

PAGE BRIEFS

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Reservations for Provincial Campsite Bookings will open on April 2 & 3 for Nova Scotia's 20 camping parks. A schedule of which campgrounds open for reservations on which day is posted on the provincial parks website. Reservations can be made online or by phone at 1-888-544-3434 beginning at 9 a.m. Most camping and day-use parks will open Victoria Day weekend and others will open in June. Campers can check the provincial parks website for information on openings.

Some provincial parks have undergone upgrades since last season as follows: Electrical and water services have been added to existing campsites at Ellenwood Lake, Valleyview and Caribou-Munroes Island provincial parks. Graves Island Provincial Park has a new water services building that will ensure safe and reliable water supply is available and the causeway to Graves Island has also been paved. An accessible and gender-neutral comfort station was opened at Valleyview Provincial Park last season and new steps to the beach in the day-use area at Blomidon Provincial Park were constructed.



When firefighters arrived on scene at 417 Cross Road in Crowes Mills flames were shooting out a window. Three pets, two small dogs and a cat perished from asphyxiation. (Clair Peers Photo)



Members from Cobequid, Debert & North River Brigades working through mutual aid assistance on January 2 for a mini home fire at 417 Cross Road, Crowes Mills. Firefighters remained on the scene for approximately 3 hours. (Clair Peers Photo)

3 Pets Lost in Mini Home Fire

By Clair Peers

(We apologize for the delay in publishing this article. We had already selected out editorial copy for last month's issue when this information and photos arrived)

On Thursday January 2 at approximately 3:20 pm Onslow Belmont fire Brigade responded to a structure fire at 417 Cross Road in Crowes Mills. When firefighters arrived the building appeared to be fully engulfed with flames coming from a side window.

The residence was a renovated mobile home with additions. The family was not home at the time of the incident. Unfortunately, 3 pets, two small dogs and a cat perished from asphyxiation.

Firefighters remained on scene until approximately 6:30. RCMP was on scene throughout the incident.

The cause is un-determined. Members from Cobequid, Debert & North River Brigades also provided mutual aid assistance.

Clair Peers is communications manager for the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade and often contributes articles to the Shoreline Journal.



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News from our Municipal Council - District 10

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private business will be contractually obligated to provide specified products/ services, at a specified max price, by a specified date and payments will be made based on successfully meeting targets or completion.

You may ask, why do you not have some ownership given you have invested \$2.79 million? Very simply, we did not want any responsibility for operation or maintenance. Public ownership or public private partnership would bring too many complications in terms of regulations etc. What our \$2.79-Million did buy, over and above, enabling this project to go forward is a 20 year lease for irrefutable use of two pair of dark fibre strands included in this fibre build. This will allow the Municipalities to create and offer fully private networks and plan to work with other levels of Government and industry to pilot advanced health care solutions, agriculture testing, educational systems, community Wi-Fi hot spots etc.

Just to explain, at this time, Xplornet has signed a contract with the Government of Nova Scotia. That contract will have many safeguards and oversight to protect their share of the public funding. One condition is the successful completion of contract with the two Municipalities. That contract is currently being negotiated with Municipal staff and legal counsel. In terms of timelines, this will be a three year project, with construction beginning this spring.

Xplornet is known locally as a satellite service provider. This is not satellite!!! This is fiber, some fiber direct to the home and wireless service to over 22,000 homes. There will be a limited number of homes still served by satellite; however the expectation is 100% coverage. I say expectations only because that is a "statement", I am cautious to be firm on; however, is what the contract will call for. The minimum service will be 50Mbps down and 10 Mbps upload, with majority reaching 100

Mbps. This is 5-G ready and for those like me that are not actually living in this high tech world. I am told that if someone wanted to build a robotics plant in Five Islands or any other community it could be done. It is my sincere hope/ belief this will enable us to encourage small tech businesses to relocate to our communities and provide their employees a better quality of life.

The potential for economic development is enormous, there is documented proof that modern, reliable, high quality fibre internet increases economic development substantially. It is projected that when 5-G comes to Canada it will create 250,000 new jobs and billions of dollars in economic activity annually. This is a great announcement; however, the work is just beginning. We must now work to ensure we are in a position to reap the benefits and ensure our Municipalities growth. It is my expectation that by next month the contract between Xplornet and both Municipalities will be signed and I can provide more information on timing etc.

On a personal note, I indicated at the beginning about it being -20 outside, which was true, when I started. I wrote this last Saturday Feb 15. I never reviewed and sent it in. This Morning Sunday Feb 23 Maurice is having a kitten because I am late, and he is up against a deadline. My point is that Zylpha and I are on a road trip to Savannah Georgia and how cool it has been to drive out of the -20 and snow into the gradual change to the point where in Southern Pennsylvania there are black Angus cows in the fields actually eating GREEN GRASS. That is what we have can look forward to in the very near future.

Tom

Tom Taggart is Colchester Municipal councillor for District 10

SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS:

So Does the Burning of Wood Products

By Greg Watson and David Stevenson

There have been studies about the burning of wood during the past decade, and the conclusions are mixed. There is a very positive side, one with Nova Scotia wood being the fuel for heat and electricity production in our province.

In all cases, the wood should come from sustainably managed woodlots in Nova Scotia. The chips from waste and low quality growth for use in local biomass burners makes it easier for foresters and government agencies to apply helpful influence over the whole process, including the possible isolation of the carbon released in burning.

Burning wood chips in our province offers the opportunity to complete the carbon cycle here, while exporting wood pellets results in a different conclusion.

This matters: there is a developing ethic over the burning of wood on a commercial scale. We know we need to stop the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from all sources, including the burning of wood.

The discussions and studies on this topic can lead to conflicting findings. Knowing this, we are cautious in reviewing

the ethics of burning harvested forest materials.

The Northern Forest Center, in New Hampshire and Maine, did an independent study in 2016 which described the greenhouse gas impacts of heating buildings with state-of-the-art wood pellet boilers. The pellets were manufactured by Northern Forest pellet mills, all of which produce fuel exclusively for thermal (heat) generation. Included in the findings was the following:

"After 50 years, greenhouse gas emissions from pellets drops to 62% less than oil, 67% less than natural gas, and 56% less than propane. This is a good result, but does not speak to the recapture of carbon. Compared to the burning of non-manufactured wood waste low quality stems, the pellets can be expected to release more gasses."

The summary of a study in the journal ScienceDirect (v. 141, 2017) contains these words:

"An industry-average pellet feedstock mix (50% sawmill residues, 50% pulpwood) appeared to generate heat that was at least at parity [i.e. equal] with fossil-fuel heating alternatives when harvest levels remain unchanged due to pellet

production. If harvest levels increase due to pellet production, using pellet heat increased GHG emissions. If baseline harvest levels drop (e.g., following the loss of low-grade markets), GHG emissions from pellet heat would at least remain stable relative to fossil alternatives."

Elsewhere in the United States, the Southern Environmental Law Center is a source of research and opinion. A new analysis (released in August 2019) by experts in carbon lifecycle modeling reveals that cutting down trees from sustainably managed forests—a practice proclaimed by many in the US industry as a best practice for wood pellet sourcing—and burning them for electricity, increases carbon released into the atmosphere for more than four decades.

This analysis involved wood pellets made primarily from thinning of pine plantation in southern US states. The pellets in this case are being shipped to the UK.

This is not a surprising conclusion, for there is a disconnect between the pine tree planting - the start of the carbon temporary capture - and the conclusion, which is the release of the carbon in the UK, rather than in the United

States.

According to attorney Heather Hillaker of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the passage of time is critical. She has noted massive carbon reductions are needed within the next 12 years, "a timeframe that cannot be achieved by burning woody biomass." We add here for Nova Scotia: we need to capture the carbon dioxide and isolate it. This is a missing element in the complicated sustainable forestry management pattern: there needs to be a place to put the released carbon dioxide. The cycle needs to close or no greenhouse gas gain is made.

What can we do in Nova Scotia? We can substitute the burning of our wood for the current burning of imported oil for heat and electricity generation. It is time to make a concerted beginning in our push to reduce greenhouse gases using our own resources.

We need our forests and we need them properly managed. With industry and government leadership, Nova Scotia can be a leader in sustainable forestry and greenhouse gas reduction.

David Stevenson is President of Colchester-Cumberland Wind Field Inc., Tatamagouche and Greg Watson is General Manager, North Nova Forest Owner Co-op Ltd., Wentworth.



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