

March 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012 is Canada Water Week and we would like to share with your readers/listeners stories about the positive actions that Nova Scotians are taking to protect our water.

Canada Water Week is an opportunity to highlight actions that Atlantic Canadian organizations and individuals are doing to protect our water resources now and for future generations. Events are taking place across the country (<http://canadawaterweek.com/>) and other media outlets are adopting this theme (<http://ww3.tvo.org/special/coming-soon-tvo-celebrates-canada-water-week>).

We would like to share the following stories from Nova Scotia:

- **Adopt-A-Watershed:** Contact person, Leann Grosvold, Clean NS
- **Groundswell:** Community-based groundwater monitoring. Contact person: Jennifer West, EAC
- **Paddle to the Ocean:** Contact person: Zac Crouse, paddler
- **Back to the Tap:** Banning bottled water in schools. Contact person: Luke Ehler - Auburn Drive High School student
- **A River Runs Free - Clementsport Dam Removal:** Contact person: Levi Cliche, Clean Annapolis River Project
- **NSLC Adopt A Stream:** Contact person: Amy Weston, Nova Scotia Salmon Association

We would also like to draw attention to the following events:

- Zac Crouse Paddle to the Ocean Presentation (March 20<sup>th</sup> - 7 pm Rogue's Roost)
- Business Unusual: Water and Food Insecurity - Mark Redwood Free Public Lecture (March 22<sup>nd</sup> - 7 pm - Room 1020 Rowe Management Building, Dalhousie University)
- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Well-Tapped - Water for People Benefit (March 23<sup>rd</sup> - 7 pm - The Lower Deck - 15\$/20\$)
- Atlantic Regional Water Symposium (March 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> - Nova Scotia Agricultural College Truro, NS)

The following document gives a short introduction to these projects and events to highlight topics for media interviews or articles.

When asked **“What is Canada’s most important natural resource?”**

### **54% of Atlantic Canadians said freshwater**

81% said they were very concerned or somewhat concerned with the long term supply/quality of Canada’s freshwater  
79% of Atlantic Canadians believe that water is very important to Canada’s economy, prosperity and quality of life<sup>1</sup>.

Water is essential for life, sustains ecosystem health, supports our economy, provides recreational opportunities and countless other services that we daily take for granted. Unfortunately we are not taking care of this precious resource. Despite awareness of the importance of water we continue to treat our rivers, wetlands, lakes and harbours with little regard.

- 68% of lakes in Halifax Regional Municipality are becoming eutrophic.
- Algae blooms have persisted in lakes in south west Nova Scotia since 2006.
- Little is known about our groundwater resources and they are facing increasing risk from potential shale gas developments.
- Municipalities are struggling to meet national infrastructure standards for water and wastewater.
- Our coastal areas are increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (including increasing severity and frequency of extreme weather events).

The following projects and events are making a difference in Nova Scotia toward improving water quality, protecting water resources, and improving community-based water stewardship.

### **Adopt-a-Watershed 2012 Kick-off!**

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Hot on the heels of Canada Water Week comes the launch of another exciting season of the Adopt-a-Watershed Program. Adopt-a-Watershed is a free, curriculum-linked program that delivers presentations to students from elementary to high school that focus on the function and importance of watersheds. Students take part in indoor and



outdoor activities that encourage their involvement in pollution prevention and water conservation activities in order to maintain clean and healthy water sources for drinking and recreational activities. Since its inception in 2008, Adopt-a-Watershed has reached over 2,750 youth in the Lake Major Watershed. This year, Clean Nova Scotia, with support from Halifax Water, is aiming to deliver the program to over 1,300 students, facilitate several community riparian planting events and explore opportunities for expansion of the program throughout the HRM. Stay tuned for news on the kick-off riparian planting event to take place in early May 2012!

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<sup>1</sup> RBC 2011 Canadian Water Attitudes Survey, [http://www.cwn-rce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/2011\\_Canadian\\_Water\\_Attitudes\\_Study.pdf](http://www.cwn-rce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/2011_Canadian_Water_Attitudes_Study.pdf)

## Groundswell

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Groundswell is a project that promotes sustainable drinking water management by increasing the number of groundwater monitoring wells in the province. This community-based monitoring project uses volunteers who are already users and stewards of local groundwater aquifers to visit wells and upload data from loggers in each well a few times each year. The project is currently collecting hourly data from 6 wells, but we are always looking for more!

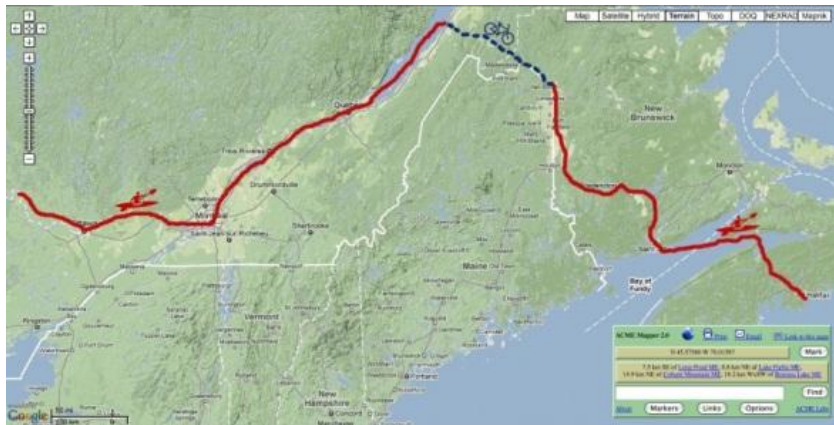


## Paddle to the Ocean

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Musician, recreation therapist, educator and expedition sea kayaker, Zac Crouse completed a self-supported kayak trip from the Ottawa Valley (Beachburg, ON) to Halifax, NS in the summer of 2011. Many friends joined him for parts of the trip, yet for more than half of the 82 days, he was on his own. With the help of a documentary filmmaker Zac was able to film his



epic journey. Zac paddled by sea kayak for the majority of the time, with a couple of bike & trailer assisted portages. Over the course of the summer and across 4 provinces he was able to paddle a 17-foot boat through everything from class IV rapids to historic canals. He surfed tidal bores and learned how to use the world's most powerful tides to assist in his progress. There were more than a few challenges: finding clean drinking water, a place to camp for the night or dragging the boat through inter-tidal mud flats – all while filming the whole experience. The goal of Paddle to the Ocean is to help Canadians realize the benefits of active transportation and to inspire people to lead healthier, more balanced lifestyles while reconnecting with the natural environment.

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## Back to the Tap

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Students from Middle Schools and High Schools from around Halifax have joined the movement to turn on the tap and ditch the bottle. The students have formed an organization named Engaged Youth for Environmental Sustainability (EYES) and banning bottled water in schools is their first target. The students gathered a petition with over 1400 signatures and made a presentation to the Halifax Regional School Board on February 29<sup>th</sup> 2012. Their presentation, which detailed the environmental, economic and social implications of purchasing bottled water was met with overwhelming support from the crowd of about 75 people and prompted some encouraging words from the Board. The Chair of the Board, Irvine Carvey said “I’m sure wherever we can that we will move on your suggestion”. The students would also like to see a reinvestment in drinking fountains in schools which have been neglected over the years and are in need of maintenance and repair. The movement follows a commitment by the provincial government made in 2010 to no longer supply bottled water during provincial government offices and meetings. EYES have organized a student rally at Auburn Drive High School with speakers from Halifax Water, the Ecology Action Centre and the Council of Canadians. They will keep working to ensure that clean, reliable and free tap water is the students’ first choice in schools.

## A River Runs Free - Clementsport Dam Removal

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The Clementsport dam, built in the early 1940s as a drinking water source for the Cornwallis Naval Station, was located near Clementsport, along the Moose River. The dam and impoundment area were later used as a community swimming park until interest in the area declined. Over a decade of neglect, coupled with high water flows and ice damages resulted in a derelict dam that posed both a severe public safety hazard as well as an obstruction to fish passage. This was significant for the Moose River, whose underlying geology provides a natural buffering capacity against the effects of acid rain, and which retains good water quality and crucial habitat for the spawning and maturation of species such as the threatened Atlantic salmon.



Moose River site prior to restoration and removal of the dam (left), and after dam removal and initial restoration activities completed (right).

In September 2011, after a culmination of 4 years of preparation and planning, the Clean Annapolis River Project (CARP) with help from partner groups successfully removed the dam. This led to the restoration of approximately 19.1 km of upstream habitat along the Moose River and represents one of the first of such removals in Nova Scotia. It is hoped that the knowledge and experience gained from this removal will prove useful in restoring other rivers across the province.

## NSLC Adopt A Stream

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From Meteghan in Clare to Louisbourg in Cape Breton, there are more than 25 community groups actively involved in protecting their local rivers and restoring aquatic habitat for fish and other wildlife through NSLC Adopt A Stream, a program of the Nova Scotia Salmon Association which provides project funding and technical support. The Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation has joined the effort to restore our waterways by becoming the title sponsor and pledging \$100,000 annually. With spring just around the corner, anglers are getting ready for the start of fishing season. With each recreational fishing license purchased, anglers contribute to the NS Sportfish Habitat Fund which contributes to hands-on community-based restoration projects. In 2011 our collective efforts resulted in the restoration of more than 143,400 square meters of stream and riparian habitat, the reestablishment of fish passage to 49.6 km of rivers and the streamside planting of 19,065 trees. Volunteers gave 7000 hours to these projects. 2012 promises to be an equally successful year.

