

Candidate Survey: Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Regional Wilderness Park

Thank you for participating in our survey for HRM Candidates in the 2020 municipal election! There is an urgent need for a coherent and collaborative effort by Regional Council and HRM staff to follow through on the commitment to establish Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes (BMBCL) Regional Wilderness Park. Thank you for responding, your answers may be released to the public.

Email address *

daveschofield@me.com

District # & Candidate Name: *

District 15 Lower Sackville

1. Have you ever visited any part of the BMBCL area? *



Yes



No



Other: _____

2. Halifax Regional Municipality is responsible for creating the BMBCL Regional Park as promised in the 2006 Regional Plan and in the updated plan 2014. If elected to HRM Council, will you commit to following through on the earlier HRM promise to create the BMBCL Regional Wilderness Park? *

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

3. a) HRM has acquired three blocks of land for the BMBCL in the last three years but in the absence of a strategy, land acquisition has been haphazard and guided by chance. If elected, will you ask staff and Council for a coherent land acquisition strategy? *

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

3. b) Please provide comments on your commitment.

I am actually shocked that there is not a land strategy in place. If elected, I will definitely be looking into what "strategy" is currently in place and working to strengthening where possible.

4. a) As Councillor, will you support the continued purchase of lands around the perimeter of the provincial wilderness area to create the Regional Wilderness Park? *

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

4. b) Over your four-year term, would you push to have BMCBL land acquisition included in the annual HRM budget? *

☐ Yes

☒ No

4. c) Please provide comments on how you would influence land acquisition.

During these uncertain times, I feel moving forward with immediate land acquisitions would be irresponsible. If elected, I would ask council and staff to work with land owners to secure land acquisitions and set tiered future closing dates over multiple years, as HRM starts showing financial recovery from COVID 19. This would be the fiscally responsible approach.

5. a) Having a signature wilderness park within the urban core of our municipality has tremendous benefits including recreation, climate mitigation, health and wellness, and the economy. If elected, would you push for the creation of this park through a coordinated planning approach and the commitment of HRM staff resources to ensure that opportunities for land acquisition and major access points/facilities are not lost? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

5. b) As an elected Councillor, please comment on what policies or actions you would introduce or support to ensure the creation of this park. *

As stated in question 4c, I would ask and ensure staff work with current land owners to set a tiered purchase approach over several years. To be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure HRM is enjoying a strong financial recovery from COVID 19. I would also work with council to set a reasonable budget for the implementation of basic infrastructure within the park that currently exists.

6. The HRM Regional Plan is currently undergoing another regular review and it is expected to be brought to Council for approval in 2021. Will you ensure that this updated Regional Plan includes policies that support the establishment of the BMBCL Regional Wilderness Park AND excludes policies that will compromise the future park? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

7. a) The public are not being engaged on new developments that impact the BMBCL Regional Wilderness Park. Staff reports to Council are too often discussed in-camera leaving the public in the dark. Will you commit to providing for effective and open stakeholder engagement and public information, and challenging the inappropriate reliance on in-camera Council meetings that exclude the public? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

7. b) Please comment on the public engagement you would support.

Release of specific information that directly affects stakeholders. Town Hall meetings with residents and expert presentations, to ensure the right information is getting to the right people.

8. Would you like to join us for a guided hike to see this wilderness area firsthand and learn more about the Regional Wilderness Park? This could include a visit to those lands acquired by HRM. *

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other: _____

9. Would you be interested in viewing a Powerpoint presentation (via link) of a backgrounder on the BMBCL Regional Wilderness Park? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

10. (Optional) Please add any personal comments as related to the creation of the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Regional Wilderness Park. And, thank you for your participation!

I am a strong supporter of wilderness areas, parks, special lands, historical lands and strong infrastructure; it is irresponsible to think you can grow and progress our city without it.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms