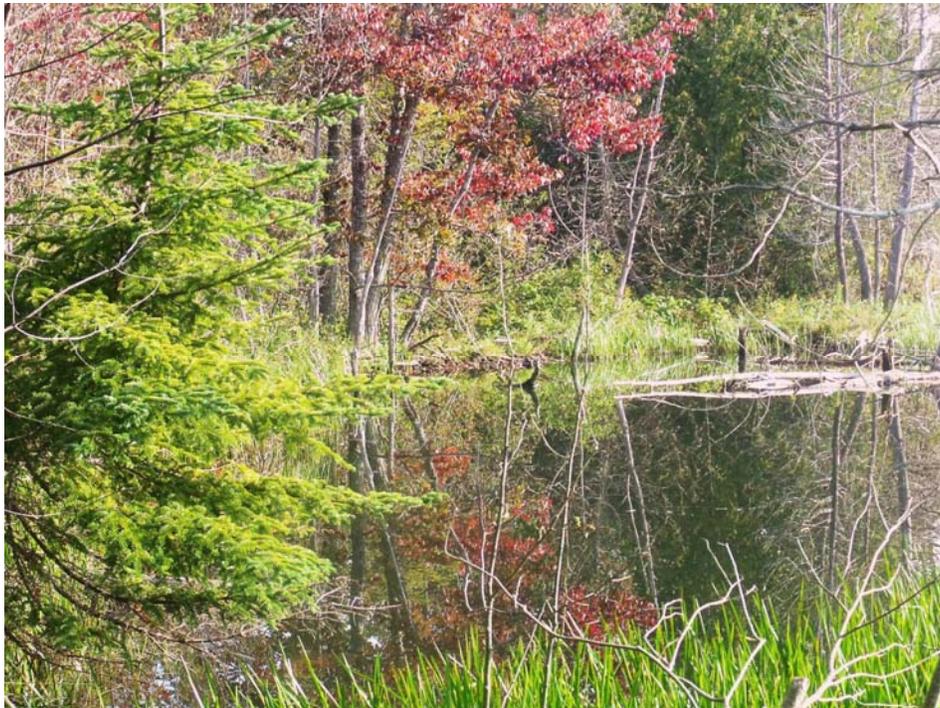


# Lot 11 & Area Watershed Management Group, Inc. Annual Report: FY 2011/2012



## **Acknowledgements**

The Lot 11 & Area Watershed Management Group acknowledges and thanks the following for their support and input.

- Our dedicated staff and volunteers
- The PEI Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry
- The Prince Edward Island Employment Development Agency
- The Prince Edward Island Greening Spaces Program
- Service Canada
- The Evangeline Credit Union
- The Prince Edward Island Wildlife Conservation Fund
- Trout Unlimited – Prince County Chapter
- The Municipality of Lot 11 and Area
- The Prince Edward Island Watershed Alliance membership
- Our MLAs: Robert Henderson and Paula Biggar
- The Ellerslie Home and School Association
- The Western School Board of PEI

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## Executive Summary

Our year has been remarkably productive, thanks to our active community members and leaders, our generous funding partners, and the valued support and assistance of the greater PEI watershed management community. This year we became incorporated under the Prince Edward Island Companies Act. As we contribute to the community and our watersheds, our group's capacity to serve is growing. Our work and our commitment continue.

All of our group's work and actions are dictated by our Watershed Management Plan. This plan was developed by a community planning committee that represents a cross-section of local interests. The plan specifies our group's priorities for action and our general approach to achieving our consensus-based goals.

Our plan mandates that community engagement and public information be a priority, because our community members need factual and relevant information to make informed decisions. Our model for watershed management reflects the underlying belief that, when provided with the facts, people will make the right choices.

Our plan further mandates that we take explicit action to preserve and protect our watershed resources through deliberate improvement projects based on prudent, preliminary assessment.

This annual report presents our year's accomplishments, and explicitly demonstrates the consistency between our actions and the strategies expressed by our planning committee.

## Background

The Lot 11 and Area Watershed Management Group was formed in October 2008. It is a not-for-profit community group and has a six member, volunteer board of directors: Mark Bishop (Chairperson), Peter Bulger (Secretary), Karen Kelly, Susan Milligan (Treasurer), Alfred Bridges, and Rory Curran. We also have a 15 member planning committee.

### Quick Facts

Not-for-profit community group  
Formed in 2008 (Incorporated 2011)  
Eight watersheds  
Ten primary streams  
18 smaller streams  
15,300 hectares

Our group's area of management includes eight geophysical watersheds: Black Banks, Foxley River, Freeland Creek, Brook's River, Cranberry Point, Josephine Shore, Bideford River, and Enmore River (east of Route 2). It has ten independent principal streams and ~18 smaller streams. The principal streams are (as named in the Provincial GIS database): MacDonald's River, Canadian Creek, Foxley River, Gains Creek, Freeland Creek, Brook's River, Southwest Creek, Grant's Brook, Ellerslie Brook, and the Enmore River. We manage a total area of 15,300 hectares (10<sup>th</sup> largest watershed group on PEI).

Karen Rank has served as our Watershed Coordinator since 2008 and has led our efforts to realize our mission. So far this work has included:

- Establishing consensus-based community objectives for our watersheds through our watershed planning process... from plan development through community ratification.
- Providing information to community members resulting in property-use strategies that are critical to maintaining the high standard of our drinking water quality, our wildlife habitat, and our shell fishing resources.
- Providing labour, capitol, and expertise to support landowners in their efforts to use, enjoy, and derive their living from their property in a watershed-friendly way.
- Building our group's capacity to serve the community and environment.
- Training and mentoring our staff.
- Designing, managing, and executing stream improvement projects.
- Productively interfacing with community members, government servants, municipal leaders, the greater watershed management community, local economic sectors, community groups, and members of our Legislative Assembly.
- Providing gainful, meaningful employment in our community.
- Educating and engaging the young people who will inherit our watersheds.



## Watershed Plan Implementation

The Lot 11 & Area Watershed Management Plan\* provides the framework for our group's actions. It provides a *singleness of purpose* for the group. All of our actions this year focused on using the plan's key strategies to realize our objectives.

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\* Download this plan from <http://www.lot11andarea.org/wsPublications.php>

## Key Strategies

Our planning committee identified 14 primary strategies for realizing our goals. All of our work this year focused on implementing these strategies. (Implementation of strategy 1 is implicit in all of our actions.)

### Primary Plan Strategies

1. Maintain a practical-action role for the group (institute immediately).
2. Provide Public Information – Groundwater/Drinking Water Assets (short term and ongoing).
3. Provide Public Information – Forest, Wetland and Wildlife Assets (short term and ongoing).
4. Promote Public Awareness and a Sense of Resource Ownership (short term and ongoing)
5. Establish Monitoring – Drinking Water (intermediate term).
6. Continue/Expand Resource Assessment – Forest, Wetland, and Wildlife Assets (short term and ongoing).
7. Promote Resource Conservation (short and intermediate term).
8. Maintain and Stay Current with Resource Conservation and Habitat Enhancement Methods (short term and ongoing).
9. Conduct Resource Enhancement Projects (short term and ongoing).
10. Involve Community in Decision Making (intermediate to long term).
11. Preserve Unique Cultural and Environmentally Significant Resources (intermediate to long term).
12. Form Productive Alliances (short and intermediate term).
13. Promote Youth Education and Involvement (short and intermediate term).
14. Maintain and Expand Financial Resources (immediate term).

## Stream Work

(Work to implement strategies 1, 4, 7, 9, and 11)

## Major Projects

### ***Foxley River Sediment Control and Capture (two projects)***

Foxley River is a priority stream in our management area. The health of the estuary and the livelihoods of those who depend upon it are critically tied to the quality of this stream. Similarly, Milligan's Pond and the wetland habitat it supports rely on this feeder stream. The stream and all of the systems it supports are endangered by excessive sediment transport. Substantial gains have been made in prior years to stabilize sediment inputs, reinforce the riparian border, and trap the existing sediment load. This year we continued this effort by installing a sediment trap and by replacing a washed-out culvert. These two projects required substantial preparation, labour, and – dare we say it – paperwork. We are especially grateful to Gillis Limited for their expert excavation and construction work, and to both the PEI Watershed Management Fund and the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund for their contributions.

### Foxley River Sediment Trap



Before



After

### Foxley River Culvert Replacement



Before



After

### ***Ellerslie Brook Ladder Pools***

Ellerslie Brook had a hanging culvert at the Ellerslie Road crossing. This hanging culvert created a migration barrier for anadromous fish. A two-tier cobble and boulder pool ladder was constructed to remedy the problem.



## **Ongoing Stream Improvement Projects**

Major projects have high visibility, but our primary field task this year was general stream enhancement efforts at Ellerslie Brook, Grant's Brook, Paugh's Creek, Freeland Creek, and Foxley River.

Perhaps the most important part of this work was improvement of riparian zones. A total of **1250 trees** were planted in the riparian borders throughout our area of management. Grasses were also planted to stabilize fugitive sediment. Alder patch cutting followed by planting was also performed in areas where alders were impacting migratory channels.

A primary task in our stream work is protecting migratory access to anadromous and catadromous fish throughout our streams' primary channels. This work includes stabilizing banks by installing (and maintaining) brushmats at the elbows of meander bends. Also, blockages caused by natural and man-made obstructions were removed. Fish cover structures were constructed in areas where land uses created unnatural exposure of fish to predatory birds. Over 400 of these tasks were performed this year.

Responsible beaver management is also critical for maintaining migratory fish habitat. Our group implemented approved beaver management plans in both the Foxley River and Brook's River watersheds.

Managing trash is an ongoing effort. Debris accumulates in our stream channels primarily through transport of discarded litter in roadside drainage structures. The Conway Sand Hills have significant environmental importance in PEI. A beach sweep rewarded us with boatloads of trash from the Gulf of St Lawrence.

## **Ellerslie School Grounds Improvement**

(Work to implement strategies 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, and 13)

We worked with the Ellerslie Home and School Association and the Western School Board in a schoolyard/playground improvement project. During the initial envisioning of the project we contributed an idea: a mixed demonstration arboretum that could be used in learning exercises at the school. We consulted with school officials and Provincial Forestry experts and obtained funding for the trees and shrubs through the Greening Spaces Program. Finally, we provided the labour needed to realize this aspect of the project. This project has the added benefit that the planting reinforced the riparian zone of the Bideford River.



*“The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.” – Canadian Nelson Henderson*

## **The Community Recreation Program**

(Work to implement strategies 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13)

Our group’s office is located at Warburton Park in Foxley River. Our community also sponsors a summer recreation program at the park. Parents and children throughout the community came to the park, giving us a remarkable opportunity to interest and inform our public and engage youthful minds.

## **Public Information/Communications**

(Work to implement strategies 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, and 14)

## **Newsletters**

A newsletter was distributed in early 2012. This was a cooperative effort with the Lot 11 and Area Community Council.

## **Web**

Our group and the Municipality of Lot 11 and Area have a cooperative website at [www.lot11andarea.org](http://www.lot11andarea.org).

## **Newspaper**

We had two articles in the *West Prince Graphic*. Both were related to our stream improvement efforts at Foxley River.

## **Tyne Valley Oyster Festival**

Our group won first prize for its float!



## **Ongoing and Follow-up Assessments**

(Strategy 6)

Follow-up assessments were conducted at Eilerslie Brook, Grant's Brook, Paugh's Creek, Brook's River, Freeland Creek, Gain's Creek, and Foxley River. New surveys were conducted at Eilerslie Brook and MacDonald's River.

Beaver management is an important part of our watershed management task. Throughout the year we worked with trappers to implement our beaver management plans for the Brook's River and the Foxley River. A new beaver management plan was developed for the MacDonald's River. This plan was approved by the Department of Fish and Wildlife and is currently being implemented.

## **Ongoing Training**

(Strategy 8)

A qualified, informed staff is our primary asset. Staff members attended safety and chain saw courses.

## **Participation in Regional and Island-wide Management**

(Work to implement strategies 3, 4, 7, 8, 12 and 14)

Our group is a member of the Prince Edward Island Watershed Alliance ([www.peiwatershedalliance.org](http://www.peiwatershedalliance.org)). Our Coordinator and our Chairperson actively participated in Alliance projects and conferences in 2011. This organization provides a great opportunity for groups to share and enrich their collective experience in successful watershed management on PEI.

We also gained substantial watershed management knowledge from neighbouring groups in our western region. DEEF Coordinator Ross Bernard's regional meetings are an opportunity to share experience with other group coordinators and to benefit from Ross's knowledge.

## **Infrastructure Development**

(Work to implement strategies 10, 12, 14)

We also continued to improve our group's capacity to meet its objectives. Our group became incorporated this year. This incorporation advances our credibility, opens new

funding routes, and better enables volunteer services. We also became better watershed managers through further experience and through the prudent, conservative purchase of materials and equipment.

## **Providing Meaningful Employment**

(Work to implement strategies 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14)

We were fortunate to have between six and eleven motivated seasonal employees this year. The work they did was of substantial benefit to our riverine and riparian assets. Rightfully, their contribution is a source of pride and accomplishment. We were supported in providing this employment through the Provincial Watershed Management Fund, the Employment Development Agency, and Service Canada. We also benefited from in-kind labour assistance from provincially paid summer students provided by the Western Forest District, TPW, and the Watershed Division of Environment, Forestry and Energy.

In addition, countless volunteer hours have been devoted to stream work, planning, public information, assessments, financial management, employer obligations (record keeping, payroll management, reporting), and writing/editing (watershed plan, permits, work plans, beaver management plans, fish habitat management plans, reports to funding partners, funding applications, etc.).



## **Future Work: 2012**

In the coming year we will continue to pursue the goals of our Watershed Management Plan through active implementation of the strategies identified in it.

One major project will continue a three-year effort to correct sedimentation problems in the Foxley River and protect wildlife habitat at Milligan's Pond. This work will include:

- Tree/shrub planting on the riparian borders, particularly those adjacent to agricultural fields.

- A sediment trap at coordinates 46.6866N, -64.0023W to mitigate bedload transport.
- A permanent crossing at coordinates 46.6822N, -64.0130W to eliminate sediment release from recurring installation of temporary structures.

We will also begin restoration of riverine habitat in the MacDonald's River. Part of this work will require a major effort to remove beaver dams that block the primary channel and create elevated water temperatures. As always, this type of stream improvement will require substantial preparatory work including bank stabilization and sediment trapping structures.

Ongoing work at Ellerslie Brook, Grant's Brook, Paugh's Creek, Brook's River, Gain's Creek, and Foxley River will include planting of trees and shrubs, blockage removals, beaver management, maintenance of sediment trapping structures, alder patch cutting, and rock pool maintenance.

A project to improve the grounds at Warburton Park is also planned. Our role in the project will be a planting effort supported by Trees Canada. This is a cooperative project with the Municipality of Lot 11 and Area.

Watershed assessment is an integral component of our work. Effective, prioritized solutions to watershed problems intrinsically require an analytical understanding of those problems. Our approach of preceding action with understanding will continue to form the basis of our work.

Public information and community engagement/involvement will also continue to be a principal action item for us. Our future will be determined by the responsible decisions of informed community members.