



Aug 27, 2020

Ms. Kathleen Fralic
Engagement Lead
Planning & Development, HRM
Regionalplan@halifax.ca

Dear Ms Fralic,

I am writing to express support of the Halifax Field Naturalists (HFN) for protecting the area of the proposed Sandy Lake-Sackville River Regional Park (SL-SRRP), as expressed in the April 24th submission (<https://www.sandylakecoalition.ca/rpsubmission>) to the RP+10 review by the SL-SRRP Coalition. HFN is one of 27 member groups comprising the Sandy-Lake – Sackville River Regional Park (SL-SRRP) Coalition.

The SL-SRRP is approximately 2800 ha in area and is covered largely by undisturbed, mostly multi-aged Acadian forest with many pockets of Old Growth; and by surface waters and wetlands including three lakes. The SL-SRRP includes about one-half of the Sandy Lake watershed, the largest or second largest subwatershed (depending on how they are aggregated) of the Sackville River Watershed.

The area hosts remarkable plant and animal diversity for a near-urban area, in fact for any area of equivalent size (approx. 2800 ha) in NS. The recent report by the Natural Wonders Consulting Firm lists 13 species-at-risk, not including Atlantic salmon and American eel, which are found in the Sandy Lake to Sackville River watercourse. Ninety-nine avian species nest in the SL-SRRP.

Just as important, the SL-SRRP lies just above the neck of the Chebucto Peninsula, and provides critical connectivity between the lands of the Chebucto Peninsula and the greater mainland.

We understand that an application for Secondary Planning for lands immediately west of Sandy Lake is imminent by at least one developer. Thus it is urgent to incorporate measures that will continue to protect the integrity of these lands in the Regional Plan.

Sincerely,

Burkhard Plache

Burkhard Plache
President,
The Halifax Field Naturalists