



Currents

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association

Special Interest Articles:

- Learn about the importance of good watershed management!
- Meet the Summer Staff and Board of Directors!
- Learn about activities going on in your own watershed!
- Be sure to check out our website for more info!

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Welcome from the Editors

The intent of this newsletter is to provide updates on the progress and recent developments of the Winter River - Tracadie Bay Watershed Association and its partners. Newsletters will be published occasionally throughout the year and will highlight various initiatives, projects and events that we are pursuing. If you have any questions about the newsletter or interests in the work please contact us. We are interested in signing up new community volunteers and welcome anyone interested in just helping out for a day.

Background

The Winter River-Tracadie Bay watershed encompasses a very large area on PEI and includes several small communities including: Brackley, York, Union Road, Suffolk, Pleasant Grove, Millcove, Grand Tracadie, Donaldston, Corran Ban, Ten Mile House, Tracadie Cross and Blooming Point. Each of these communities has its own unique qualities and historical traditions; yet the one thing they all have in common is that they share the same water source for domestic and commercial use. This is important to note because people are not always aware that they actually live in a watershed and that they share this water source with other residents and businesses over a considerable area. In fact, one of the largest operations to use water from our watershed is the City of Charlottetown.

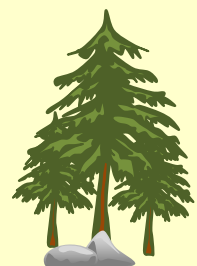
Historically, the watershed has been classified as rural and the economic activity of the day focused primarily on three main industries: farming, fishing, and tourism.

Yet, over the past several years a shifting of economic activity has been taking place. Presently, over 50% of residents living in the area commute to urban regions (e.g., Charlottetown) for employment. Additionally, the population in the watershed has been on the rise as more people from the western and



eastern parts of the Island move to a more central location in search of employment and other amenities. Having said this, it is increasingly important to work toward developing a watershed management plan, so that we can protect the health and sustainability of our current water source.

A sound watershed management plan will provide the structure for harmonizing economic development and environmental protection. It will also integrate socio-economic and cultural realities, institutional structures and the biological aspects into upland protection and conservation in order to attain sustainable development.





Who We Are!

Our Vision: protecting and enhancing the health and aesthetic qualities of the Winter River - Tracadie Bay watershed area.

The *Winter River - Tracadie Bay Watershed Association* is a community-based, non-profit volunteer organization that was established in 2008 by members of the local watershed community. The members of the Association are concerned with the health and sustainability of the Winter River -Tracadie Bay watershed area and work towards protecting and enhancing the natural environment and aesthetic qualities of the watershed for now and for future generations.

In addition to the work of our organization, the *Tracadie Area Residents for Resource Protection (TARRP)* has been actively involved in environmental stewardship and watershed work for a number of years in the Eastern Tracadie Bay area. They have the responsibility of managing an important natural area, and are involved in various projects in that part of the watershed.

Our Summer Team!



activities because it is an excellent opportunity to learn about their immediate environment and it is a **great experience!!**

It is our goal to educate our youth about the importance of environmental health and conservation and it is our hope that they pursue post-secondary education in an environmental field related to the work. The importance of involving youth in the community cannot be overstated; they will inherit the land...and the problems that we leave behind.

Coordinator: Jackie Bourgeois

Jackie is a long-time resident of PEI who grew up in the Montague area. She is an Honors graduate of *Dalhousie University /NSAC* and studied at *Lakehead University* specializing in Environmental Project Management. After graduating from university, she moved to Nunavut in 2001 where she worked for the Nunavut Government - Department of Environment for 7 years.

Field workers: Mike Sweeney & Karalee McAskill

Mike is a Grade 11 student of Charlottetown Rural High School who lives in the Grand Tracadie area. In

A watershed management plan provides actions to:

- ✓ Protect a watershed or prevent damage to it.
- ✓ Mitigate the effects of land use to an acceptable level.
- ✓ Restore degraded environments
- ✓ Optimize the availability of water resources

previous years, he was employed as a laborer in the mussel and fishing industries for the summer months. He enjoys being outdoors and is interested in pursuing a career in the fishing industry. Having worked as a laborer, he certainly has what it takes to work in the streams for the summer.

Karalee is resident of the Stratford area and a recent graduate of the *Wildlife Conservation Technology Pgm* offered at Holland College. She has had an interest in the environment since high school and is currently entering into her third year of a Geology degree at Memorial University of Newfoundland. She is looking forward to learning about watershed management and will use this knowledge in her future career in the environmental field.



We are pleased to have been approved for funding under the PEI Department of Environment, Energy & Forestry through the *Watershed Management Funding Program*. It will help us to carry out the necessary work that will ultimately support us in developing a sustainable, long-term management approach for our watershed. This year we have hired one coordinator and two students. We look forward to having them participate in watershed management activities and hope that they learn a great deal about watershed enhancement over the summer months.

We specifically encourage youth from our area to participate in watershed

What is a Watershed?

Why Are They Important?

Why Do We Need to Protect Them?

What is a Watershed?

A watershed is the area of land that drains both surface water and groundwater into a particular river or stream. We all live in a watershed!! Since the water resources within each watershed are interconnected, it is important that we have a stake in what happens within our watershed system.

Watershed boundaries are based on topographical or physical boundaries rather than community or political boundaries. They include not only watercourses, but the entire land base draining into the watercourse.

They are separated by points of land (hills or slopes) at higher elevations than the surrounding lands. From these high points, water (both groundwater and surface water) drains in different directions into distinct watersheds.

It is important to understand that water is constantly being reused and recycled. Our entire planet's water supply and quality is linked through the water cycle. That is why it is important to keep it healthy and protect it from things like toxins, pollution, extreme runoff, unsustainable usage, and other materials that would cause deleterious effects.

This Summer's Activities

With so much work to do on the watershed, we identified some projects that we would like to pursue this year. One of our first priorities is to develop a watershed management plan. This could take up to 2 years to complete and will require active participation from the watershed communities. We look forward to collaborating with you on this project, so keep your eyes peeled for upcoming info.

As well, in May 2009, and with funding from the City of Charlottetown, we completed a River Survey which is helping us to determine where we need to focus our immediate attention. The success of this project was only made possible by the interest and support of the local watershed landowners who gave us permission to access their property. The report can be downloaded from our website (www.wintertracadie.ca). There are other activities going on and we will talk about those in our next newsletter, as well as discuss other projects where you can be involved.

List of projects going on this summer:

- Developing a Watershed Management Plan (phase 1)
- River Survey - completed
- Stream cleanup & Debris removal
- Nitrate testing clinic - July 25th at Corran Ban Hall - check insert
- Tree planting & Riparian Assessments- volunteers are all welcome!!
- Corran Ban Bridge Project

“We completed a Watershed Survey in May 2009 which is helping us to determine some priority areas.”

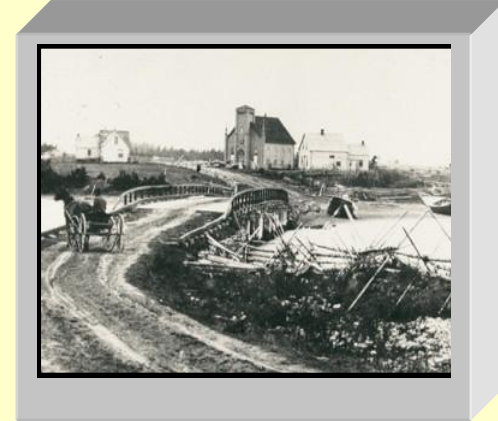


Be a Volunteer - How You Can Become Involved!!

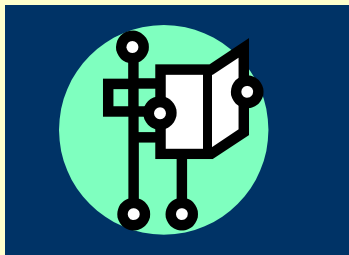
The WRTB Watershed Association would like to hear from people within the watershed region who would like to volunteer some of their time for our many projects, or from those interested in becoming official Board Members. If you have an interest in the environment, and in the health & sustainability of your own watershed, volunteering is an excellent opportunity to learn more about watershed enhancement and to gain new skills that can be applied in many other areas. We are always looking for skilled people who can offer their time for projects such as: bat/birdhouse building, tree planting, interpretative skills, identifying species of flora & fauna, etc.

We are also interested in hearing from those who may have pictures hiding in old photo albums that they took within the watershed. These could be anything from plant-life, to wildlife, to waterways, streams, dams, people fishing on the Winter River or Tracadie Bay areas, etc. Infrastructure photos of bridges, wharves, etc are all welcome.

Additionally, we would love to hear stories about the watershed and the communities within it. If you have a story that relates to the watershed, we would appreciate hearing from you by submitting it to our coordinator, so we can include it in our next newsletter!!



Corran Ban Bridge in the 1880s



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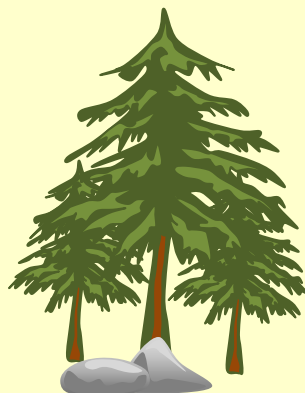
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Please consider becoming a member of the Association. The annual fee is \$10 for adults and \$5 for youth. The membership form may be downloaded at www.wintertracadie.ca

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.wintertracadie.ca