

Sandy Lake – Sackville River Regional Park



It is remarkable that we still have large, wild places like Sandy Lake (Bedford) and the Sackville River so close to Halifax's urban centre.

The woods and waters surrounding Sandy Lake and Sackville River are exceptionally biologically diverse – they host more than 100 species of migratory birds and 15 species at risk, including Atlantic Salmon and Wood Turtle. This abundance is tied to the rich soils, extensive forests, and intact streams and lakes that still exist there, undeveloped.

Since 1971, the area has been identified in city planning documents and multiple studies as an exceptional natural area for both wilderness protection and recreation, worthy of conservation as a Regional Park. For humans, the area provides excellent opportunities to reconnect with nature and lead healthy lifestyles through swimming, hiking, dog walking, snowshoeing, and more.



Fortunately, 1,000 acres of the area is protected as Jack Lake (Sandy Lake) Regional Park. But the potential for development in the remaining 1,800 of wilderness threatens to damage the existing park and would eliminate the potential to create a high-functioning, expansive protected area. Incompatible development in the area would likely devastate lake water quality, endangering fish and other wildlife. Sandy Lake and its feeder brooks are the headwaters of the Little Sackville River, a local success story of restoring habitat for salmon. A 2013 clear-cut of 300 acres near Sandy Lake has shown how sensitive the lake's water quality is. More roads and houses would destroy the headwaters, bringing with it habitat degradation and flooding downstream.

The Sandy Lake - Sackville River Regional Park Coalition has formed to take care of unfinished business. That is, to finally protect the remaining land and water in the area, stretching from the west side of Sandy Lake to the Sackville River, long identified for protection as a park. Our Coalition includes 28 organizations who share the vision of expanding the park, for people and wildlife. Increased land protection would benefit Sandy, Marsh, and Jack Lakes (and accompanying wildlife), and the Sackville River's largest sub-watershed. An expanded Regional Park would provide an outstanding place for public access to nature and outdoor recreation for a growing city. Protection of this area in particular is a key part of the Halifax's Green Network Plan.

Our Coalition supports the urgent objective of protecting this area for current and future generations before it is too late. Now we need an independent, ecologically-based study of a conceptual boundary for the enlarged park.



To learn more please visit our website:

SL-SR Regional Park Coalition website: www.sandylakecoalition.ca