

# Will Cliffs of Fundy Geopark Become a Global Tourist Destination?



Bob Smith, chair of the WCCDA (West Colchester Community Development Association) welcomes everyone to the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark discussion. (Harrington Photo)

By Linda Harrington

The WCCDA (West Colchester Community Development Association) hosted a public meeting Thursday, May 25th at the Peg in Masstown looking at “How will the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark change Communities along the shore?” and “How do we take advantage of this wonderful new opportunity?”

Guest speakers were Sacha Brake, the new Executive Director of the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark and MLA Tom Taggart.

David Phillips, Chief Execu-

utive Officer for TCPEP (Truro Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity) started off the evening explaining the priorities of TCPEP and the importance of the Cliffs of Fundy Geo Park as a globally recognized tourist designation. He noted Colchester County is one of only two areas outside HRM with 2% growth. “The Cliffs of Fundy is important to TCPEP to grow productivity and tax base in this community,” he said. “We need to look at it as a tourist destination. It is our Peggy’s Cove.”

Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO

Global Geopark is located along the north shore of the Minas Basin of the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia, covering 165 km from Lower Truro to Apple River for a total of 2600 square kilometres. It is one of only 177 UNESCO sites in the world.

A Geopark is a designation that attracts tourists wishing to explore the connections between geology, local communities, culture, and nature. Sacha reflected on the relationship to GeoHeritage, connecting history of the land to the history of the people.

“Tourism is important, but it is just a piece of the Geopark,” she says adding, “For the people that live here it is about community engagement and partnership.” Events such as the Not Since Moses Run, Career Fairs, Geo Seniors events, Tours, Fundy Food Trail and special events help bring people together and showcase what our region has to offer.

Referring to the headline of the meeting “How will the Cliffs of Fundy change our communities?”, Sacha says we don’t need to really change but can celebrate, grow and promote what we already have.

Arthur Haskins mentioned outdated material on the current fundgeopark.ca website and Caleb Grant, Geoscientist at Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark noted there is a new website in the works, and it should be online within the next month. Haskins also

suggested this area deserved more specific marketing, referring to a Taste of Nova Scotia publication which combines the Bay of Fundy and Annapolis Valley into one large geographical area. It was noted this can be confusing for potential tourists who do not realize this area is separated by a large body of water.

MLA Tom Taggart passed along words of appreciation to Anita McLellan, one of the Fundy Geopark Board of Directors, for her involvement with the area’s tourism association, and her continued work promoting the area. He said this area has never received the promotion it deserves and is a huge asset no one knows about. “Evaluators from Greece and Italy said this area has the potential to be the #1 Geopark

in the world...that’s huge,” says Taggart.

An online 30 second video marketing campaign for Cliffs of Fundy Geopark recently ran for eight weeks and was viewed over 400,000 times by people all over the world. “This is helping to showcase what our region has to offer, and making this an international tourist destination,” says Sacha. “If you are a business owner or tour guide, come and talk to us about how you can use the Fundy Geopark branding to help grow your business.”

One major shortfall to having tourists stay longer in this area is currently accommodations, something to consider as a regional strategy is developed going forward.



David Phillips, Chief Executive Officer for TCPEP (Truro Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity) explains the importance of the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark as a tourist destination. (Harrington Photo)



Sacha Brake, the new Executive Director of the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark was one of the guest speakers on Thursday, May 25th. (Harrington Photo)



Tom Taggart, MLA for Colchester North is excited to promote the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark. (Harrington Photo)



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