

## REPORT: BIOREGIONAL PLANNING

# Tantramar 2040: Bioregional Planning Meeting

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## **1.0 Introduction of Tantramar 2040**

### ***Purpose***

Tantramar 2040 is an initiative to work toward a sustainable future that considers environmental, economic, and social/cultural challenges and opportunities. Partnering communities include the Town of Sackville, and Villages of Dorchester, Memramcook and Port Elgin. This process will build on local initiatives and focus on common topics that can be best addressed as a region.

### ***Background***

EOS Eco-Energy co-hosted the *Adaptation & Actions Conference* in March of 2009. The conference was a success with over 100 participants and representation from 15 municipalities in Atlantic Canada. During the final discussion, participants identified the need to develop sustainability plans within municipalities and at the regional level. As a result, EOS submitted proposals to its member municipalities to develop a regional sustainability plan. The Town of Sackville and the Villages of Dorchester, Memramcook, and Port Elgin agreed to work collaboratively on a sustainability plan for the Tantramar region. EOS is coordinating the Tantramar 2040 initiative, in partnership with the Tantramar Planning District Commission.

### ***Funding***

EOS Eco-Energy has received funding from the Rural Secretariat and the New Brunswick Environmental Trust Fund to coordinate the Tantramar 2040 initiative.

## **1.1 Steering Committee**

A Steering Committee was struck to ensure that a quality ICSP representing community interests is produced as required to meet funding deadlines. Members of the Steering Committee report to their respective Councils, associations or organizations, and represent the following entities:

- Town of Sackville
- Village of Memramcook
- Village of Port Elgin
- Village of Dorchester
- Fort Folly First Nation
- Local Service Districts
- Greater Sackville Chamber of Commerce
- Enterprise South East
- Tantramar Planning District Commission
- Beaubassin Planning Commission
- EOS Eco-Energy

## 1.2 Mission Statement

The Steering Committee crafted a mission statement to reflect the Tantramar 2040 process.

*“Tantramar 2040 will gather the resources and imaginations of its communities to plan and take action on sustainability, ensuring the region’s collective environmental, economic, and socio-cultural wellbeing.”*

## 2.0 Third Round of Meetings

The purpose of the third series of meetings is to provide input in the development of an action plan for the region. There are four meetings that are being held throughout February and March to discuss action planning for the priority topics: food, local business development, energy, social supports, water, bioregional planning, infrastructure, and transportation. Each of the action planning sessions will be held in a different community to accommodate participation from members of each community and the rural areas.

The Tantramar 2040 Steering Committee decided to offset some of the carbon produced as a result of these meetings by purchasing trees to be planted in communities in the Tantramar region. Renaissance Sackville has agreed to donate trees (native species) matching the amount of money raised to offset carbon (ie, if Tantramar 2040 raises \$100 towards the purchase of trees, \$200 worth of trees will be donated to communities).

### 2.1 Marketing

The workshop was open to the public, and invitations were distributed to individuals with knowledge or a keen interest in key areas of sustainability. A poster advertisement and an article in the Sackville Tribune highlighted the opportunity for public involvement in the upcoming meetings. Advertisements were posted on the Tantramar 2040 website, New Brunswick Environmental Network website, Memramcook website, Town of Sackville online events calendar, Dorchester newsletter, and Le Lien newsletter in Memramcook. An email was also sent for distribution to various networks.

### 2.2 Process

In the third round of meetings, coordinators have invited guest speakers to give brief presentations on the topic(s) for the evening. Following the presentation, a series of questions have been developed to help guide the discussion toward creating the action plan for the topic.

## 3.0 Bioregional Planning Discussion

The *Bioregional Planning* meeting was held at the Memramcook Resort in Memramcook, NB.

Twenty participants attended the meeting. This meeting raised \$10.51 for carbon offsets.

### 3.1 Bioregional Planning Discussion Notes

Presenters at this meeting included Denis Doucet and Ben Phillips from the Fundy Biosphere Reserve, Roberta Clowater from CPAWS-NB, Susan Linkletter with the Petitcodiac Watershed Alliance, and Guy Gautreau with the Village of Memramcook. The Bioregional Planning session was divided into two separate discussions— one on issues related to land, the other on issues related water.

Facilitators asked the following questions, based on feedback during previous workshops:

1. *What is our capacity to work on conservation at a larger scale such as the Chignecto Isthmus?*
2. *Once important areas are identified, what are the ways that connectivity can be conserved on private lands?*
3. *What do local groups need most to help conserve connectivity?*
4. *How do we maintain the ecological integrity of our watersheds?*

The following notes highlight points from the group discussions on land issues:

- There is a need to identify core habitat areas for wildlife (i.e., animals and plants)
- Is it more important to focus on restoration to historical levels or creating new areas of connectivity?
- Potential partners: CPAWS, FBR, Canadian Wildlife Services, Department of Environment, Tantramar Planning District Commission, Beaubassin Planning Commission, MTA, UdeM, Chignecto Soil and Crop Association, naturalist clubs, etc.
- Currently, there is an interest in issues that will arise as a result of genetic isolation of some populations in Nova Scotia dealing with connectivity through the Chignecto Isthmus
- There should be more focus on conservation
- Fundy Biosphere Reserve has a number of projects related to this topic that are of interest
- Eventually, roads and railway lines will need to be relocated
- It is important to establish corridors for wildlife movement
- The region should look at creating a biodiversity inventory (Species At Risk have inventories, but we need a better idea of what we have in the region and how many) in order to monitor the overall environmental health of region
- Making information available to the public is a very important part of the process (FBR website would be a good location to house this information)
- There are opportunities through MTA and UdeM to provide useful information through projects (need to make linkages with the academic sector)
- Developing a 'Resource List' by building on local knowledge is another important action item
- It is important to work with farmers to integrate best management practices for sustainable management (i.e., creating buffer zones)
- Currently, there is a grad student at MTA working on a project with Dr. David Lieske to assess agriculture and infrastructure at risk in association to climate change
- We need to identify the 'what' and the 'where' (i.e., property owner list/ monitor and research sites)
- Educational material on how and why you manage wildlife and people
- It would be interesting to have a project through the universities that looks at the dollar value of biodiversity (i.e., pollinators provide billions of dollars to the economy every year)
- Need to encourage 'citizen scientists'
- Develop training sessions as part of an integrated education strategy

- Identifying old dump locations, every farm had one, always uphill of a stream, brook, may contain toxic substances, oil, etc. Dumps are still being found on distant remote locations, and are being cleaned; stream cleaning is also being done.
- Educate people that appliances can be brought to Gautreau's Auto Salvage for disposal between special garbage pick-ups. Remove car carcasses from the landscape.
- Sites could be reported anonymously in a central database to be scheduled for eventual clean-up.
- Sites of CNR railroad tied stockpiles should be reported to Dept, of Env. to force clean-up, same for other large entities like Irving, etc
- Education is key to rally people together to connect with nature, starting with kids, to care & protect, make nature accessible. It would be interesting to have a walking (or ski) trail traversing the Beaumont-Memramcook forest. Educate owners on how to protect the environment on their properties, watersheds.
- Map sites of interest such as historic, ecologically sensitive, wildlife, bogs, & wetlands. Educate, sensitize to protect, on private and crown lands. Move to protect areas of high ecological value.
- Easements may hinder sale of properties, people should know that they can sign up with Nature Conservancy, Nature Trust.
- Ways to identify these sites: aerial photos, word-of-mouth, folklore, contacting owners, etc.
- Memramcook is environmentally very good, people are very aware, more so than neighbors. People should be more open to permitting different uses on their properties.
- Zoning is a key planning tool for property usage
- Question of liability & insurance of public on private land
- Dieppe is building out toward Memramcook, planning should come before development. Promote green communities, low impact developments

The following notes highlight points from the group discussions on water issues:

- Promote citizen scientists and the tracking of rare species
- Have guided tours/ experiential learning is a tool that will help create values (i.e., dragonfly example)
- Be proactive by being part of the system, not a separate entity
- Protect buffer zones/ restore water management to natural systems
- Action: map water quality data, model future potential changes
- Proposer à UdeM d'utiliser leur terrain
- How to protect watershed: protect biodiversity, identify property owners of contaminated sites, manufacturing sites, etc.
- Les gens de Memramcook ne veulent pas le causeway, mais l'alternatif est dispendieux et le procès est long. Les partenaires du causeway sont DoT, Dept. of Agriculture & CNR (reconstruction de levées, pont).
- Sites contaminés, toxic dumps, septic pipes directement aux ruisseaux & rivière
- Éduquer les gens & fermiers pourquoi le zone tampon, trop de terrains sont cultivés jusqu'à la rivière, ou ruisseaux
- Développer un dépliant à poster aux maisons, articles dans Le Lien « Notes Nature »
- Identifier les zones humides, étangs, bogs, etc, pour les protéger, nettoyer, remédier

## 4.0 Next Steps

Discussions from the *action planning* meetings being held throughout February and March will help guide the sustainability plan for the Tantramar region. At the end of the process, there will be a set of actions and potential partners to take collaborative action on the priority topics. Also, we are planning a final workshop - **From Planning to Action** - on Saturday March 19<sup>th</sup> to help address the gap between developing a sustainability plan and implementing it.