

Director's Report: Recreation Services


The following is an overview of activities in the Community Development Department since April 2025, which Paul Smith, Director circulated to council at its August 14 Council meeting. This section focuses on the "Recreation Services".

RECREATION SERVICES

Not-for-Profit Insurance Funding Program

A new online application and financial reporting forms for our Not-for-Profit Insurance Funding Program is now available on the municipal website. The program provides financial support to eligible not-for-profit community organizations to secure Directors & Officers and General Liability Insurance. Groups can apply for funding by contributing up to 50% of total premium costs up to \$1,000.00 per organization. The deadline for applications is October 24, 2025.

Tractor Tender for Recreation Services

Recreation Services issued a Tractor Tender, which closed on July 16, 2025. We are currently in the process of reviewing the submitted bids. The new tractor will be an asset, supporting a wide range of essential tasks including road maintenance, winter forestry work, operating attachments such as a chipper, backhoe, bush mower, and finishing mower, as well as assisting with daily shop operations.

Non-Profit and Community Event Grants

All applicants have received funding for their respective organizations. Some organizations were fortunate to receive additional support through provincial and other funding sources and all recipients are required to submit a post grant report form.

Community Action Fund

The United Way, Town of Truro and the Municipality of Colchester have developed a community action plan to support people of all ages to participate in local recreational activities and promote an active lifestyle. It is hoped others will be inspired by the generosity of the late William "Bill" Lake who can apply and receive up to \$200 for individual activities.

Arenas

The County has supported the three arenas who have been working towards planned capital upgrades for the upcoming season. Following a successful year, the new floor at the North Shore Recreation Centre and Zamboni at the Don Henderson Memorial Sportplex have made significant differences in both arena's operations.

Special Events

Colchester Bike Week (June 1st to 9th) was a great success featuring 13 bike rodeos held at eight different schools. A total of 969 children participated in these fun and engaging events, which were designed to promote bike safety. The week also included six events for adults as well as the donation of more than eight bicycles to deserving children.

Step into Spring

The Step into Spring Walking Challenge was a huge success, with participants across the County logging an impressive 41,748,629 steps over eight weeks, surpassing the 30 million step goal. Colchester staff took part as well, with 11 staff members submitting a combined total of 4,820,044 steps with Mitch Millard logging the most at 649,649 steps.

Colchester and Truro Volunteer Recognition:

The Colchester and Truro Volunteer Recognition Celebration was a wonderful success, with a great turnout from the community. This year there was an increase in nominations, thanks to the ease of the new online nomination form. Colchester County Provincial Volunteer Award winners were Dick and Brenda McMullen who will be representing the Municipality at the provincial awards in September.

Cobequid Trail Run

The Cobequid Trail Run is celebrating its 20th Anniversary. The run is scheduled to start at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 24th which includes the 5km, 10km and the half marathon. The event is being held at the NSCC with the race taking place along the Cobequid Trail.

Parks and Trails

Cobequid Trail

Work has been awarded for the replacement of the small bridge with a culvert along the Cobequid Trail beside MC Power in Lower Truro. Construction will take place in August.

Debert Recreation Park

A local cricket club plays regular weekly matches on the new, temporary cricket pitch and have also hosted a small tournament in June, with several other clubs from NS participating.

Five Islands Lighthouse Park

The new viewing deck is nearly complete. The first new interpretive (Geopark) panel has been installed on the deck. The swing set was replaced in June with enhanced and more accessible options, and new Adirondack chairs were placed on the lawn.

Not Since Moses organizers hosted the race kit pickup on July 12th with 5 km and 10 km runs on July 13th at the park. With 1000 runners, the park and community were very busy - a very positive and fun atmosphere!



The park was also the site of a visit and dinner on July 20th as part of the Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark revalidation. The team commented on the beautiful view and recognition of the significance of this place to the Mi'kmaq and the community.

Fundy Discovery Site

Council awarded the pedestrian bridge to WRD/TRS who will begin designing the structure over the next six months with an expected construction start date next spring and span two years. The \$7.9m project is funded through the ICIP program at 73.3% with the remaining 26.7% financed by the Municipality.



The Visitor Information Centre has recorded strong visitor numbers so far this summer (see chart). Construction of the observation deck is nearing completion, with the railings in progress. (The deck will not open until the connecting trail is constructed.) The view of the river (upstream and down-



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stream) and surrounding landscape from both levels is terrific.

A new multi-use pathway from the Fundy Discovery Site to the Cobequid Trail (along Highway #286) will be tendered this summer with an expected completion date sometime this Fall. The 3m wide paved pathway will be funded through the ICIP program at 73.3% with the remaining 26.7% financed by the Municipality.

The Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark revalidation team visited Fundy Discovery Site on July 20th and were impressed by the tidal bore and the investment in quality infrastructure and commented on subtle design features that make the place special and visitors welcome.

Parks and Trails Coordinator assisted Geopark staff with planning road wayfinding and route confirmation signage as well as the review of draft interpretive signage for several geosites (ongoing).

Nelson Memorial Park

Tree care - mulch circles and fence protection have been installed/refreshed at most parks this spring, including Nelson Memorial Park. Staff installed a new metal roof on the maintenance shed.

Stewiacke River Park

The park has been very busy with regular visitors, as well as with 18 reserved uses of the picnic shelters from early May through July 20th. There are shelter reservations for all weekends for the remainder of the Summer.

Active Communities

Fun in the Sun Day Camps are well underway and thus far camps have been a success. All camps are held in several community local schools thanks to a continued partnership with CCRCE. Thanks to \$25,000 in funding received from the

Province of NS, additional camps in West Colchester have been added to the camp schedule in 2025.

Also, the funding has allowed Recreation Services to hire two additional Day Camp Staff from communities within West Colchester. The funding will also be used to partner with community groups and organizations during the upcoming year to work on sport and recreation initiatives.

Recreation Staff are meeting with other Municipal Recreation Departments, as well as Provincial Representatives, who are working towards a collaborative solution for Community Use of Schools.

With Fall approaching, Recreation Services is in the process of finalizing our upcoming programs including but not limited to; Colchester Multisport, 4-on-4 Women's Hockey League and the Women Learn 2 Play Hockey programs. Adult Learn to Skate will once again be offered as it has been very successful over the past few years.

The Municipality will be working with school and community groups in 2025/2026 to provide access to recreation facilities through our Facility Access Program which has seen a significant increase in applications during 2024/2025.

Staff are working with a group in Tatamagouche to bring more recreation opportunities to the area. Working with the Village of Tatamagouche, a proposal has been submitted to the Province on securing a MPAL (Municipal Physical Activity Leader) who will develop and lead new recreational initiatives.

Equipment Loan Program is still a popular program the Municipality continues to promote with lots of equipment for groups and individuals to borrow and use for various occasions.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
May	263	n/a	n/a	509	744	607	667
June	n/a	n/a	113	1400	1537	1584	1490
July	2259	n/a	432	2060	2150	2117	
August	2570	324	1022	2149	2111	2781	
Sept	n/a	255	845	1499	1565	1855	
Oct	n/a	n/a	345	517	541	907	
TOTAL	5092	579	2757	8134	8648	9851	2157

Visitor Information Centre at Fundy Discovery Centre has recorded strong visitor numbers so far this summer. A quick comparison to previous years is below:



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MLA

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Millbrook • Salmon River

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