

FRS Directors Report for 2016

Another year gone by and here we are again in Scotsburn for our Annual Meeting. On behalf of the board, it's been a privilege to serve your interests over the past year.

We held 10 board meetings, usually in one board member's home with refreshments and a jam packed agenda over 3-4 hours. We treat ourselves to a potluck Christmas party in December masquerading as a board meeting, but little to no business gets discussed. Many thanks to Bernadette for providing a seaside venue for this event. Of note would be the resignation of 4 board members this past year. Michelle Ferris, Ron Kelly, David Hachey and Scott Ross all moved on for a variety of reasons. We thank them all for their service and wish them the best. And an extra special thank you to Michelle Ferris who has put a tremendous amount of time and energy into the society. She was an incorporating director and served every year as an officer of the board these past 10 years. Also, Charlie Kennedy was welcomed back to the board after a brief absence.

May was an interesting time for FRS. Billy MacDonald camped out for the entire month on the Crown land on the Porter Road, the upland watershed area for FRS land, under a May Days banner. Many visitors dropped by, we had several scheduled events and Billy and others worked at collecting a large pile of garbage - Pictou County Solid Waste sent a truck for its pickup and there was a good article by Carol Dunn in *The News*. Joella photo-documented flora and fauna as well as many of the natural and historic features of the land. We held our May Board meeting there. This was an initiative started by Billy to encourage others to look at any Crown land and its condition wherever they live. This will be an ongoing May event for FRS, although for only part of the month. This year's May Days will be May 5 to 8 and will have a number of events associated with it. Hope to see you there, even just to drop by and visit.

The Permaculture Project for Lot 2 of FRS land continues. We had an Ecological Forest Classification and Forest Inventory Report done by Patricia Amero RPF of Picea Forestry Consulting and Woodlot Services. Patricia presented this report as a Talking Forest event in November and then led FRS members on a short woods tour to highlight some points of interest. A copy is present for your perusal. This very comprehensive report will take some study to fully understand and is a first step in our Permaculture Project. We wanted to know what we had on the land and are now looking for a Permaculture Design Plan to begin moving forward on the land. Members, John Hatchard, Jonas Klum and Annie Ferguson, worked on a topographical survey of Lot 2, mapping elevations, water, access roads and boundary lines. This project was Volker's initiative and the design phase is mostly funded by a grant of \$5000.00 from Sage Environmental Program. We hope to start some initial work this year creating a gathering place for outdoor events on the land - some form of shelter, toilet and water source is so far envisioned but we would like members' input on the final goals for the project; to this end we are planning a "brain storming" session on April 9 at 1PM at the Winter Camp.

Port Hawkesbury Paper arrived in September/October to carry out some harvesting and silviculture work on the Crown Land on the Porter Road. They postponed this work to the fall from the summer after Billy's concern for the nesting birds he had noticed during May Days. This work was monitored closely by Billy and he made a startling discovery very shortly after the woods crew pulled out - he found fresh Mainland Moose tracks that came right up through a clear cut and right over the place where Billy had his tent pitched for May Days. Carol Dunn provided another story in *The News*. It felt pretty special to see those foot prints in the soil and the type of evidence that Billy was hoping to find even though a "day late and a dollar short". Had that Moose showed up before the cut we may have had a reason to postpone that activity.

The Talking Forests educational series continues with the above mentioned May Days, Lot 2 Permaculture Project, as well as having Danny George as last year's guest speaker at the AGM. Danny had some startling insights into forestry activities on Crown lands and can be seen in a video on the FRS website. The February Winter Tracking event for every weekend in that month was well attended. Billy and Joella hosted that event as

FRS Directors Report for 2016

well as a Night Sounds at the Forest's Edge in October. On December 29, a Redtail Nature Awareness alumnus, Ethan Huner, held a Winter Ecology and Wildlife Tracking seminar out of the Winter camp with about a dozen participants. More wonder awaited as another Mainland Moose track and scat were found on FRS land by Joella. Word must be out in the Moose community about our safe haven...

In addition to the Talking Forests series, we are engaging the community through requested events such as an afternoon outing by a group from Sobey's head office and a grade 11 biology class from Pictou Academy. As well, Craig's Way footpath is seeing considerable use and continues to be maintained in good condition.

In October hunting Season signage was posted near Craig's Way warning both hunters and hikers that each may be present in the area. No bullet holes have been reported in these signs to date. Hunting season dates and the wearing of blaze orange are mentioned on our website. "No Camping" signs (provided by DNR and FRS) were posted after a group of 5 camped on the Nature Reserve, cut trees, built a fire and cut trees on FRS and NR land.

Billy and Tom spoke at a Forestry themed evening at the Sugar Moon Farm in Earltown with the Ecology Action Centre's Matt Miller in June with proceeds at the door donated to FRS. A Fall Forestry Fair slated for last Fall was postponed to this Fall and FRS will have a booth at this daylong event. More to come on that on the FRS website. This Fall Forestry Fair has encouraged the formation of a promotional materials committee to review our current inventory and to look at some type of "pop-up" display for our promotion. The results should be evident in Earltown this Fall.

The Canadian Revenue Agency invited FRS to participate in a consultation session in Halifax in December. Bernadette and Candace attended. We now have a better understanding of our responsibilities as a registered charity and the rules governing a charity's political activities.

This meeting marks the 10 year anniversary of the Friends of Redtail Society. Last summer saw Billy hosting a 25 year anniversary of his Redtail Nature Awareness camp. Significant milestones and there is certainly lots of work ahead for the next 10 years. We hope you're all along for the ride.

Respectively submitted on behalf of the FRS Board,

Tom Miller
Chair, FRS