



East Coast Trail Association News

Issue No. 47

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Fall 2008



2008 Tely Hike - October 18 - Sugarloaf Path

***Show your support for the East Coast Trail
& come celebrate with us***

This is our 9th Annual Tely Hike. This event is our one and only fund raiser for the year. Its purpose is to raise money for the maintenance and operation of the East Coast Trail. In 2007 we raised \$29,000, and our target for this year is \$35,000. We need the support and active participation of our members to achieve this goal. Your passion and love for the Trail is the key element required to convince others to donate money to support this invaluable recreational and tourism resource. A Trail developed and maintained for your hiking enjoyment; a coastline protected and preserved for future generations. Please make the time in your schedule to get involved and form (or join) a team to help us raise this money. ***The East Coast Trail needs your help.***

The Problem with Plastic "Checkout" Shopping Bags

Say "No" to plastic bags & bring your own bag

This 500 m section of the Sugarloaf Path at the backend of the Robin Bay Landfill has been referred to as the plastic forest. The landscape, as we pass by the Landfill, is littered with plastic bags; they are hanging from the trees and scattered throughout the woods. The sheer volume of the new and legacy plastic litter is illustrated by the pictures contained in this newsletter. What's more, every year the number of plastic bags littering this section of the Trail is growing and accumulating. This is hazardous to wildlife, is visually unattractive, and is unacceptable. Change is required, and the Association is moving forward, together with the City of St. John's, with a four step program that addresses our short and long term change requirements. Refer to the articles and pictures in this issue for further details. ***The East Coast Trail needs your help.***



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Highlights Report:

by Randy Murphy, President



The main focus of this issue is the Tely Hike and the Trail Cleanup at Robin Hood Bay. Please join in and support these initiatives. In addition, we have been doing so much more:

The 2008 trail development project between Logy Bay and Pouch Cove has been fully funded; it started up on July 28th and will complete in 2009. I wish to thank all our funding partners for making this possible. We will provide more details at the AGM and in the next Newsletter.

We have been actively working with the province, since March 2008, to find the tools required to protect and preserve the Trail for future generations. We are making progress and will keep you informed. Again, more details will be supplied at the AGM.

The Depts. of Tourism & Justice have been working with us to draft the new Pedestrian Trails Act. The Act will provide limited liability for the Association, landowners, towns and the province in the event a trail user is injured. We are hoping that it will be placed on this Fall's legislative agenda.

Minister Clyde Jackman, Tourism, Culture & Recreation, agreed to support our funding request for trail maintenance. We had requested \$290,000 a year for five years; the 2008 Provincial Budget provided for \$100,000 a year for five years. This has provided our maintenance program with a major boost as we begin the five-year plan to redevelop this program. We have begun the search to source the additional \$190,000 a year we need to support our trail maintenance goals. We have sent a letter thanking Minister Jackman and his staff for making this possible.

We have also been really busy on the finance and accounting side of the Association. We have completed a detailed review of our accounting system, implemented many changes to improve the system, including a major revision of accounting code and reporting procedures, and we are in the process of completing our first external audit. The external audit will be performed annually from this point forward.

The completion of the external audit, in combination with our registered charity status, will provide us with the two essential elements needed to seek foundation and corporate funding.

The East Coast Trail Association News is published by the East Coast Trail Association. The newsletter appears four times, annually.

The views expressed in the newsletter are those of contributors and not necessarily those of the Association, its membership or funding agencies. Every attempt is made to credit authors for original text and photographers for images. Submissions are welcomed and may be directed to the Newsletter Committee,

c/o:

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2008 Tely Hike: We need your help to raise money for the Trail: *by Randy Murphy, President*

In May 2008 the East Coast Trail celebrated its 14th birthday. There was no party, no cake or cookies . . . just a bunch of dedicated volunteers and two employees working hard to develop, protect, preserve and maintain the Trail. All actively working to find the money needed to support trail development, custodians submitting their trail condition reports for trail maintenance, recruiting and training volunteers to perform trail maintenance, as well as, completing our year-end procedures, converting to a new accounting structure and getting ready for an external audit.

Our 14th birthday is a major milestone, and we have a lot to celebrate. The East Coast Trail has become a provincial, as well as, a national treasure. It benefits the province, communities, businesses and residents at all levels including health and recreation. And I am very pleased to report that by the end of 2009 a total of 286 km of the 540 km Trail will be constructed and delivered to market - more than half of the Trail fully constructed and almost 70% of the coastal portion completed. The dream of the East Coast Trail is being realized and we are delivering as promised.

The Trail is a success story today due to the dedication, commitment and energy of the Association, driven by the selfless motivation of our volunteers. They are the reason we exist, and the reason we will continue to exist, they are the foundation on which this Association is built. However, while our volunteers provide their time and expertise for free, they also need funding to acquire the critical resources that are essential to trail maintenance.

The Tely Hike is our one and only fund raiser for the year. Its purpose is to raise money for the maintenance and operation of the East Coast Trail. The Association must be able to effectively demonstrate its ability and capacity to maintain and operate the Trail, failure to meet this requirement is not an option. We are currently in year one of a five year program to redevelop and rebuild our trail maintenance program. Our objective is to deliver a sustainable maintenance solution capable of supporting 540 km of trail by year-end 2012. So, how is year one going . . . you ask?

In January 2008 we acquired the volunteer services of Judith Whittick as our new Chair of the Trail Maintenance Committee. This year, Judith and her team

are focused on reworking the maintenance system to establish a solid foundation for the ongoing maintenance program. They are providing the momentum and building the capacity required to effectively respond to the needs of our beautiful wilderness trail.

In addition, the \$100,000 received from the Province has had an immediate and significant impact. It is allowing our Trail Maintenance Committee to establish a sound long term trail maintenance plan, as well as, secure some of the key resources required to carry out our stated goals. The funding, in combination with Judith and her team, has provided a major boost for our maintenance program, added significant value and is making a difference. The following are some of the results achieved by the end of August:

- Completed 28 volunteer maintenance outings, already more than 2007.
- Conducted engineering inspections of 2 large bridges and completing the repairs with a paid maintenance crew.
- Developed and implemented trail safety protocols and trained 6 maintenance volunteers in chain saw safety and 12 in first aid and CPR.
- Acquired new tools, equipment and the materials needed to support trail maintenance increasing the overall efficiency of the program.
- Recruiting more maintenance volunteers - we are frequently getting up to 15 volunteers per outing, and we now have 12 volunteers who are prepared to organize and lead the maintenance outings.
- Introduced mid-week outings in August in addition to our weekend maintenance outings.
- Hired a seasonal maintenance employee, Cathy Brown, to support our volunteer maintenance staff and to begin the work site surveys (south of St. John's) required to support our five year maintenance plan.

Not bad for the first eight months, many thanks to Judith and her team, and to the Province. And while the provincial funding has helped to kick start the redevelopment process, it was less than requested, and we are searching to find the additional \$190,000 required to support our maintenance goals.

Now back to the Tely Hike . . . the Trail, as discussed, cannot maintain itself, nor can our volunteers function effectively without resources and funding support, plus our trail is aging and requires more care. Thus, we are calling on our members to support the Tely Hike and help us raise \$35,000.

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2008 Tely Hike cont'd

We need your support and active participation to make this a successful fund raising event. If you love the Trail, get involved and form a team. Invite your family, relatives, friends, neighbors, fellow hikers, and co-workers to join with you. Actively engage them to raise money to support the maintenance and operation of the Trail. Set a fund raising target for your team, and each individual, and get out there and have fun doing it. Sell your community on the need to contribute funds to support the Trail by showing them your passion and love for this great community resource called the East Coast Trail. Your fund raising contribution will also make you eligible for the following prizes:

- **Top Fundraising Team** - a Cougar Helicopter Ride for 14 along the Trail.
- **Top Fundraising Individual:** as usual, we will have a great prize.
- **Draw Prize:** a West Jet trip for 2 anywhere they fly in Canada - this is a draw prize, one entry for every \$20 raised, so the more you raise, the greater your chances of winning!

Please checkout "Tely Hike 2008" at our website www.eastcoasttrail.com to obtain all the information and forms you need to support your team or individual fund raising efforts.

So, maybe, it's time we had a party to celebrate 14 years in and still going strong, no energizer bunny required, just the Trail. On October 18th come to the Legion at Pleasantville to register for the Tely Hike and Party, give us your gift of funds to maintain the Trail, hike with your team along the Sugarloaf Path, and return to the Legion for a party to celebrate your fund raising contribution, our volunteers, our accomplishments and, of course, the East Coast Trail's 14th birthday . . . see you there.

In the meantime, if you wish to join the Tely Hike Organizing Committee for this event please call the office at 738-4453. We are looking for volunteers to help out with the following functions: recruiting Tely Hike teams, the silent auction, trail cleanup program, plastic bag awareness campaign, sponsorship program and the event day activities.

If you love the Trail, get involved and form a team. Invite your family, relatives, friends, neighbors, fellow hikers, and co-workers to join with you.



Judith and a maintenance crew stop for a picture.



The Problem with Plastic "Checkout" Shopping Bags:

by Randy Murphy, President

Plastic shopping bags and other litter are blowing out of the Robin Hood Bay Landfill into the woods, onto the Trail and into the ocean. This 500 meter section of the Trail at the back-end of the landfill has often been referred to as the plastic forest.

The Association has been working, together with the City of St. John's since 2005 on an annual cleanup program. This, however, is a remedial action to address the symptom of the real problem. We, the residents of this province, are doing little to reduce or eliminate the number of plastic shopping bags we use and discard each day.

And the problem of plastic shopping bags on the Trail is minor when you consider the impact these bags are having on our ocean. The impact on the wildlife, on and in the ocean, can be catastrophic. Seabirds become terminally entangled, and whales, seals, dolphins, etc., can and do die from ingesting plastic bags they mistake as food.

A critical factor in our assessment of this problem is that Robin Hood Bay Landfill is located right on the edge of the ocean. And given the fact that most of this province's towns are located along the coast, so are the majority of our landfills. Thus, the proximity of our landfills to the ocean is an influencing variable that is contributing to the severity of this problem.

In addition, please note that the pictures used throughout this newsletter, illustrating how plastic bags are impacting our landscape, represent only a fraction of the plastic bags that are blowing into the ocean throughout this province.

What can we do?

First, we have to understand that this problem does not fully belong to the City of St. John's and the Association and that the action we are taking is on the back end of the problem. We have to begin by recognizing that we (you and I) have created this problem by agreeing to use plastic shopping bags. Therefore, the resolution of this problem is a shared responsibility that belongs to each individual, business, community and the province. The recovery from this problem has to start by agreeing to reduce or eliminate the use of plastic shopping bags from our daily living. If we don't use

them, they will not be delivered to the landfill, and they will not end up on the Trail and in the ocean.

Where can we start?

Immediately, if each of us began to use just one re-useable bag we could help eliminate 6 plastic shopping bags per week, 24 bags per month, and 288 bags a year. This one simple action could eliminate the use of 22,176 plastic shopping bags in an average lifetime. So, the answer is to start small, one bag at a time.

What can we do after this first step?

We have to be willing to take the corrective action required to seek a reasonable, feasible and practical long-term solution. We have to move away from our dependence on remedial programs, to a preventative program aimed at reducing or eliminating the use of plastic shopping bags altogether.

What actions have other jurisdictions taken to resolve this problem?

Ireland is a leader in reducing the use of plastic shopping bags. In 2002, Ireland passed a tax on plastic shopping bags. Customers who want to use plastic bags must pay \$0.15 per bag at the cash register. Plastic shopping bags were not outlawed, but carrying a plastic bag became socially unacceptable. Within the first year of this program, Ireland was successful in reducing plastic bag consumption by 90%. We have a similar success here in the province with the NL Waste Management Trust Fund. This deposit refund program successfully diverted 60% of the beverage containers from landfills and the roadside.

Please remember the reduction or the elimination of plastic shopping bags is a shared responsibility. The Association will continue with the cleanup program and the City will continue to implement improved waste management practices. The real challenge and opportunity, today, is for the residents, the retailers, the communities and the province as a whole to begin the process to immediately reduce or eliminate the use of plastic shopping bags.

In summary, the plastic "checkout" shopping bag poses a serious environmental threat that we can no longer ignore. The simple solution is to stop using plastic bags altogether. The Association has written to Minister Charlene Johnson, Environment and Conservation, highlighting our concerns. We have requested the Minister to address this problem by helping

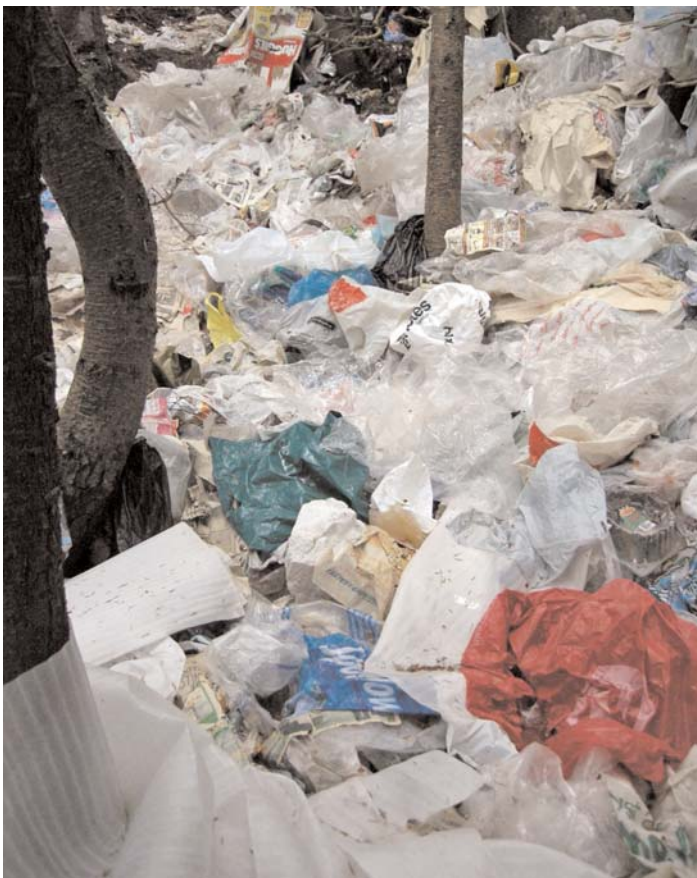
to select and implement a long-term solution that will work for this province.



Sugarloaf Path

These images were taken along the 500 m section of trail commonly referred to as the "plastic forest". Every year the number of plastic bags littering this section of the Trail is growing and accumulating. This is hazardous to wildlife, is visually unattractive, and is unacceptable. The East Coast Trail Association and the City of St. John's are working together to restore this area to its natural state. We are also asking the residents and retailers of the Avalon Peninsula to help us to seek a dramatic reduction in our local consumption of plastic bags. If we don't use them they will not be delivered to the Landfill. The immediate solution is reusable shopping bags . . . **Say "No" to Plastic Bags & Bring Your Own Bag!** In addition, you can join our cleanup campaign scheduled for September 20 & 27. Please call 738-4453 to register.







Plastic Bag Facts & Trends from around the World:

The plastic "use & toss" shopping bag was introduced just over 25 years ago. Today, over 40 countries are wrestling with the plastic bag issue. The ugly truth is, the worldwide consumption rate is now estimated at well over a billion single-use, free, plastic bags per day. The following facts illustrate the environmental impact we are causing for the convenience of unlimited, free, single-use plastic bags.

Top Facts - Consumption:

- Each year, an estimated 500 billion to 1 trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide. That comes out to over one million per minute. Billions end up as litter each year.
- According to The Wall Street Journal, an estimated 12 million barrels of oil are required to make 100 billion plastic shopping bags, that is 60 million barrels annually and growing.
- When retailers give away free bags, their costs are passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices. Annual cost to US retailers alone is estimated at \$4 billion.

Top Facts - Environmental Impact:

- Thousands of sea birds, whales and other marine mammals die every year from eating discarded plastic bags mistaken for food. Once swallowed, plastic bags choke animals or block their intestines, leading to an agonizing death.
- In a landfill, plastic shopping bags take up to 1,000 years to degrade. As litter, they breakdown into tiny bits, contaminating our soil, waterways and entering the food web.
- Less than 3% of plastic bags are recycled each year, leaving 97% of the plastic bags taken at the checkout still in

circulation. A large proportion of these end in our landfills, blown across our landscape, or floating in our oceans.

Top Facts - Solutions:

- In 2001, Ireland consumed 1.2 billion plastic bags, or 316 per person. An extremely successful plastic bag consumption tax reduced consumption by 90%. Denmark also used a levy to reduce their plastic bag consumption by 70%. The City of Seattle, effective January 2009, will charge a green fee (\$.20) on all plastic bags.
- San Francisco became the first US city to ban plastic checkout bags. Over 40 countries around the world are currently taking action to get rid of plastic bags. China recently announced its decision to ban plastic bags.

Large retailers, such as IKEA, are leading the way by not offering free plastic bags, and encouraging customers to buy reusable bags by lowering the price of their reusable bags.

Conclusions:

1. Legislation to ban light-weight, single-use, plastic bags is the most effective way of dealing with low rates of recycling plastic bags and the huge numbers that get dumped in the environment.
2. A levy (consumption tax) only has a short term benefit, after awhile people simply become used to paying the additional charge and continue to use more plastic bags.

For example, Ireland's levy of \$.15 per bag, introduced in 2002 resulted in 90% reduction within 3 months, a 95% reduction by the end of 2005, and saw bag usage per individual increase in 2006. In 2007 Ireland increased the levy to \$.22 per bag.

The bottom line from around the world is the single-use plastic bag is a serious environmental issue that should not be ignored.

Leave No Trace (Outdoor Ethics Education)

It's important to practice low-impact hiking, walking and snowshoeing to conserve and protect our natural environment. Leave No Trace Canada www.leavenotrace.ca is a national non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and inspiring responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships. It builds awareness, appreciation and respect for our wildlands. The ECTA concurs with the Leave No Trace Principles:

1. **Plan Ahead and Prepare**
2. **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces**
3. **Dispose of Waste Properly**
4. **Leave What You Find**
5. **Minimize Campfire Impacts**
6. **Respect Wildlife**
7. **Be Considerate of Other Visitors**



What is ECTA doing to address the plastic bag problem?

The problem area we are focusing on is the plastic bags blowing across the East Coast Trail on the Sugarloaf Path. The landscape, as we pass by Robin Hood Bay, is littered with plastic bags; they are hanging from the trees and scattered throughout the woods. The sheer volume of the new and legacy plastic litter is illustrated by the pictures contained in this newsletter. What's more, every year the number of plastic bags littering this section of the Trail are growing and accumulating. This is hazardous to wildlife, is visually unattractive, and is unacceptable. Change is required, and the Association is moving forward, together with the City of St. John's, with a four step program that addresses our short and long term requirements.

Step 1: Cleanup the 500 m section of the Sugarloaf Path.

We must continue to collect and remove the plastic bags and other wind blown litter from the woods between the Landfill and the Trail. Our objective is to convert the existing plastic forest back to its natural state. This can only be achieved with your help, ECTA members working together with the residents of this region to cleanup this 500 m section of the Trail passing through Robin Hood Bay.

The 2008 Cleanup Campaign is scheduled to begin on September 6th and will be conducted on all weekends up to and including the weekend of October 11th. We are calling on you, our members, to volunteer your time to help lead the way with this cleanup. Also, we will be asking representatives from the following groups to participate in the cleanup campaign: tourism industry, environmental groups, town councils, retailers, the media, and schools. In addition, the City has hired two people to support the cleanup. The City staff will start at the Landfill and work towards the Trail, and we will start at the Trail and work toward the Landfill. Please call the office at 738-4453 to sign up for the cleanup campaign.

Step 2: Say no to plastic bags and bring your own reusable bag.

Robin Hood Bay's transition to regional landfill status means the frequency and volume of plastic bags delivered for long-term storage will increase significantly. All communities, the 250,000 residents of the Avalon Peninsula, will be delivering their garbage to Robin Hood Bay. The Association is seeking a dramatic reduction in our local consumption of plastic shopping bags to successfully support this transition without further impacting the Trail.

In the short-term, we are looking for a practical, preventive, low cost, and effective solution that can be implemented

immediately. At the end of the day, availing of reusable shopping bags is the answer. Each reusable bag has the potential to eliminate an average of 1,000 plastic bags over its lifetime. It is a solution that each of us can implement immediately: Just say "No" to plastic bags! & Bring your own Bag!

The primary focus of this campaign is to enable the residents and retailers on the Avalon to reduce the number of plastic bags handed out at checkouts. Remember to take your reusable bags and use them in every shop, not just the super-market. If you are a retailer, please offer a reusable bag option and train your checkout staff to actively promote this option. We really need to get serious about ridding the environment of plastic bags and making the switch to environmentally friendly reusable bags. This program will, hopefully, provide more of our residents and retailers with the start they need to make this move.

Step 3: Improve the waste management practices at Robin Hood Bay.

The City is in the process of transitioning Robin Hood Bay to a Regional Landfill Facility. The new waste management practices being implemented will significantly improve how the City manages plastic bags away from and into the Landfill as we move forward. Please refer to the next article "What the City is doing at Robin Bay?" for the details.

Step 4: Decide on a long-term strategy to resolve this problem.

The solution is to stop using plastic bags altogether. Can this be achieved through a volunteer program, or by implementing a plastic bag consumption tax, or by introducing legislation to ban plastic bags?

The "***Say No to Plastic Bags***" awareness campaign will raise the question with the general public and hopefully generate a healthy dialogue that will move us forward in search of an effective long-term solution that will work for this province. The Association will request representatives from all the groups who participate in this cleanup and awareness campaign, including the province, to meet for a cooperative roundtable discussion to assess the results of the campaign, the lessons learned, and to help decide on the next steps. This meeting is targeted for November 2008.

Please, join in and support this initiative by participating in the trail cleanup, by saying no to plastic bags, and encouraging your relatives, friends and neighbors to do the same. The plastic "use & toss" shopping bag poses a very serious environmental problem that we can no longer ignore.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever has!"-- Margaret Meade.

Together we can make a difference!



What is the City Doing at Robin Hood Bay? It's All Good!

by Jason Sinyard, Manager -
Waste Management Division, City of St. John's

(Although knowledge about impending change has not yet seeped into the collective conscience on the Avalon Peninsula, major management and operational modifications are coming at Robin Hood Bay. Affectionately known as 'the dump', this waste site is about to be transformed into a modern landfill facility with funding support from three levels of government. The East Coast Trail Association welcomes the following submission from engineer Jason Sinyard which gives details, well worth a read.)

In November 2007, the Provincial Government officially designated Robin Hood Bay as the site for the Avalon Peninsula's Regional Integrated Waste Management Facility. The City and Province immediately began working together to re-engineer the site to meet modern environmental standards. The new site will include among other things, a modern landfill, a materials recovery (recycling) facility, a central compost facility, a public drop-off area, a leachate collection and treatment system, a methane gas collection system and an administration building. The estimated capital cost for construction is \$38.5 million excluding contingencies, engineering and HST. The City has committed to contribute \$6.5 million from the Robin Hood Bay Reserve Fund and the Province has committed to provide the remainder through the Federal Gas Tax Rebate. Construction has been underway since December 2007 and will continue into 2010. As I will outline below, much of the work planned for Robin Hood Bay will result in a cleaner site which will positively impact the adjacent East Coast Trail.

The Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) is scheduled to be operational by mid 2009 and the Central Compost Facility (CCF) by mid 2010. As such, the City will be implementing a curbside recycling program in 2009. All recyclable materials will be processed at the MRF, baled and shipped to market. Likewise, in 2010 the City will add organics collection to its recycling program and this material will be processed into compost at the CCF. This will dramatically reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill. In particular, as plastic grocery bags and paper will be included in the recycling program, these items will be processed at the MRF rather than disposed of at the landfill significantly reducing the wind blown litter on site. Although the flow of bags and paper to the landfill will not

stop immediately, the amount will continue to decrease with time. Differential tipping fees at Robin Hood Bay for recycling/organics versus garbage along with requirements under the Provincial Waste Management Strategy will serve to ensure similar waste diversion practices by other municipal users of the site as well as the industrial, commercial & institutional sector.

In addition to the leachate and methane systems, the landfill operation is also being improved. This includes transitioning from an area method of landfilling to a cell development method which will result in much smaller active working faces, better compaction and the ability to cover the waste at the end of each day. Portable litter screens will be positioned downwind of the tipping face to collect much wind blown litter at the source. These steps will be in place by the fall of 2008 and will result in a decrease in wind blown litter.

The landfill itself is being relocated from the eastern end of the site to the western end further away from the trail. The eastern portion of the site is being capped with an impermeable liner this fall (2008) to divert clean rain water away from the waste and reduce leachate production. This part of the landfill will likely not be required for landfilling purposes for 10 to 15 years. A growing medium will be planted on top of this liner and several permanent litter fences will be installed to collect wind blown litter. These will be cleaned off on a regular basis. Grates will also be installed this year in the drainage ditches at the asphalt recycling site and snow storage site adjacent the Trail. These will collect any litter that is flowing in the ditch toward the Trail. These grates will be cleaned on a regular basis.

In addition, a contract will be awarded for full time litter collection services at the Robin Hood Bay site. This service will not only reduce litter on site but will periodically be extended to clean litter from the section of Trail impacted by the landfill.

It is acknowledged that there may always be some impact on the East Coast Trail due to its adjacency to the regional landfill. However, as we know, the landfill does not generate the garbage and litter that impacts the Trail, but rather is merely the point of disposal for such materials. That being said, the new facilities and operational changes at Robin Hood Bay will have a significant positive impact on the site.

Information pertaining to the work at Robin Hood Bay and the City's plans for a curbside recycling program can be found on the City's website www.stjohns.ca.



The Southern Shore: A Garbage Problem is Approaching We need to talk!

by Ed Delaney, Resident of Bay Bulls,
Trail Manager, ECTA

There are five official landfill sites from St John's to Trepassey wherein residents in the towns and communities along the Southern Shore can unload junk and trash. The dumps are located at Bay Bulls, LaManche Village Road, Ferryland, Renew's-Cappahayden and in St. Shott's (which serves the Portugal Cove South and Trepassey area.) Residents, through their Town Councils or Local Service District (LSD) Committee, presently pay for a weekly pickup of 'household garbage'. In addition to this paid service, dumps are 'open' on specified days of the week so that local residents can truck their own larger trash items not normally transported by the garbage truck.

These dumps are scheduled to be phased out or closed as the Robin Hood Bay Landfill in St. John's is ratcheted up to handle all garbage on the Avalon Peninsula. Meetings are being held to address the problems that are certain to follow with the closing of the 'local' dumps that are, for now, conveniently located. The biggest problem is: what will local residents do with their now normal weekly or bi-weekly trip to the dump when the landfill sites are closed? Have the local Town Councils or LSD's put plans in place to capture the trash and junk and prevent it from being deposited in openings along seldom used roads, or on the old forgotten favourites - the cliffs and the landwash.

How large a problem is it and is anyone addressing the problem that will be created if these dumps are closed? Gary O'Driscoll, the Bay Bulls Landfill attendant counted 124 pickups unloading at that facility on Saturday Aug. 16, 2008. In fact, O'Driscoll estimates that an average of 90 pickups offload at the landfill per 'open day' throughout the year. Fifty two 'open' days per year gives a total 4,680 pickup loads discharging at the site, in addition to the household garbage collected by the contractors. This landfill site is for residents from Bay Bulls to Mobile only. The question is: where is this garbage going when the site is closed? If the other four landfills on the Shore are getting even 50 pickups per 'open' day, the combined total reaches 10,400. The entire area would, therefore, see more than 15,000 pickup loads of trash being left at the landfills annually, and that is from private dumping only.

Going back to the question raised earlier - is there a proposed solution in place to handle this trash once the landfills are closed? The solution according to Mr. O'Driscoll, to the best of his information, is the 90 pickups that use the Bay Bulls landfill on a weekly bases are now expected to truck garbage to Robin Hood Bay. Oh yes - that is certainly a reasonable expectation! Let's see - that will become a good two hour turn-around time and at least \$20 for fuel!

The problem is a lot closer than we think. Gary also informed me that the dump at Bay Bulls has approximately another year left, being scheduled for a phase-out in 2009. The household garbage rate increase for the Bay Bulls - Mobile area to offset the transportation cost to Robin Hood Bay will be approximately \$80.00. That cost will mostly likely increase if you are a resident further south along the shore. This estimate and outcomes are strictly conjecture at the moment and are offered in the absence knowing what's going to happen.

The people who use the LaManche Dump or Ferryland Dump will face the same dilemma: remain environmentally conscious and truck the trash at great expense to Robin Hood Bay or find another solution. As for people in Renew's and Portugal Cove South - is it safe to say they will be driving their private pickup loads of junk to Robin Hood Bay Landfill?

Unfortunately, the other solution will likely be that oil drums will become popular again and found in every yard or garden, placed right alongside the compost bin. The sixties revisited! And what can't be burned will likely go over the cliff, or along a side road at the end of the harbour! We should think about this possibility and the impact it would have on the ocean and the landscape. We should also discuss and offer better solutions.

Please note, the following was added just prior to printing the newsletter. *The Association has been advised by the City of St. John's that this issue falls within the mandate of the Greater Avalon Waste Management Committee. This Committee consists of 8 representatives from the City of St. John's, 8 representatives from other communities on the Avalon Peninsula, and an independent Chair is about to be appointed. We have been informed that the issue has been discussed with the Committee, however, no firm decisions on how waste will be transported from outlying areas have been made at this point. This requirement will be addressed and an appropriate solution will be included in the overall system design to support the needs of communities outside the main urban areas. We will keep you posted.*



East Coast Trail volunteers worked at cleaning up the illegal coastal dumping site on LaManche Village Path at Burnt Cove in the fall of 2005.

THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER!

We're always looking for ideas; send us your photos or tell us about your hike. We're interested in hearing about your ECT experiences.

The deadline for the Winter 2009 newsletter is Nov.10, 2008. Submit to office@eastcoasttrail or to 50 Pippy Place. Thanks to Randy Murphy, Wanda Cuff Young and Lewis Greenland.

MEMBERSHIP

We invite you to join the 600 members whose essential support helps the East Coast Trail Association build, promote, and maintain the Trail for generations to enjoy. Receive quarterly newsletters and weekly event schedules.

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|-------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| Annual Individual / Household | \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Annual Small Business | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Life Membership | \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Send name, mailing address and email address with payment to: ECTA, P.O. Box 8034, St. John's, NL A1B 3M7

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