

**Cobequid Eco-Trails Society**  
**Annual General Meeting #2**  
**7:00 pm – 9:00 pm, Wednesday, March 24, 2010**  
**Colchester Historical Museum, 29 Young Street, Truro, NS**

**MINUTES**

Present: Ineke Bakker, Gordon Benjamin, Heather Crocker, Mike Hansen, Gordon Hickman, Art Ives, Kim McCallum, Shelley McCallum, Garnet McLaughlin (Chair), Ashley McNutt, Lynn Patriquin, Bettie Spence, Bonnie Waddell, Norris Whiston, Adam Wile, Sheila Wilson

Regrets: None

Guest: Rod MacLennan

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 pm.

1. Confirmation that a quorum is present (10 members of CE-TS): 16 members were in attendance.
2. Approval of the agenda: Moved by N. Whiston, seconded by S. Wilson that the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting: Moved by Mike Hansen, seconded by Lynn Patriquin that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting #1, December 9, 2008 be approved.

CARRIED

4. Business arising from the minutes: none.
5. Consideration of the annual reports of the directors and committees:

***Report of the Chair - Garnet McLaughlin*** summarized CE-TS achievements over the last two construction seasons. A truly impressive amount was accomplished.

- During 2007-2009, a formal Trail Development Plan was prepared, which went through a 16 step review and public consultation process before being approved by the Dept of the Environment. Grant applications were written, submitted, and approved, most significantly by the Municipality of Colchester County, and NS Department of Health Promotion and Protection. When the National Trails Coalition infrastructure funding program was announced, we were “shovel ready” with environmental approvals and landowners’ agreements in place. The grant “working group” was Bonnie, Garnet, and Norris.

- Special thanks to Norris who did much of the background work, research, and exploring that enabled us to create a unique variety of interesting and challenging trails. As chair of the Nuttby to Gully Lake Trail Committee, he also publicized and coordinated the volunteer trail building days, keeping detailed records.
- In late July 2008 trail building started at Rogart Mountain and continued through November. 6.2 km was completed during the summer and fall by volunteer labour, with over 28 trail building days. Volunteer trail building, valued at \$14 per hour, counts as part of our matching contribution, when we apply for grants.
- In the Spring 2009 a contract was signed with Cobequid Trail Consulting (Economy) to oversee the building of the remainder of the trail system in the 2009 construction season. In the trade the method used is called “hybrid trail building” which means a combination of hired and volunteer labour. 8 full time employees were hired, which included 2 Dalhousie University students, local residents and residents of other areas of Colchester County. Volunteers did some of the most technical tasks, building a knowledge base for maintenance of the trail in the future. The volunteer contribution is estimated at \$100,000 to date.
- Winter 2009-2010: Kim McCallum organized the building of the main trailhead kiosk at Sugar Moon Farm and Pancake House. It has eight 4’ x 4’ panels for regulations, safety information, maps and interpretive information including flora, fauna, geology, and settlement history. It is designed so that the information can be updated periodically. It is expected to be completed by the end of June.
- Looking to the future: CE-TS was established to support trail building throughout Central Nova Scotia. When the Rogart Mountain – Gully Lake Protected Wilderness Area trail system is complete, we can turn our attention to other potential projects.
- Some possibilities are:
  - 1) Exploration and research of the Chiganois – French River system to develop a conceptual plan.
  - 2) South Colchester, around the Stewiacke Area, the town is developing a trail system and would like to connect up to other trail systems.
  - 3) Engineering plan / feasibility study for a non-motorized bridge over Salmon River.
  - 4) Cape to Cape trail, specifically to expand from Rogart Mountain over Nuttby towards the Wentworth Valley – community sponsors need to be identified.
  - 5) Committee to begin developing policies and procedures for designating trails for bikers in central Nova Scotia.

***Gully Lake – Nuttby Mountain Trail Committee Report - Norris Whiston*** presented.

- Norris prepared a background paper on risk management which was accepted by NS. Dept of Health Promotion and Protection. NS Trail Federation coordinates Director and Trail liability insurance of the province for incorporated volunteer trail groups.
- Trail building began in early spring thanks to bridging funds provided by the Municipality of Colchester. The infrastructure grant did not arrive until July. The

Trail Management Agreement with the Department of the Environment for the Gully Lake Protected Wilderness Area was signed in August 2009.

- Security on the trail is provided by markers, arrows, kilometer distances, and trail maps handed out at Sugar Moon Farm. A few are posted.
- An excellent slide show of work in-progress and completed, was presented. It illustrated some of the more technical trail building tasks (such as stone treads in wet areas, steps, reshaping, side sloping, hardening, board walks, and raking) as well as a number of volunteers and staff at work on different sections of trail.

**Web Site Updating - Mike Hansen** outlined plans being made for the updated Web site over the next six weeks, which will likely include: bulletin board, downloadable maps, downloadable membership forms / brochure, trail building and volunteer notes, as well as much of the same information to be found on the Trail Head Kiosk at Sugar Moon Farm.

**Three Trail Events - Sheila Wilson** presented a lively description of three trail events, two sponsored by CE-TS & Hike Nova Scotia and one sponsored by VolkSport. The purpose was to make people aware of where the trails were, what kind of trails are available, and realize they don't have to drive a long distance to get to them.

The first event on January 16<sup>th</sup> had approx. 30 people. There was a registration table, banners, maps to hand out, snowshoes for rent. Volunteer leaders and sweeps were available for four groups, each with a different level of fitness, including beginners.

The second event Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> was more chaotic, mainly because 80 people showed up, creating a parking problem, and confusion about where to meet and which group to join. It was clear that we must be more organized for a larger turn-out. The weather was perfect and everyone had a great time at both these events.

The third event, also large, with approx. 80-90 people, was more organized. After consulting with Quita and Scott at Sugar Moon Farm, a different parking plan was made. People were given a slip of paper with information about the walks. All people were told to arrive early, and did. They selected their group on registration near the Trailhead kiosk, and joined it immediately at the individual trailhead. A volunteer stayed at the start place for each group, so that no one started off on their own. Key to the success was the weather, which was beautiful, and also the "pre-walks" which got the trails broken, signs put up, low branches lopped off, etc. Thanks go to all the volunteers!

Next years winter events:

January 22, 2011 (CETS)

February 20, 2011 (VolkSport)

**Trail Event Planning** - Bettie Spence presented the perspective on the events of “lessons learned” and some suggestions that could be incorporated into guidelines for event organizers, based on the experience with these first three events. Overall the events were truly a success and exceeded everyone’s expectations.

- Select two people as coordinators, to head the event and delegate tasks to support people and volunteers. Everyone should receive the same information so there will be less confusion.
- All participants should sign a “liability waiver”. Some had concerns about privacy. These waivers should be used for the event only and not for any other purpose.
- There should be a single sign-up for registration and a single hand-out describing the event. Too many (a sign-up for the event, sign-up for snowshoes, sign-up for lunch, sign-up to join CE-TS, notices for up-coming events, brochures from Hike NS, brochures and maps from CE-TS.) is very confusing. Limit the number. Consider distributing non-essential notices after the event.
- Pre-walk the trail shortly before the event so there are no surprises (due diligence).
- Each group should consist of at least one leader and one sweep. They should be people who know the area and possible hazards i.e. snowmobile trails, and have worked on the trails. The larger the group the more volunteers are needed. The sweep makes sure no one is struggling, falling behind, or wandering off track. Volunteers should make a point of talking to each person to make sure they are comfortable and no one is in need of first aid or other assistance.
- There should be one first aid kit for each trail group.
- Do not rent snowshoes for the event. Refer people to local sources of rentals.

[Norris noted that Hike NS had 12 events (winter 2010) which were attended by 350 people. 125 came to the three events on CE-TS trails in the Earltown area.]

Moved by B. Spence, seconded by S. Wilson that CE-TS create guidelines for hosting winter events by late June 2010.

CARRIED

6. Consideration of financial statements:

**Kim McCallum, treasurer**, presented the financial statements which consisted of three reports. Fiscal Year End March 31, 2009; Fiscal Year End March 31, 2010; Operating Budget for April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011.

Moved by N. Whiston, seconded by G. Benjamin that the Financial Statement for the period ending March 31, 2009 be approved.

CARRIED

Moved by M. Hansen, seconded by B. Spence that the Financial Statement for the period ending March 31, 2010 be approved.

CARRIED

Moved by A. Ives, seconded by K. McCallum that the budget be approved such that the Executive of the Board is authorized to spend up to \$2,000 to operate the Society for the fiscal year April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011.

CARRIED

[Art Ives noted that any expenditures above \$2,000 must be approved by the Board.]

7. Nomination Committee Report:

**Gordon Benjamin** presented the report of the Nominating Committee. There are four vacancies. CE-TS by-laws specify that the Board has 12 directors.

Garnet McLaughlin (Chair)

Mike Hansen (Vice-Chair)

Bonnie Waddell (Secretary)

Kim McCallum (Treasurer)

Norris Whiston (Chair of Gully Lake – Nuttby Trail Committee)

Sheila Wilson

Bettie Spence

Gordon Benjamin

**The committee nominates to fill vacancies for a three year term:**

**Gwen Mader, Art Ives, Gordon Hickman, John Sullivan**

Moved by K. McCallum, seconded by M. Hansen that the slate prepared by the Nominating Committee be accepted.

CARRIED

There followed a general discussion about the executive and general agreement that the existing executive should stay in place, if willing, until a new trail initiative is undertaken, which would be a better time for a transition. Each person on the executive was queried as to whether they would accept another term. All responded that they would.

8. Other business – comments and suggestions from the members.

**Ashley McNutt** wondered why there was no budget allocation for Marketing. Garnet responded that it was a good point. To date Norris has handled the publicity and marketing initiatives and had submitted expenses.

**Garnet** announced a Trail Conference being planned for October 2010 which will be held in Annapolis (Cornwallis). It will include a Government Summit for all the Departments of Government that are stakeholders in motorized and non-motorized trails. Garnet will be conducting a trail building workshop – a legacy workshop, with help from Ashley.

**Gordon Hickman** asked if CE-TS had been in contact with the Boy Scouts as possible volunteers for trail building. Rod MacLennan suggested that “Ventures” which are boys aged 14 to 18 years would be most appropriate. They meet at the First United Church every Monday night. Perhaps a Board member would present a slide show about the trail work.

**Mike Hansen** asked for projected time lines on work still to be done on the Earltown Trail System. The trail system is expected to be completed by the end of June 2010.

**Garnet** spoke about the gym teacher in Bible Hill who has 43 girls training on 17 bikes in a mountain biking course, from which the top 10% of girl athletes are excluded. He is working on developing a bike trail in the Bible Hill area, to get high school age girls more active.

**Gordon Hickman** asked if CE-TS had communicated with the biking community. Garnet indicated that Gwen Mader, just elected to the Board, was representing the biking community on our Board.

**Adam Wile** asked what policies and procedures were in place for designating bike trails. Garnet/ Bonnie said that these have not yet been developed, but his input would be very welcome and he and Gwen could start working on them. Ashley McNutt has many good ideas for “bike events” such as “picture scavenger hunts”.

9. Motion to Adjourn: Moved by Kim McCallum that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Waddell, Secretary  
Cobequid Eco-Trails Society