

Geopark Celebrates International Geodiversity Day

By Darrell Cole

One of the cornerstones of the UNESCO Cliffs of Fundy Global Geopark is to celebrate the rich geodiversity of the Bay of Fundy coastline in Cumberland and Colchester Counties.

Representatives of the organization hosted a trio of events in both counties on Monday, Oct. 6, to celebrate International Geodiversity Day with the first of those a sunrise talk and tour of the beach at Spencer's Island in Cumberland County near Advocate Harbour.

Later in the day, events were held at the Discovery Centre near Truro and at Five Islands Provincial Park just east of Parrsboro in Colchester County.

"Geodiversity is about recognizing the different ages and types of rocks that are in a region, different landforms and how that relates to biodiversity, culture, where people live and how they live," Tim Fedak, curator of geology at the Nova Scotia Museum said. "We're blessed here in this part of the world, at the Cliffs of Fundy, with a rich geo-heritage that goes all the way back to 300 million years ago and the assembly of Pangea to the formation of Cape Split with the break up of Pangea 200 million years ago."

A handful of participants arrived on the beach at dawn and watch the sun rise over Cape Split and then went on a walk along the beach looking for the fossilized remains of plants and animals as well as trackways left by tiny insects millions of years ago.

They were also asked to visualize what they saw on paper in the form of drawings of the sunrise, the scenery and the cliffs.

During the walk, Fedak talked about what geologists from the Geological Survey of Canada mapped 125 years ago as having 300-million-year-old fossil footprints.

"It's amazing what you can discover here. There are all kinds different cycles of time that area here," he said.

Fedak said people are beginning to really appreciate the hidden geological treasures along the Bay of

Fundy and what the Cliffs of Fundy Global Geopark have to offer. That recognition goes back many years before the park's designation to the Fundy Geological Museum in Parrsboro in the late 1980s and the World Heritage Site at Joggins.

Geological diversity refers to the natural portion of the planet that is not alive, both at the surface and in the planet's interior - the Earth's minerals, rocks, fossils, soils, sediments, landforms, topography and hydrological features such as rivers and lakes.

The term 'geodiversity' also spans the processes that create and modify these features.

It's that geodiversity that attracted Bonnie Moore to Spencer's Island to see the sun rise over the horizon with vibrant colours.

"I'm a big fan of the geopark and spend a lot of time hiking here," she said. "We need to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of what the geopark means and by us showing up here today it will lead to a greater appreciation of the ecosystem we have right in our own backyard. It's very unique."

The events were another opportunity to celebrate the geopark after the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark were recommended in September to receive a green card, and with it, its full UNESCO Global Geopark status for another four years—a powerful reminder of the region's incredible geological and cultural importance.

This renewed designation puts Cliffs of Fundy back on the world stage, reinforcing its commitment to celebrating Earth's oldest stories—told through dramatic cliffs, ancient fossils, and powerful Mi'kmaw traditions.

Evaluators from UNESCO's Global Geopark organization visited the part in July as part of the program's four-year revalidation process.

The Cliffs of Fundy Global Geopark stretches from Lower Truro in Colchester County and extends along the Fundy shoreline to Apple River in Cumberland County. The area was awarded its official status as a UNESCO global geopark in 2020.

Cumberland selected for Community Climate Capacity Program

By Darrell Cole

The Municipality of Cumberland is one of nine communities across Nova Scotia who are the latest participants in the Community Climate Capacity Program.

Joining Cumberland in the program are the towns of Antigonish, Lockeport, Lunenburg, New Glasgow and Port Hawkesbury; the Municipality of Queens and West Hants.

Through the Community Climate Capacity Program, the Municipality of Cumberland will align its municipal planning strategy with coastal protection and climate priorities; develop and distribute public engagement materials on coastal hazards, such as flood risk, and develop flood policy.

"We are very pleased to be part of this program and the services provided to better define our coastal protection policies in the plan review we have underway," the municipality's director of development and planning Glen Boone said. "Having someone who is focused on that issue can help support that process."

Boone said Cumberland County is unique geographically in that it has three coastlines - the Northumberland Strait, the Bay of Fundy and the Chignecto Bay.

"They're all unique and distinct in their own way," he said.

Environment and Climate Change Minister Timothy Halman made the announcement Oct. 21 at the Community Climate Capacity Summit in Truro. The event brought together community representatives from across Nova Scotia to collaborate on best practices, learn from each other's experiences and gain insight into climate and sustainability

initiatives at the local level.

"Our government is investing to protect communities from the impacts of climate change," the minister said. "From flood planning to coastal protections to exploring clean energy, we are supporting those who know their communities best to take action in ways that make the most sense for their communities."

To date, the government has invested \$7.3 million in the Community Climate Capacity Program to support local action in response to climate change.

"Over the past year, we've worked alongside Nova Scotia communities to identify and support their climate goals, and we're seeing firsthand what coastal communities need. By expanding the program, our team can offer more support where the risks of coastal hazards are greatest, helping communities build resilience through local climate

solutions and securing them additional support for priority projects," Scott Skinner, president and CEO of the Clean Foundation.

Clean Foundation's Community Climate Capacity Program is funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change. It provides communities with a dedicated staff of specialists who can help guide them through climate and sustainability initiatives at the local level.

Whether it is the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather, flooding or prolonged heat waves, climate change is increasingly affecting Nova Scotia's communities.

After launching in May 2023, the program team shared detailed information about the program with communities and organizations across the province, gathering feedback on climate change and sustainability challenges.

GEO-PARK AGM November 25

The Cliffs of Fundy Geopark Society will host its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Tuesday, November 25 at 6:30 p.m. at the Economy Recreation Centre in Economy. Immediately following the AGM, the Society will hold an interactive community planning session to gather input and share ideas for the Geopark's new strategic plan. Discussion topics will include sustainable tourism and economic development, community partnerships, volunteer opportunities, and conservation and education initiatives. Participants will also hear updates on projects recently completed or currently underway.

Additional community planning sessions will take place in the coming months, with a goal of finalizing the new strategy by Spring 2026.

All are welcome to attend and help shape the future of the Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark. For more information, please contact Devin Trefry at manager@fundygeopark.ca

Introductory Ringette Program Coming to Springhill

By Darrell Cole

As a sport, ringette is considered among the fastest games on ice.

Since its creation in 1963, the mostly female-dominated sport has grown in every province and has sprouted roots internationally in the United States and Europe.

A Come Try Ringette session is coming to the Dr. Carson & Marion Murray Community Centre in Springhill on Nov. 1 from 5 to 6 p.m. and will be followed Nov. 8 by a four-week introductory program at the arena.

The four sessions will run from 9:15 to 10:15 am on Nov. 8, 15, 22 and 29.

Cost for the four-week program is \$85 per person.

An eight-week program will kick off in January, running from Jan. 10 until Feb. 7. The program is open to youth ages four to 12.

"It's designed to be low cost and so there's minimal equipment required," Ringette Nova Scotia executive director Stacey Sloan said. "The participants will need a hockey helmet with a cage, skates and some sort of protective glove."

Sloan said sticks will be provided and the organization will have some helmets and cages available.

"It'll just be some basic skills," she said. "You don't have to know how to skate as we'll have some of the skate assists there. We'll teach them how to hold the stick, how to pass the ring, how to stab it. The hope, longer term, is we could start a team and then a club."

After the Come Try Ringette

session in Springhill, there will be some exhibition games from 6 to 7 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m. among some U12 teams.

"If anyone wants to stay, they'll be able to watch the games to see how the sport is played," Sloan added.

For several years, ringette associations in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have been using rinks in Amherst and Oxford, and sometimes Springhill, for games and tournaments. Eventually, Sloan said, the hope is to see the creation of a local Cumberland County ringette association. There is also a growing university league across the Maritimes, including Mount Allison University in nearby Sackville, N.B.

"We're pretty HRM heavy right now as that's where the bulk of our players are right now, but we're growing strategically into others of the province," she said. "Along with the sessions in Springhill, we're also hosting an introductory program in Antigonish. We also have an association in Berwick, that's been there for decades and we're just starting an association in Colchester."

The main objective of ringette is to use a stick to hit a ring into the opposing team's goal. Like hockey, the team with the highest score at the end wins.

Ringette is different in hockey in several ways, including:

30-second shot clock: The short shot clock leads to a fast-paced game that requires constant motion.

Everyone wins: The fast pace

and constant passing of ringette discourages ring hogs and fosters teamwork.

No-contact policy: There is no intentional body contact, making it much safer than hockey.

Straight stick: Sticks are straight with a specialized tip.

Hollow ring: Rather than a puck, ringette uses a 6-inch rubber ring.

No face-offs: Any stoppage results in a free pass to restart the game.

No offsides: Players can't carry the ring over a blue line. They must pass the ring over a blue line to a teammate.

More protection: Ringette cages (masks) are made with tight triangular or horizontal bars to prevent the stick from penetrating.



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