

# Kensington North Watersheds Association

# NEWSLETTER



Kensington North’s mission is to preserve and protect the watersheds of Kensington North in a healthy, natural state; to develop projects and activities that will maintain or restore the rivers to such a state; and to promote an appreciation and respect through public awareness and education for the beauty, importance, and environmental diversity of the watershed.

The 2019 field season was another busy year for Kensington North Watersheds Association! We had a successful field season working on a variety of projects including bat monitoring, covering 53 total km of stream for maintenance and restoration, salt marsh creation, planting more than 1500 trees, agriculture trials, and more!



## Improving Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat in Barbara Weit River

In 2019, we began work on year one of a three year project in the Barbara Weit River watershed. This project is funded through Environment and Climate Change Canada’s EcoAction fund, and focuses on improving water quality and wildlife habitat.

Work completed in 2019 as part of this project included planting trees and shrubs, performing stream maintenance, removing a decades-old culvert, and beginning to clean up an old garbage dump.

We planted approximately 300 native trees and shrubs along the stream. These plants will help sta-

bilize stream bank soil, provide shade to streams, and act as shelter or food for wildlife. As part of our stream maintenance we removed nuisance debris, branches, and fallen trees both before and after Hurricane Dorian, and constructed brush mats to catch excess silt. We partnered with East Prince Quad Trax club to remove a decades-old culvert, known as Mary’s Bridge, which was impassable for fish. The next phase of this culvert removal will involve installing a bridge for ATVs, skiers, and hikers to safely cross the stream. Finally, we began to tackle a very large garbage dump along the...



*Left:* Before and After cleaning up a fallen spruce tree in Barbara Weit River.





(Cont'd) stream in New Annan. This dump had a wide range of household items, including bike parts, shoes, personal care items, and medications containers! Some of the strangest finds included a mercury ointment to treat “parasites and vermin on the skin”, and a 38 year old plastic Zeller’s bag in perfect condition! We filled approximately a dozen fish totes full of garbage, but there is still a considerable amount of garbage remaining. Over the next two years, we’ll continue to work on this dump!



**Above:** Garbage dump before we began cleaning up.

**Right:** 38 year old Zellers bag found amongst the garbage



## Coastal Restoration in Hunter’s Creek and Baltic River



The 2019 field season was year three of our Coastal Restoration Project funded by the Fisheries and Oceans Canada. This project is part of a PEI-wide project to improve fish passage. Kensington North’s portion of the project involves stream work in both Hunter’s Creek and Baltic River, as well as work in the estuary. Over the years, sediment from upland has moved downstream and accumulated in our estuaries, making them shallower and reducing habitat. To improve fish passage, we use a mini-dredger to suction sediment from the estuary, creating a deeper stream channel. We then deposit this excess sediment into enclosures we’ve built. Once the new sediment settles, we plant it with marsh grass to create new salt marsh habitat.

**Above:** Mini dredger in operation in Baltic River estuary.

**Right:** A field with good cover crop establishment in fall 2019.

## Living Laboratories Initiative

Another new project Kensington North is working on is the Living Laboratories Initiative in partnership with East Prince Agri-Environment Association and funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. This project is designed to benefit farmers and Islanders by improving the health of soil, water quality, and crop productivity. This project involves developing and testing multiple beneficial management practices (BMPs) on agriculture

fields such as cover cropping, irrigating, fertilizer use, and more. The Living Labs project is especially exciting as it has a collaborative approach to research, involving farmers and producers, scientists from Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, scientists from the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, and environmental groups all working together.





## Hazardous Waste Stewardship

Starting in 2018, we've been reaching out to households, businesses and the agriculture community on management of hazardous wastes as part of our hazardous waste stewardship pilot project funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada. In 2018 we distributed a survey gathering information of households' knowledge and behaviors regarding hazardous wastes and their disposal. Following the survey we released a series of articles in the County Line Courier to raise awareness on topics including: what makes a product hazardous, how to properly dispose of it, the risks associated with it, and DIY alternatives. We've also held numerous focus

groups on hazardous wastes including at the New London Community Complex as part of their "How to be an Adult" series, and with the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada. For both of these focus groups, we were joined by Merie Surkan from IWMC to help us provide more information on sorting and disposal. We wrapped up our project at the end of March by releasing a short instructional video on hazardous waste disposal, which is available to watch on our [Facebook page!](#)

**Below:** Hazardous waste bin used to sort out hazardous products from other garbage in the Barbara Weit garbage dump.



## Wildlife Conservation Fund, Bat Monitors, Beach Cleanups, & Pollinators!

Our 2019 Wildlife Conservation Fund project focused on improving wildlife habitat in Spring Valley Brook and Indian River watersheds. Activities included removing stream debris, cleaning up fallen trees, and building brush mats. We also planted approximately 600 native trees and shrubs!

Summer 2019 was our second season monitoring bats in the Kensington North area! This project is a partnership with researchers from Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, who provide us with multiple acoustic monitors and interpret the data for us! Results from our 2019 monitoring are available on our [Facebook!](#)



In 2019, staff also walked 7.5 km of shoreline along our North shore beaches picking up garbage off the beach. Of course, we can't always be on the beaches looking for garbage, so we would like to thank the residents and visitors who do walk the beaches regularly and clean up trash, helping to keep our beaches beautiful, safe, and clean!

We also created a "Pollination Station" at Ross' Place Community Gardens to attract pollinators including bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. We used a combination of native flowers like swamp milkweed, yellow coneflower, and joe pye weed, as well as other nectar sources like bee balm and sunflowers!



**Above:** staff walking along a north shore beach picking up garbage.

**Left:** One of four stationary acoustic bat monitors set up in the Kensington North area for a week in July 2019.

## Educational Days with Schools & Water Quality Testing

In 2019 we held multiple educational days for students both at Queen Elizabeth Elementary School and Kensington Intermediate Senior High. In June, we held our annual Environmental Day for grade 6 students. This day involves students visiting different stations relating to the environment, including garbage sorting with IWMC, wildlife diversity with mounts from PEI Forest, Fish, and Wildlife, a fishing activity, exploring pond life, and a pollinator station. As well, Jamie Stride from Island Falconry services gave a presentation on birds of prey. We also joined Ms. Ramsay's grade 8 science class to discuss water quality testing and demonstrate pollution sources within watersheds using a watershed model provided by UP-

PEI's Let's Talk Science. Finally, we were joined by Mr. Dymont's Global Issues class to help us plant trees in Tuplin Creek watershed!

We also began to monitor water quality in various watersheds again in 2019. Thanks to the PEI Watershed Alliance's equipment bank, we can loan a handheld YSI monitor to quickly test water for different parameters. The main parameters we test for include nitrates, temperature, dissolved oxygen, and pH. Having this stream data helps us identify areas of concern and observe if the actions we and our partners are performing are having an impact on water quality!



*Above:* Students from Mr. Dymont's Grade 12 Global Issues class pose while planting trees in Tuplin Creek watershed.

## Membership

By becoming a member or renewing your membership, you will be joining and supporting Kensington North in addressing issues within our watersheds. Members' participation in meetings, forums, and special events helps create the direction for our association.

**Regular members** are entitled to vote at our annual or special meetings, are eligible to stand for election for our Board of Directors, and receive newsletters

**1 year: \$10**

**3 years: \$25**

**5 years: \$40**

**Corporate members** are not eligible to vote at meetings, but receive special recognition for their support and are listed on the Corporate Members page of our website, and they receive newsletters

**1 year: \$100**

**3 years: \$250**

**5 years: \$400**

**Youth memberships** are available for those less than 18 who want to be involved with the watershed group. They are not eligible to vote, but are still encouraged to become involved in watershed issues and activities

**1 year: \$2**

Want to become a member? Click the link at the bottom of the page to be redirected to our membership form!

### Thank you to our supporters:

Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Environment & Climate Change Canada, PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund, PEI Watershed Management Fund, Province of PEI, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Town of Kensington, Employment & Social Development Canada, Colleges & Institutes Canada, and our members & donors