



## 2021 Field Work Report - Pandemic Edition #2

Staff continued to work in smaller groups and limit indoor activities or carpooling, but we still had many accomplishments this year, despite ongoing pandemic restrictions:

- Replacement of a culvert at Tim's Creek on the Suffolk Road in partnership with the Department of Transportation. Although it took longer than anticipated, the results look very promising for fish passage. Our staff will be monitoring the area this year and replanting trees and shrubs in the disturbed area.
- 3,351 trees and shrubs were planted
- 12 brush mats were constructed
- 16 wildlife habitat brush piles were created
- 10.54 km of stream were cleared of major blockages
- 1,450 kg garbage was collected from 14.2 km of shoreline, 8.2 km of roads, and several dump sites near streams
- 1,040 points of interest were recorded for project planning and reporting
- 2 footbridges were built at the walking trail on the Suffolk property owned by WRTBWA by two skilled volunteers who worked with our fall staff to complete this project, and provided some training in basic carpentry skills
- Completion of work in both the stream and the fields, in partnership with a farmer, to repair previous erosion damage and to prevent future erosion from causing problems

**Summer staff:** Ashley Artz, Evan Cahill, Jackson Paquet, Jessica McBride, Liam Poirier, Samantha MacSwain & Sarah McBride

**Supervisors:** Jennifer Woods, and Raena Parent

**Fall staff:** Benjamin Henger, and Lyndsay MacWilliams

**Watershed Coordinator:** Sarah Wheatley



Staff during fall work (left to right): Raena, Benjamin, Lyndsay, Jenn, and Liam.

You can donate to support our work at [WinterTracadie.ca/donate](https://www.wintertracadie.ca/donate)

## Valued Board Member John Hughes Retires

Outdoorsman, elite athlete, educator, family man – all of these are apt descriptors of the man who has become synonymous with the Winter River - Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA). Having been born near the bridge in Corran Ban, the river was the natural playground area for wandering and exploring and so it became and remains a special place. Since the Association's first organizational meetings in 2008, John has been at the table, on the trails and on the water, lending a hand, leading groups, and sharing his knowledge of the wonders of this very special place.

John has spent most of his life in the watershed. He graduated from St. Dunstan's University with a B.A. in 1962; from McMaster University with a B. Phys. Ed. in 1963; and from Michigan State University with a M. Ed. (major in environmental studies) in 1975. He was involved in education at all levels beginning 1963 and until his retirement in 1994. John taught physical education at the high school level and was the Coordinator of Outdoor Education for the Unit 3 School Board for three years. He taught courses for teachers in environmental studies at UPEI during the summers of 1979 and 1980. John believed the best way to teach students about the environment was to get them out of the classroom and into a natural setting.

His list of volunteer work at the provincial level is a long and accomplished one, too long to cover completely in a short newsletter. Here are some of the highlights:

- Chair of the PEI Health and Physical Education Association
- Coach of the PEI Track and Field Team at the 1969 Canada Summer Games
- Sport Director for cross-country skiing for the 1991 Canada Winter Games
- Certified instructor in Nordic skiing, alpine skiing, and canoeing
- Taught numerous canoeing courses and ski clinics
- Coached and played on Men's provincial softball champs

For the WRTBWA, John is best known for leading the annual Lady's Slipper hike. Over many years, he's offered his large canoe to take summer staff for a paddle out of the Tracadie Wharf. He's helped crews build footbridges at our property on the Suffolk Road, led the winter snowshoe hike on the Winter River Trail, and hosted participants at the family cabin. John has lent a hand in many of our shoreline cleanups and wrote articles for this newsletter.

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*PHOTOS (Left to right) A) former coordinator Bruce Smith and John Hughes netting fish below a fish ladder in 2012; B) John lead this group of hikers through the Winter River trail to his family's cabin in February 2016.*

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In 2014, the WRTBWA received the provincial Organization Environmental Award, presented by then-Lieutenant Governor Frank Lewis. The citation made special mention of John's contribution:

"For many years, the Winter River - Tracadie Bay Watershed Association has advocated for the north shore environment and educated students and residents on how to manage the watershed. John Hughes was a founding member of the association and provided strong leadership over the years. An avid outdoorsman, he opened cross-country trails, hosted snowshoeing classes and offered canoe lessons. Under his leadership, the association was the recipient of the 2013 National Excellence in Water Stewardship Award for Prince Edward Island. Canadian Geographic has included the work of the association on its website as a teaching tool."

Those of us who serve on the Board of Directors will miss his participation in decision making, particularly the work of our Field Committee. John's is the corporate memory of our organization in that regard. He may not have been the most vocal member at Board meetings, but the Chair would often turn to him before the close of debate on a particular issue, asking: 'What do you think, John?' The answer was always factual, well-reasoned and in the best interests of the watershed.

We don't know if John Hughes appreciates Milton Acorn's poetry but there's a stanza in one of Acorn's best-known works, The Island, that seems to suit John well. It reads:

Nowhere that plowcut worms  
heal themselves in red loam;  
spruces squat, skirts in sand  
or the stones of a river rattle its dark  
tunnel under the elms,  
is there a spot not measured by hands;  
no direction I couldn't walk  
to the wave-lined edge of home.

We the Board members and the WRTBWA's community of interest thank you for your generous contribution, we wish you good health, and we hope you'll continue to accompany us on this special journey for many years to come.



*Photos from top to bottom: A) Staff fun day outing in John's canoe in 2019; B) Luke Peters and John assessing trees in 2015; C) John, Minister Janice Sherry, and Cathy Corrigan with the Council of the Federation 'Excellence in Water Stewardship Award' in 2013; D) Board members in 2015.*

# Upcoming Event

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be held at the Tracadie Cross Community Centre on **Wednesday May 25 at 7pm.**

Our guest speaker Scott Anderson from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will discuss "Agricultural Climate Solutions using the Living Labs approach".

The agenda also includes reports by the coordinator, chair, and treasurer.

## Contact Us

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We would like to thank our funding partners for their support of our work in 2021.



- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada: Youth Employment and Skills Program
- Employment and Social Development Canada: Canada Summer Jobs
- Environment and Climate Change Canada:
  - ◊ EcoAction Community Funding Program
  - ◊ Atlantic Ecosystem Initiatives (in partnership with Coastal Action in Nova Scotia)
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada: Coastal Restoration Fund (in partnership with the PEI Watershed Alliance)



- Cotton Trust Fund for Public Parks
- Employment Development Agency: Jobs for Youth; Rural Jobs Initiative
- Skills PEI: Post Secondary Program
- Watershed Management Fund

City of Charlottetown:  
Water & Sewer Utility



### Other grants:

- Colleges and Institutes Canada: Career Launcher Internships
- Canadian Parks & Recreation Association: Green Jobs Initiative
- Nature Canada: Winter Youth Grant
- PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund



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