rights, wildfires, high production forestry and changes to the environmental assessment process, as well as a webinar on mining critical minerals in Nova Scotia. We supported grassroots allies, including at community-led meetings about Dartmouth Cove, Eisner Cove Wetland, the proposed Ingram River Wilderness Area and uranium mining.



PHOTO: Patrice Bouchard

## COASTAL & WATER

The Coastal and Water Team became part of the second Peregrine Accelerator for Conservation Impact cohort in early 2025. The program's focus is to develop innovative conservation solutions to support ecological and human health in the North Atlantic Transboundary Landscape. The Team held a week-long retreat in P.E.I. along with the seven other organizations in the cohort to launch the program. Through this program, the Coastal and Water Team is developing a community based coastal monitoring tool.

In June, the Team attended the Coastal Zone Canada Conference in P.E.I. where we co-hosted a two-part workshop on coastal access with Dr. Patricia Manuel (Dalhousie School of Planning, ret.), Dr. Hannah Harrison (Dalhousie Marine Affairs Program), Mike Kofahl (ECELaw), Samuel Eisner (Lawyer) and Bryson Guptill of The Island Walk P.E.I. The workshop facilitated coastal access conversations with participants and aims to set urgent research and action priorities for coastal access.

Earlier in the summer, the EAC partnered with the Halifax municipality and TransCoastal Adaptations at Saint Mary's University to launch Living Lakeshores, a new project focused on restoring and protecting freshwater shorelines. The initiative will support community-led restoration using nature-based approaches and increase public understanding of shoreline resilience. As part of the project, residents were offered free shoreline naturalization training, helping to build climate-adapted, ecologically healthy lakefronts across the region.

The Coastal Team was invited to the iconic Thinkers Lodge National Historic Site in Pugwash to join an international workshop on coastal adaptation. The meeting focused on identifying key challenges, priorities and solutions for coastal communities as they face the challenges of adapting to an ever-changing climate. The Team was able to share important lessons and experiences from Nova Scotia's failure to adopt the Coastal Protection Act.



PHOTO: Jimmie Pederson

## ENERGY & CLIMATE

From farmers' markets to Parliament Hill, our Energy Team has been busy making the case for a clean, affordable and just energy future. We've connected with community champions and decision-makers across Nova Scotia and Canada to discuss big-picture solutions like East-West transmission lines and their nation building potential. With the launch of the Atlantic Offshore Wind Coalition, we're advancing offshore wind as a job creator and grid decarbonizer, while stressing the need for responsible development.

We've also been clear about what we don't want in Nova Scotia. Our No More B.S. campaign pushed back against uranium mining, fracking, biomass and nuclear, while our Powerlines vs. Pipelines campaign emphasized people-powered, Indigenous-led solutions.

A highlight was the Day of Electrification, where electric vehicle (EV) adopters and providers from across the country shared lessons. We also welcomed our new Teens for Climate group to their first in-person meeting.

We launched two key initiatives: Building Nova Scotia's Green Workforce and the Mi'kmaw Workers in Energy Efficiency video series, both sparking lively conversations about building a strong, sustainable workforce. Learn more at: [ecologyaction.ca/justtransition](https://ecologyaction.ca/justtransition).

Through our Faith in Motion pilot, 25 faith buildings are exploring EV charging in their parking lots. Pivoting to in-person Better Building Speaker events increased attendance 1000 per cent and motivated participants to take direct actions.

On energy poverty, we shifted gears from provincial advocacy to grassroots engagement. The EAC's Petition Action Team distributed postcards across Halifax, Dartmouth and Spryfield, helping residents share stories and demand fair, affordable energy. By keeping people front and center, we're turning awareness into collective action.



PHOTO: Istock

