

Annual Report 2022-2023



Sackville Rivers Association Annual Report 2023

A message from our President



Restoring and Protecting the
Sackville River



Creating Recreational
Opportunities



Encouraging Stewardship
through Education and
Outreach

I would like to begin by thanking our past president, Walter Regan for mentoring and supporting me through my first year as president of the SRA. I would also like to express my gratitude to our office coordinator and environmental engineer, Damon Conrad. This past year has seen the SRA continue our field work on the river, on trails, in education, community outreach, and advocacy. Our objective, as always, is to restore and sustainably manage the Sackville River and its watershed.

The continued presence of Atlantic salmon and brook trout, species requiring a pristine environment, in our river system is an indicator of our success. We counted fewer salmon coming through our fish ladder this year, possibly because water levels were high in June and many fish may have simply jumped the falls. However, we did note a higher percentage of salmon vs grilse than we normally see. More habitat was restored in the Sackville River system by our summer student restoration team. We are thankful to the volunteers and community members who continue to support us in our activities especially our trail and river clean-ups. We would like, especially, to thank US Consul General Lyra Carr for coming out on Earth Day to help clean up the Little Sackville River and members of the 2501 Halifax Artillery Cadet Corps who donned waders and helped Damon Conrad clean up a portion of the Sackville River in Bedford.

People continue to enjoy time outdoors walking and biking our active transportation trails, the Sackville Greenway and the Bedford-Sackville Connector. We are looking forward this summer to introducing fly fishing to youth aged 12-15. Probably the biggest news item this year was the announcement of the 2000 acre plus Sackville River Wilderness Area by the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment and Climate Change. We would like to acknowledge the indispensable contribution of CPAWS in helping to make this happen.

This year we were able to place aquariums of brook trout eggs in three elementary and two high schools. Teachers had access to the Fish Friends lessons online. In the community, members of the public visited our displays and participated in activities that fostered a better understanding of our watershed and all its treasures. Through this outreach we increased membership by 50%. In social media we have 458 followers on Facebook and 471 Instagram followers. Over the past year we have had a Facebook reach of over 35 000 people.

None of this work would have been possible without the help of our coordinator, directors, and volunteers. We are grateful for the steadfast support of our local HRM Councilors, Provincial MLAs and Members of Parliament.

Ann Angelidis

River Restoration

*A primary goal of the SRA is to protect, restore and remediate the Sackville River and its watershed
We recognize that healthy river systems are good for people and for the environment*

Highlights

2022

- As part of River Restoration 2022, work in the Little Sandy Lake Brook, an important feeder brook to Thompson Run, included the installation of diggerlog, rock sills, and deflectors for habitat restoration, the removal of garbage and debris jams to increase flow and fish passage.
- 15 Structures in total were installed in Little Sandy Lake Brook (7 diggerlogs, 5 rock sills, and 3 deflectors) at 12 sites in Hammonds Plains. This work in a reach of approximately 230m of brook restored approximately 500m² of fish habitat. Work took place in the reach below Little Sandy Lake and Sandy Run
- This project will benefit the entire Sackville River Watershed by increasing the overall productivity of the watershed – the Sackville River and its' many feeder brooks. All the work planned was outlined in the SRA Sackville River Watershed Restoration Plan (SRWRP). The SRWRP is the SRA's current guiding plan for restoration work on tributaries on the Sackville River Watershed.

- This project was made possible by funding from Adopt-a-Stream, Service Canada Summer Jobs, Stantec, Echo Foundation, Susan and Graham Smith Foundation, the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation, and the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

2023

- For 2023 our restoration efforts will be concentrated on Drain Lake Brook in the Indigo Shores subdivision, as well as in Peverill's Brook in the Bedford Rifle Range (if we can gain access to the site while our work crew is on)
- Funders for this project (so far) are Adopt-a-Stream, Service Canada Summer Jobs, Student Skills Incentive, Echo Foundation, Susan and Graham Smith Foundation, the McLean Foundation and the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation



Fishway

- 2022 was a challenging year for our salmon counts at the Sackville River Fishway, with drought conditions largely drying up the Sackville River at our fishway - 15 salmon in total counted (5 large and 10 grilse) – our largest percent large to grilse in almost 10 years.

Volunteering

- The last cleanup that we have done was a cleanup along the Sackville Greenway and the Bedford-Sackville Connector Greenway in the Spring of 2023 to celebrate Earth Day – thanks to all who came out!
- Volunteering events will be held this year almost as normal, COVID-dependent.

Fundraising/Donations

- **Spring Duck Run Race**, held on April 29th, 2023, was a huge success for the two partners – SRA and Acadia Recreation Club. In total we had 103 corporate ducks and almost 700

family ducks run down the Little Sackville River behind the Superstore ballfields. The event was held along the Sackville Greenway and was attended by over 100 people.

- The **SRA Dinner Auction** was held on September 16th, 2022, at Sackawa Canoe Club, after several years of absence, and was a success. We are currently working on the 2023 Dinner Auction for October of this year
- There has been an uptick in personal and private support for SRA in these hard times. Thank you to all of the kind support offered in the past year to help SRA stay in the game. Together we can weather this hardship and come through on the other end stronger and more committed than ever as a community.

Trails

“To work towards the establishment of a Conservation Corridor along the Sackville River by providing access to, and appreciation of, the river”



Highlights

SRA is responsible for the following trails: **Fort Sackville Walkway, Bedford Sackville Connector Greenway** and the **Sackville Greenway**. A Total of approximately 7 kms. *Happily, we can report that trail users are taking more and more responsibility for our trails by reporting issues and picking up litter. **Community ownership is an asset.***

- Maintenance of our trails - thanks for support by HRM Parks, HRM – Active Transportation, and SRA volunteers.
- Resurfacing (crusher dust) of the trail adjacent to Range Park was completed in March 2023 after heavy construction equipment had damaged the trail surface.
- A few vandalism incidents on the Sackville Greenway do keep us on our toes. Signs removed, graffiti, swing gates stolen, etc.
- We acquired access to 4 bike and 4 pedestrian counters through HRM – Active Transportation. One set installed near the Rifle Range by Don Ambler.
- Initial step in constructing the Handicap walkway to the Sackville Greenway at the Lions Club - March 2023.
- We have lobbied to have HRM provide legal support for land easement agreements for portions of our trails that are not on HRM land.

- Arkle Court trailhead (Old Sackville Rd) paved by apartment building contractor.

The following events were hosted in support of our trails:

- **Family Cycling Event** – June 25, 2022
33 attendees – included an education and outreach component for the river. Great support from local businesses and support groups (Recycle your Cycle, Sportwheels, Lions Club, HRM – Active Transportation, Bike NS).
- **Tree Planting Event – Range Park Bedford**– June 2022. 12 participants. Sponsored by HRM arborist Crispin Wood. Trees benefit the environment by absorbing carbon dioxide, stabilizing riverbanks, providing shade, removing air pollutants and in many other ways.
- **Clean-up of the Sackville Greenway and Walter Regan Park**, and Sackville River Bedford with over 40 participants including trail users and cadets. Excellent enthusiasm.
- **Trail Steward training** – led by Victor Henrikson of Cole Harbour Trails Association – March 2023 with 10 attendees. Very thorough seminar.

Education and Outreach

One key to a sustainable future is a well-informed populace who value the natural environment. The SRA works towards that goal by providing educational opportunities on topics relating to environment for young and old alike.

We offer community outreach sessions, host regular talks on environmental issues and, operate an on-line educational program.



Highlights

Education

- We installed aquariums and provided trout eggs to **St Catherine's, Oakfield, and Sycamore Lane** elementary Schools. Teachers followed our online **Fish Friends** program, and we helped their classes to release roughly 900 trout fry into the Sackville Rivers.
- At the high school level, **Sackville High and Millwood High** school "**Green Teams**" each hosted an aquarium and raised brook trout from eggs to the fry stage. Classes ranging from grade 9 science to grade 12 biology made regular observations of the developing trout. We assisted students in releasing approximately 600 trout fry into the Little Sackville River in late April.
- We guided students from **Leslie Thomas Junior High** as they explored the nature of acid precipitation and methods for its mitigation.
- At the **Mount Uniacke Public Library** we conducted an activity on the nature of watersheds and the importance of wetlands for students in the after-school program.

Outreach

We showcased our association and environmental issues at several events throughout the year and we would like to acknowledge the tremendous support of local businesses that partnered with us:

- We celebrated **World Ocean Day** at the **Maritime Museum of the Atlantic** with a display entitled "**From River to Ocean and Back Again**" that explored the migration of Atlantic salmon.
- In co-operation with HRM arborists, we participated in a tree planting event near the Sackville River in Bedford. Trees benefit the environment by absorbing carbon dioxide, stabilizing riverbanks, providing shade, removing air pollutants and in many other ways.
- The SRA participated with the Lion's Club, the RCMP, SportsWheels and, Bicycle Nova Scotia in hosting a **Family Bike Event** on the Sackville Greenway.

- Our **Dinner Auction** was a great success at its new location, the beautiful Sackawa Canoe Club.
- **Giving Tuesday** is a world-wide generosity movement. And the people of the Sackville River watershed proved that they understand the meaning of the word “**generosity**”. We’d like to thank **TAPestry Beer Bar** for supporting this event by providing an attractive gift certificate to the **Winning Donor**.
- SRA had a great time participating in activities during the **Sackville Business Association’s Snow Days**. Kids enjoyed our “**Feed the Fish**” game, “**Fish for Goldfish**”, and our very special **Photo Booth**. And a big “**Thank you!**” to **Colin Chase** at **ViewPoint Gallery** for leading a small but hardy group of **Sackville River Shutterbugs** for an outdoor photography session along the Sackville Greenway.
- Our **World Wetlands Day** information kiosk at **Ducks Unlimited Wetland Centre** at the **Shubenacadie Wildlife Park** attracted over 50 people.
- We held a hugely successful **Flea Market** in February. All proceeds went to continue our restoration and protection of the Sackville Rivers.
- We returned to the **Nova Scotia Sports and RV Show** after a 10-year hiatus. This was an excellent opportunity to showcase our association and make new connections.
- Our **Earth Day Clean-up** of the Little Sackville River was a great success as we filled 30 large bags of trash and removed large items such as shopping carts, gas tanks and tires! After the clean-up, folks were invited to have a **Sackville River Defender Copper Ale** at **Ol’Biddy’s Brew House** and chicken skewers from **MediTerra Kitchen**. \$1 from each beer and chicken skewer was donated to the SRA.
- The annual **Spring Duck Run Race** took place on a beautiful sunny April morning. 61 businesses sponsored over 103 corporate ducks while 700 family ducks vied for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes.
- We conducted visits to the **Fish Ladder** located by Helfer’s Lumber. Members of the community learned about the migratory habits of Atlantic Salmon, American Eel, and Gaspereau.
- We were very active on **social media** this past year. We reached over 35,000 people on Facebook and Instagram.

Sackville Rivers Association
Income Statement 04/01/2022 to 03/31/2023

REVENUE

General Revenue

HST Refund Revenue	575.00
Federal Government Revenue	24,425.00
Gov Revenue Municipal	32,408.93
Interest Income	-124.66
Fundraising Revenue	49,941.08
Membership Revenue	420.00
Electro Fisher Rental	4,812.50
River Conservation	21,628.00
Total Revenue	<u>134,085.85</u>

Budgeted Amounts

TOTAL REVENUE

134,085.85 | 116523.9

EXPENSE

Payroll Expenses

Wages	73,028.03
EI expense	1,624.45
CPP expense	3,862.77
WCB expense	2,267.94
Total Payroll Expense	<u>80,783.19</u>

Expenses

Mileage	2,036.15
Bank Fees	273.00
Insurance	3,783.00
Office	2,784.38
Rent	4,481.52
Utilities	163.61
Professional Fees	2,137.50
Repairs & Maintenance	31,779.32
Public Relations	3,713.43
Water Quality	19.67
Fundraising Expense	9,133.72
Supplies	403.54
Safety Equipment	211.55
Expenses Total	<u>60,920.39</u>

TOTAL EXPENSE

141,703.58 | 137930.3

NET INCOME

-7,617.73 | -21406.4

