



Rackham’s Pond. This place is a treasure in our watershed; it is beautiful at every time of the year. Photo credit; Kayla Nieuwhof, 2015.

WRIG 2015 Season Field Work

Our field crew was able to accomplish an incredible amount of restoration and enhancement work in our watershed over the 10 week field season this summer. Here is a summary of the work they completed:

- 852 tree and shrub species native to PEI were planted by staff and volunteers throughout the watershed
- Debris and blockages were cleared from 5.2 kilometers of our streams enabling fish passage
- 5 major blockages were removed with the use of a chainsaw
- 8 brush mats were built to trap sediment; 3 on the main branch of Hornes Creek and 5 on the main branch of Wheatley River
- 10.1 kilometers of Riparian Health Assessments were completed, providing information that can be used to guide future enhancement work
- Rackham’s Community Pond was maintained for public enjoyment
- 6 wood duck nesting boxes were placed along waterways in the Wheatley River and surrounding watersheds
- Shoreline cleanups took place on the Barachois Beach and east of the Oyster Bed Causeway

We are incredibly grateful for the time our field crew spent with us—as returning staff their experience and knowledge was invaluable.

WRIG would like to acknowledge the funding programs that make these positions possible: Canada Summer Jobs, the Jobs for Youth Program, the Wildlife Conservation Fund, and the Watershed Management Fund. We would also like express our appreciation for the Hunter-Clyde Watershed Group along with the other watershed groups that we’ve had the privilege of working with on various projects and the community members and volunteers that provide crucial support necessary for carrying out the stream enhancement and habitat protection work WRIG does throughout the summer season.



Brittany, Field Crew Supervisor, and Jerrica, Field Crew Technician.

Shall We Gather At The River?

Shall we gather at the river?
The beautiful, the beautiful river;
Gather with the saints at the river
That flows by the throne of God.



Jack Hanley's sister, Kathy, and good friend Donne De Roche.

One chilly afternoon in late October, friends of Jack Hanley gathered at Rackham's pond to remember him. Jack, a long-time resident of Wheatley River had passed away in December 2013, but this gathering brought together many residents, neighbours and family to view a beautiful octagonal

bench built in his memory with an oak tree planted within. Despite the chill in the air, many warm words were shared about Jack. How could the memories be anything but fond when speaking of such a generous and likeable character? Steve Lowe spoke from the Wheatley River watershed group and Kathy Kiely, Jack's sister, was on hand from Massachusetts to meet all who attended. Stories of Jack's dogs, his ever giving nature and love of PEI were told, as well as his life's experiences fighting in the Vietnam War, working as a Boston fire chief, and battling cancer. My own memories of Jack would include his hand waving out the window of his truck at us, every time he drove up his driveway, and the way he always brought my children Christmas presents – which we had just opened when we received the

sad news that he had suddenly passed away. Or when we were travelling to Boston for the first time and he urged us, if we felt lost or at loose ends, to just 'pop' into a firehall and introduce ourselves as friends of his, and the firefighters would be sure to look after us! After the memorial at Rackham's pond, a reception was held at the Wheatley River Hall, catered by Green Island Catering (Jennifer and Mike Levy, Rusticoville) who provided delicious food and desserts. As I looked around the room, I couldn't help but think that Jack would be looking down on us and smiling. In this busy time, it is rare to pause and take time to visit with one's neighbours. I saw people I hadn't seen in years, met several new friends and put faces to names of people I had never met in person. Although we have lived in Wheatley River for 8 years, this was the first time I felt truly 'at home' in this community. I think Jack would be glad of this final 'gift' that he was giving to all of us. Life is short, as Jack's passing showed us, and soon we will all 'gather at the river' – hope to see you again, neighbour.



Soon we'll reach the silver river,
Soon our pilgrimage will cease;
Soon our happy hearts will quiver
With the melody of peace.
-Robert Lowry

Submitted by Marti Hopson, neighbour of Jack Hanley

2016 WINTER WOODLOT TOUR!

The 2016 Winter Woodlot Tour is coming up! This will be the sixth annual Winter Woodlot Tour and it is our turn to host the event in the Wheatley River Watershed. The Winter Woodlot Tour has been an extremely well attended event that is focused on increasing understanding of the role that woodlots and forests play on PEI. This is a fun and educational event that is free to the public and provides an excellent opportunity to learn more about healthy ecosystems, winter wildlife, sustainable commercial use of woodlots, and outdoor recreation. This event is put on by WRIG in partnership with Hunter-Clyde Watershed Group, Central Queens Wildlife Federation, and the PEI Department of Forestry. Preparation has begun for this year's tour—stay tuned for more details! Information about this event will be posted on the WRIG Facebook page, on our website (www.wheatleyriver.ca), and on posters throughout the community as well as on the PEI Winter Woodlot Tour Facebook page. This year's Winter Woodlot Tour is scheduled for Saturday, January 30th with a storm date on February 6th. We'd love to see you there so make sure to mark this fun, family-friendly event on your calendar!

Special thanks to Rackham's Pond Landowners

- Grant, Nancy, & Steven Rackham ●
- Charles and Laura Lipnicki ●
- Melvin & Debbie Ling ●
- Michael & Betty-Ann Mokler ●
- Philip & Shirley Wheatherbee ●



Questions? Comments? Just want to get in touch?

You can reach us through the WRIG website www.wheatleyriver.ca, on our Facebook page, or e-mail Kayla@WheatleyRiver.ca. Office hours are variable so if you'd like to drop by please contact us to make sure we're in, and we'll be happy to meet you at the WRIG office in the Cymbria Lions Club at 2184 Church Road!

Camp Abegweit Living Shoreline Project

Augustine Cove/Cape Traverse (AC-CT)
Watershed Group in partnership with South Shore Watershed Association and Camp Abegweit contracted Nova Scotia's Helping Nature Heal Inc. (experts in Living Shoreline restoration; www.helpingnatureheal.com) to tackle an erosion issue at Camp Abegweit. HNH provided valuable people power and guidance to work with volunteers from the neighbourhood, UPEI Climate Lab, BBEMA, WRIG and several other watershed groups to build an 'installation' to enhance approximately 450' of shoreline at the camp*. One of the values of this site is the ability to compare and contrast the effectiveness of hardscaping (using rock to prevent erosion) with a Living Shoreline. A 'manufactured' Living Shoreline speeds up nature's work by adding materials to the cliff face that will allow the site to grow. At Camp Abegweit the former bare shoreline cliff is now an intricately woven structure that will trap seed, decompose, and create soil that nature will build on. This will provide much needed nutrients to seeds and plantings. The 'angle of repose' (the slope created by the debris) will deflect the wave action from pounding into the cliff and redirect the wind up instead of in. This deflection will prevent loss of soil and vegetation. On the upland you will find that dead and leaning trees have been felled and woven into 'brush walls' which, as they decay, will feed the newly planted seedlings and wildflowers. They will also deflect wind, and hold and store water to be slowly released between rain falls. This project is a work in progress. We will be constantly adding and building over the next 3-5 years, after which time the shoreline will be self-sufficient. It may look like a pile of trees, hay, leaves, seaweed and brush but Helping Nature Heal (HNH) has 14 years of research and practical experience that they applied to this cliff face. Rosmarie Lohnes (HNH owner) has been an amazing mentor and guide throughout this process. Watching her dedicated

crew work over two days to produce the first step in this Living Shoreline was a sight to behold. If you would like to volunteer your time to this project please email SSWA@SSWA.ca We would like to thank all the volunteers and our funding partners for their support. Contact Helping Nature Heal for information on Living Shorelines; 1-902-543-7416.

*Before initiating any work within the 15 meter buffer zone check with the Provincial Government regarding permits.
Submitted by Martha Howatt, Augustine Cove



Martha Howatt and Rosmarie Lohnes at work on the Living Shoreline.

WRIG IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE FUNDING FROM PEI WCF FOR THE 2016 WINTER WOODLOT TOUR!

As a non-profit organization, WRIG receives its funding through a variety of sources. We'd like to gratefully acknowledge the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund for its continued support of our efforts to enhance and maintain the overall health of the Wheatley River watersheds. In addition to awarding funds for the 2015 field season, WCF has granted funding to WRIG for the 2016 Winter Woodlot Tour. This event has a strong educational component, encouraging knowledgeable practice and sustainable use of the Island's woodlots and forests.



Your 2015/2016 Board of Directors

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- Director, Sidney Annema
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Educational Day with Summerside Intermediate School



We started off the fall by partnering with BBEMA and the Island Preserve Company to host an environmental education day for the grade 7 class from Summerside Intermediate School on September 18. The class came out to the beautiful Gardens of Hope in New Glasgow for a day of outdoor learning and exploration. The students rotated through four stations: aquatic ecosystems and the health of our rivers, plant identification, BBEMA's tag and release program with Monarch butterflies, and the butterfly house. The students were very engaged in the activities, taking notes and pictures for a class project that they completed based on their observations throughout the day. We had excellent weather and are very grateful for the use of such a beautiful location. We hope to continue to develop this education opportunity and others like it in the future.

GREAT CANADIAN SHORELINE CLEANUP

On Saturday, October 10th, WRIG partnered with the Hunter-Clyde Watershed Group and the Island Nature Trust to take part in the 2015 Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup. We walked along the Barachois Beach, the large sandbar that stretches across the area between the North Rustico harbour and Robinson's Island, to collect garbage and fishing equipment that had washed ashore. We collected a total of 27 kg of garbage during the cleanup. Overall the beach looked fantastic, thanks to visitors that help keep the beach beautiful and safe by cleaning up after themselves and others! The Barachois Beach is well-known to locals and is a relatively quiet beach making it an excellent location for observing several species of shorebirds, peaceful walks by the ocean, and enjoying time in the sun during the summer months. This beach was also home to three pairs of nesting piping plovers this summer—their nesting areas were marked, protected, and monitored by the Island Nature Trust. The piping plover is an internationally endangered shorebird that returns to PEI each spring to nest on our sandy beaches. You can improve their chances of survival each year by helping to ensure that their marked nesting areas remain undisturbed.



Coming Events

Our Photography Contest is happening now!
Send us your photo by January 15th, 2016.

2016 Winter Woodlot Tour – Saturday, January 30th with a storm date on February 6th.

Do you have a coming event you'd like to share? Let us know and we'd be happy to add it to our newsletter and promote it on our Facebook page!

Please Consider Joining Our Membership



Individual or Family \$10.00
Corporate or Supporting \$50.00
Simply clip this out and mail it to:

The Wheatley River Improvement Group
2184 Church Rd, RR#3
Hunter River, PE, COA 1N0

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email - Would you like to be notified about upcoming WRIG meetings and events? _____

YES _____ No Thanks _____

Please visit us online at...
www.WheatleyRiver.ca



OUR GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION TO THOSE WHO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE:

OUR FUNDING SOURCES:

- Province of Prince Edward Island Watershed Management Fund•
- Greening Spaces Program•
- Government of Canada Summer Jobs Program•
- Jobs for Youth•
- Wildlife Conservation Fund



Your Conservation Dollars at Work

OUR PARTNERS:

- Hunter-Clyde Watershed Group•
- PEI Departments of
- Forestry and Agriculture•
- Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal•

AND OF COURSE, ALL OUR INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY AND CORPORATE MEMBERS!

BLUE BAY FARMS
CREEKFIELD HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION
GAUDREAU FINE WOODWORKING
ISLAND PRESERVE COMPANY
LE CONSEIL ACADIEN DE RUSTICO, INC.
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