

The Backlands: a cornerstone for our city's green network



HRM Standing Committee on
Community Planning and Economic Development

20 April 2023

Dr. Boris Worm
Kaarin Tae

The Backlands Coalition

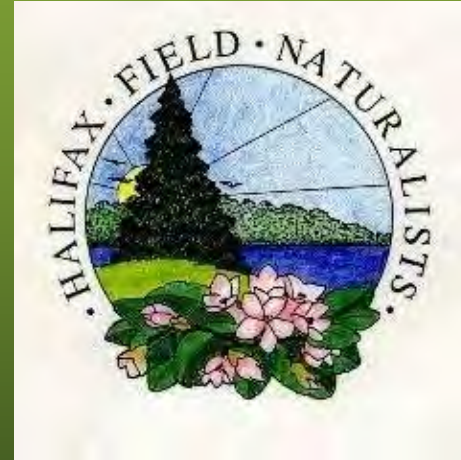
- A coalition of local citizens and non-governmental organisations.
- Mission: to preserve the Backlands for their natural, historical, cultural, conservation, educational, and recreational value.





Members of the Backlands Coalition

- Fergusons Cove Neighbourhood Association
- Halifax Field Naturalists
- McIntosh Run Watershed Association
- Nova Scotia Wild Flora Association
- Oceanview Drive Residents
- Purcells Cove Neighbourhood Committee
- Ravenscraig Neighbours
- Urban Farm Museum Society of Spryfield
- Williams Lake Conservation Company
- Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization



The Backlands Coalition is a member of Our HRM Alliance



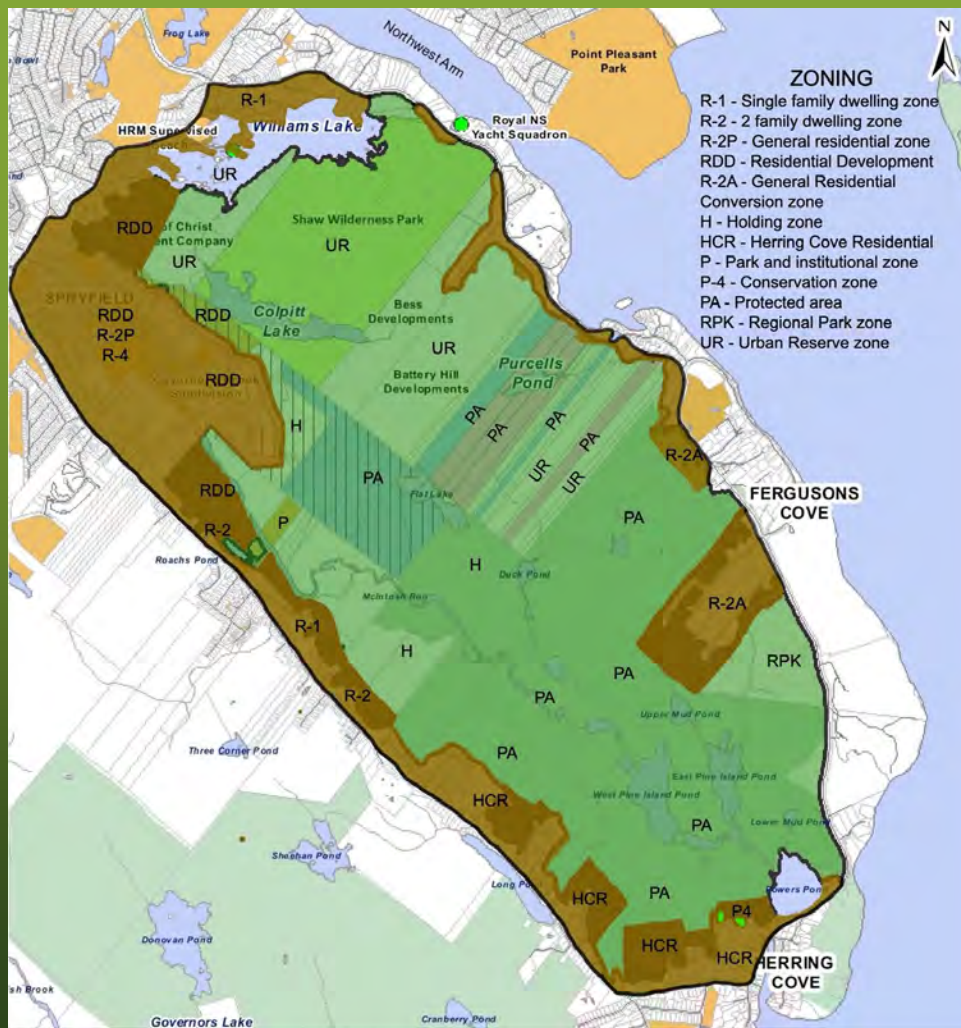
OURHRM
ALLIANCE

Backlands Background

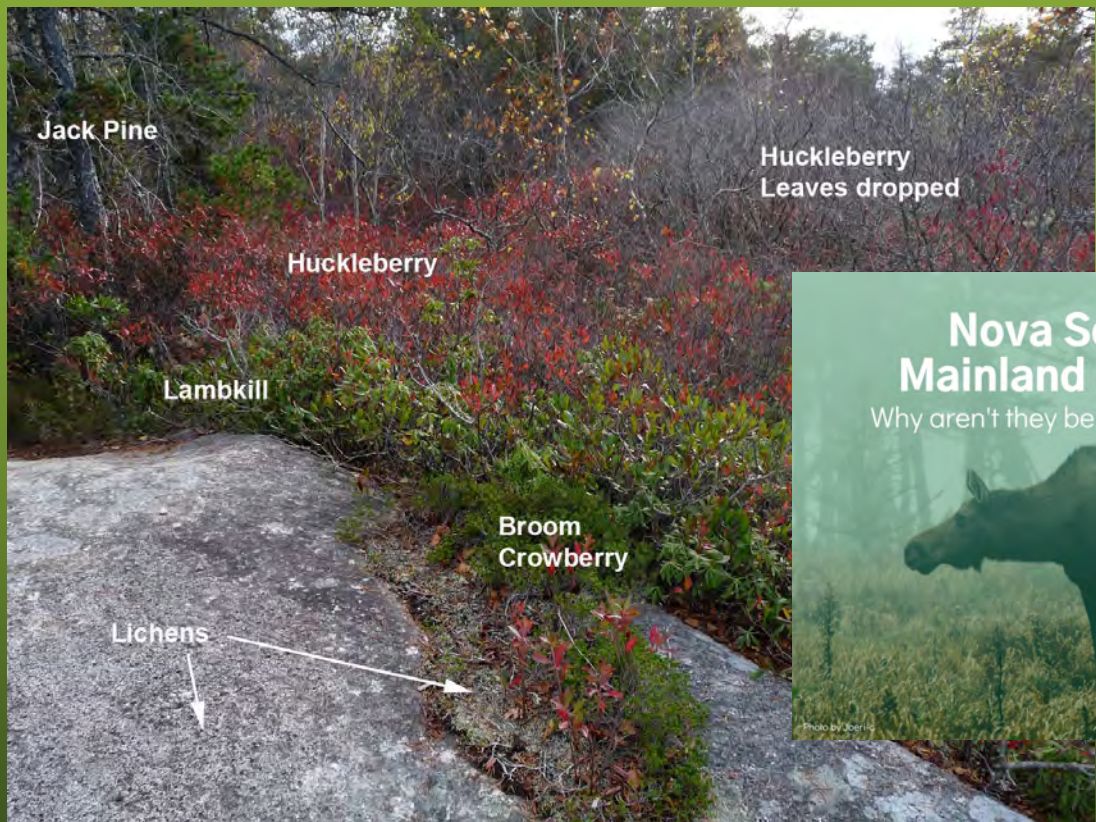




- Chebucto Peninsula
- District 11
- Bordering communities:
 - Spryfield
 - Williams Lake
 - Purcells Cove
 - Fergusons Cove
 - Herring Cove
 - Green Acres
- Shaw Wilderness Park
- McIntosh Run watercourse
- Jack Pine / Broom-crowberry Barrens



- HRM Parkland
 - Partnership with Nature Conservancy of Canada (Shaw Wilderness Park)
- HRM Protected
- NS Nature Trust
- Crown Land
- Private Landowners
- Developers



Huckleberry
Leaves dropped



Rare at-risk species and habitats



12,500 Volunteer hours
110,000 visitors in 2021

Accessible 'backyard' wilderness for Haligonians

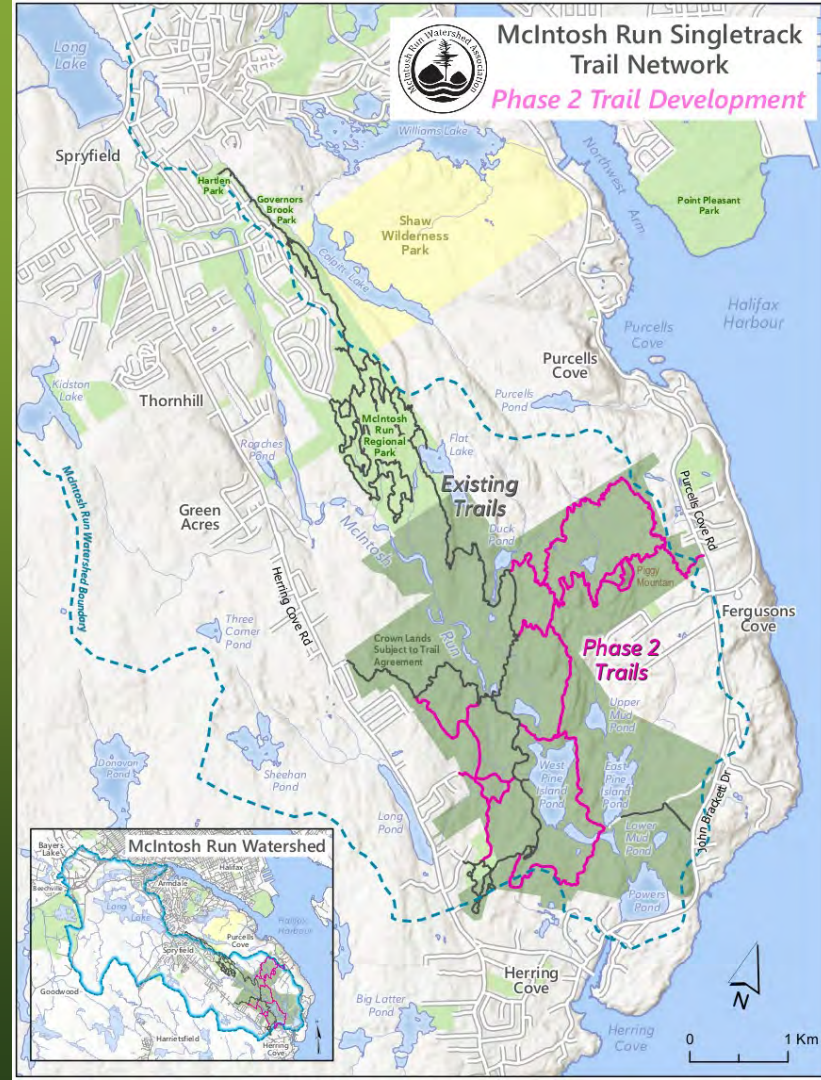


Phase 1 Trails

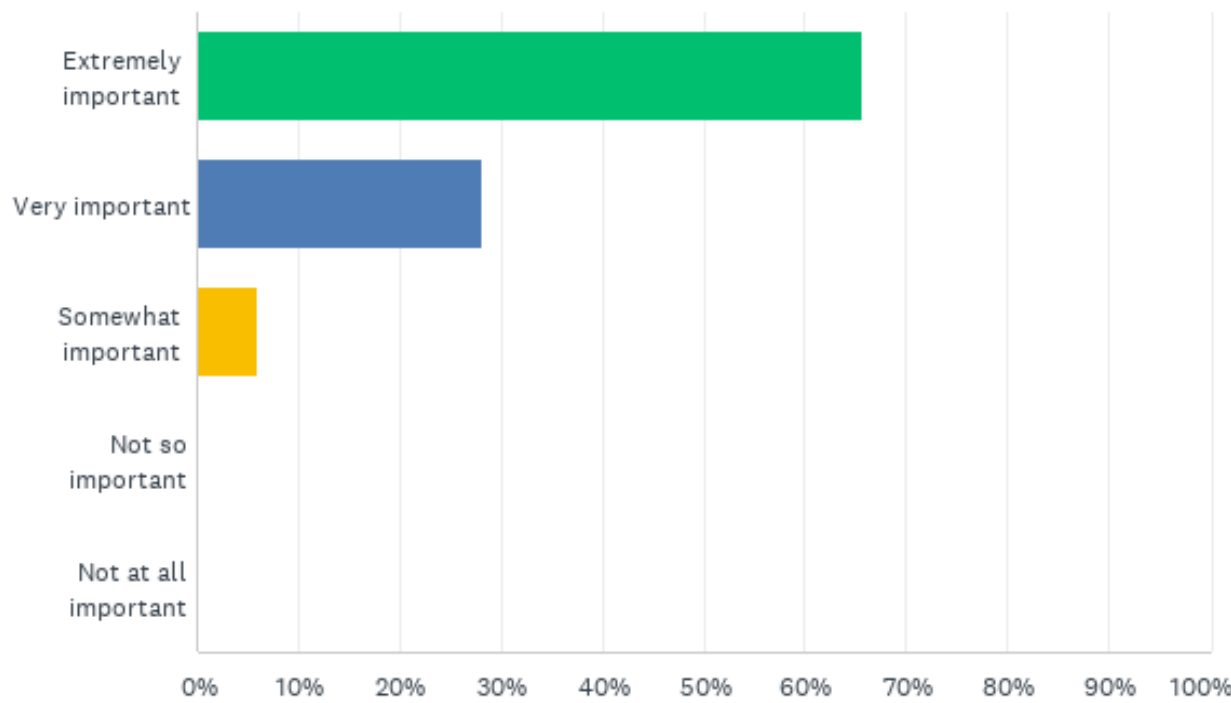
- Trail plan approved by HRM and NS-DNR in 2016
- ~19km of new trail, adopt ~4km.
- 12,000 volunteer hours
- Completed in 2021.

Phase 2 Trails

- Trail plan approved by HRM and DNRR in 2022
- ~16 km of new trail
- Construction 2022 - 2025

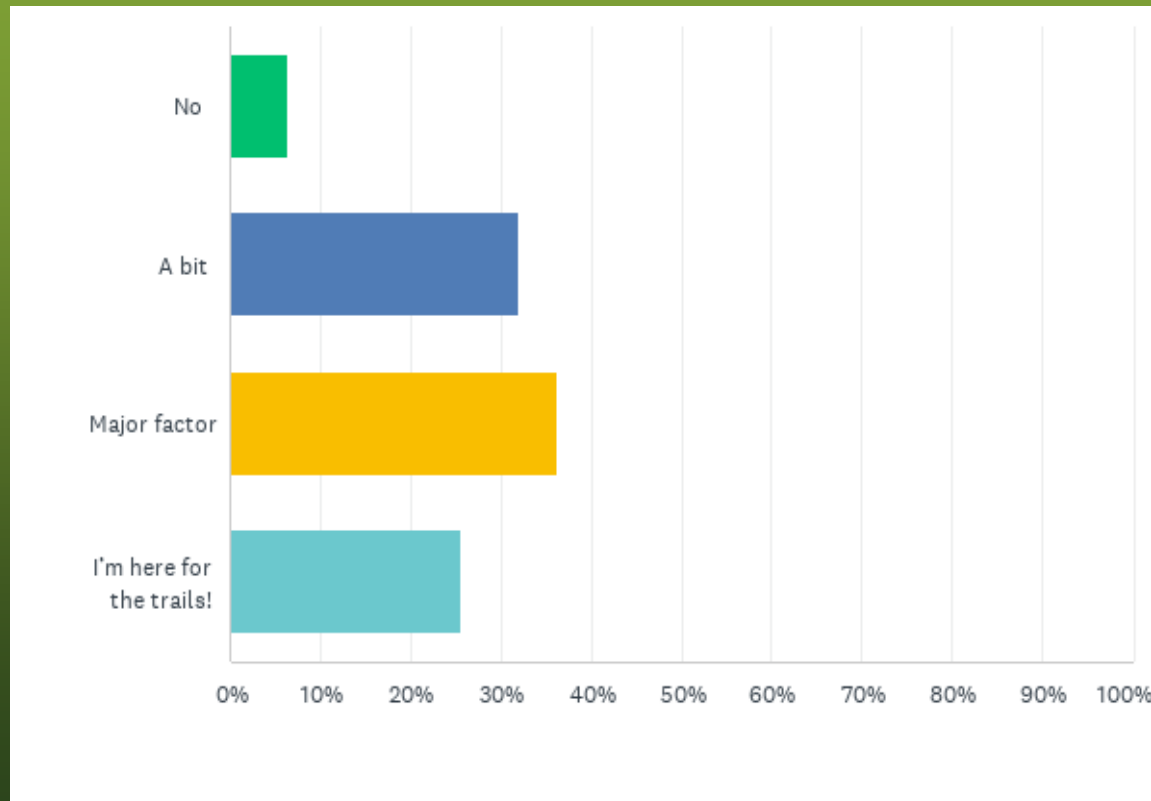


2021 SURVEY: “How would you rate the importance of these trails to you?”



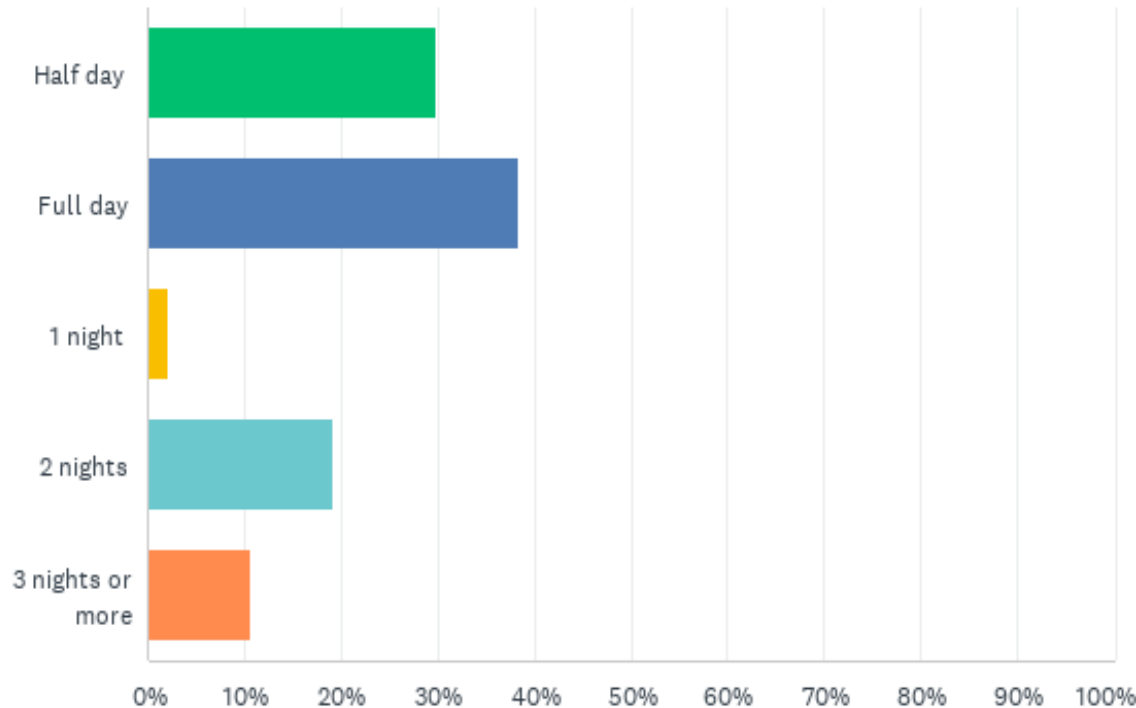
94% say trails are very or extremely important

“Did the trails influence your decision to visit Halifax, or to stay longer in Halifax?”



98% said they are very likely or certain to return to visit the trails

“How much time are you spending in the area?”



Average expenditure
in Halifax,
per visitor: \$570

Mental health benefits of visits to nature parks



Regular visits to nature parks ...

- increase workplace productivity up to 12%
- improves individual mental health up to 17%
- contributes ~2.5% of GDP annually



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Biological Conservation

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/biocon

Economic value of nature via healthcare savings and productivity increases

Ralf C. Buckley*, Alienor L.M. Chauvenet

School of Environment & Sciences, Griffith University, 4222, Australia

Source: Buckley et al. (2022) *Biological Conservation* 272, 109665



The Backlands: A cornerstone for the Halifax Green Network Plan...



... not a suitable place for housing development

Our Request



- Recognize the Backlands as a foundational piece of the Halifax Green Network.
- Rapid development on both sides of Herring Cove Road may soon eliminate wildlife corridors out of the Backlands and other suitable wildlife habitats.
- HRM needs an appropriate zone in Municipal By Laws to reflect the need for protection of the Backlands.

Thank you!
Merci!
Wela'lin!



backlandscoalition.ca



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