

Walking & Wheeling

Quarterly

Nova Scotia's Active Transportation Newsletter – Spring 2006

Published by Pathways for People, a project of the Ecology Action Centre and Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Program Area of Nova Scotia Health Promotion



Pathways
for People
Active Transportation



Photo credit: Bill Danielson

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Hike & Glide in Highlands Winterfest

By Christine MacInnes, the Cape Breton Highlands Project Office

This year's Highland Winterfest will be held during March Break (March 11-19). There will be lots of activities for families, adults and children alike. Downhill, telemark, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are all being offered in the area.

The North Highlands Nordic Ski Facility will hold its Annual Cross Country Ski Loppet on Sunday March 12. The term 'loppet' is from the Norwegian tongue and means 'Citizen race.' Traditionally in Norway, loppets are 80 kilometres in distance and approximately 10,000 people participate. Linda Murray, an experienced cross-country skier and member of the North Highlands Nordic Ski Facility, came up with an acronym to describe the

term: **Lots of People Participating Each Time.** The origin of the loppet is steeped in history. At one point in time the infant king of Norway had to be carried to safety in a backpack when their country was being raided.

The loppet is geared for all ages and abilities, classic ski technique, offering choices in distance of two, seven or 10 kilometres and you can choose whether or not to be timed. Registration is at 12:30 p.m. and begins at 1 p.m. It takes place on the easiest touring trails and offers the most scenic trails. The modest registration fee includes a barbeque and a chance on door prizes. Everyone who

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enters receives a Participation Certificate upon finishing. For more information call 902 383-2479 or check their website at <http://www.nhn.xcski.ca>.

The Cape Breton Highlands National Park will host interpretive snowshoe hikes within the park. The Keltic Lodge will again offer its buffet specials at the Atlantic Restaurant and feature live entertainment on March 11, 17 & 18. Ski Cape Smokey hopes to host their Torch

Light Parade this year.

Local community organizations will sponsor various events throughout the week. Schedules and posters will be forthcoming.

Winterfest is a celebration of winter in the Cape Breton Highlands. With special events planned around St. Patrick's Day and the 'Ides of March' we are sure to have lots of snow to enjoy the festivities.

Active Living A Strategy for Annapolis County

By André Bouchard, Active Living Facilitator,
Municipality of the County of Annapolis

The Active Living Strategy for Annapolis County is a joint, co-operative project between the Municipality of the County of Annapolis, the Towns of Middleton, Annapolis Royal and Bridgetown and Nova Scotia Health Promotion Physical Activity, Sport & Recreation. It aims to educate and inspire people of all ages to become more physically active by providing citizens with opportunities to increase their daily physical activity and participate in fun, meaningful, active recreation pursuits. The goal is to get 2005 people (approximately 10% of the county) physically active at least 5 hours a week.

A key component of the strategy emphasizes the need for municipal planners to work collaboratively toward creating safe and accessible physical environments that encourage people of all ages to increase active modes of transportation, such as walking and cycling. In Annapolis County, this will involve creating links between existing and future parks, trails, sidewalks and open spaces. Other activities will include continuing cooperative trail development initiatives and supporting Active & Safe Routes to School.

"Also, in honour of the 400th anniversary of Port Royal and the spirit of Samuel de Champlain's L'Ordre de Bon Temps, we are inaugurating Club 400 – The Order of Active Living," says André Bouchard, Active Living Facilitator for the County of Annapolis.

When Club 400 launches this spring, residents of Annapolis County can register and receive their Club 400 Activity Log. In it they'll record the type and duration of their physical activities which can range from organized sports to yoga, or from cycling to piling wood. Members can earn

different rewards for achieving 50, 100, 200, 300 and 400 hours of physical activity over the year.

"Getting more people in our county to use active modes of transportation can be quite a challenge because we are so spread out," says Bouchard. "However, walking is the number one recreational activity in Annapolis County. Our strategy will make it safer and more appealing, while Club 400 will provide incentives for more people to get moving."

Club 400 is expected to get underway in some Annapolis County schools in March with an official, county-wide launch taking place at the Bridgetown Active Living Fair on May 25. For more information, contact André Bouchard, Active Living Facilitator at (902) 532-0286 or activeliving@annapoliscounty.ns.ca.

<http://www.annapoliscounty.ns.ca/club400>



"We gotta start 'em young," says André Bouchard seen here with his daughter Sophie.

Open For Motion: Street Closures Welcome People

By Laena Garrison, TRAX Coordinator, Ecology Action Centre

Spring into motion! This April, TRAX, a project of the Transportation Issues Committee at the Ecology Action Centre, will host the first of what could become a weekly "street opening" in the Halifax Regional Municipality. The event will involve "closing" a street to motorized traffic in order to "open" it to modes of active transportation.

Funded by Go for Green, other in-kind partners include the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Nova Scotia Health Promotion, Active & Safe Routes to School here at Ecology Action Centre, Partnership for Access Awareness NS, Disabled Individual Alliance and Katimavik.

The full-day Open Streets event is inspired by the success of Ottawa's Sunday Bikedays (during the spring and summer in Ottawa, a total of 65 kilometers of streets are closed to traffic and open to walkers, runners, bikers and in-line skat-

ers). This fun, family event will provide the only temporary HRM street space that is long enough, wide enough, flat enough, straight enough and safe enough to accommodate cyclists, wheelchair users, walkers, runners, in-line skaters, in-line cross-country skiers, stilt walkers, life-sized puppeteers and other non-motorized goers who would not otherwise be able to come together in the same place at the same time.

There will be many activities, including educational booths (e.g. Pedometers 101, hands-on bike repair tutorials, in-line skating for beginners, etc.), puppet performances and recreational races to foster the participation and interaction of all ages. Help us promote Active Transportation by contributing your ideas to or volunteering for the Open Streets event! Contact Aliza Weller at streetopening@ecologyaction.ca. <http://www.trax.ns.ca>

Making Tracks Uncovers Barriers To Walking To School

By Janet Barlow, Active & Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Ecology Action Centre

October saw the launch of Making Tracks, a project of the Active & Safe Routes to School program of the Ecology Action Centre. Making Tracks aims to make Active & Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) more effective in Nova Scotia and increase the use of active transportation among students in pilot schools.

Making Tracks has two phases. In Phase I, we'll research the barriers and benefits to using active transportation to school. In Phase II, we'll redesign the program using community-based social marketing tools and test it in pilot schools.

Focus group (qualitative) research has been completed in schools across the province and survey (quantitative) research is underway. This spring and summer we'll identify pilot schools and redesign the ASRTS program to reflect the research. The pilot will start in the new school year.

The project is generously supported by Transport Canada, the IWK Health Centre Foundation and Nova Scotia Health Promotion. <http://www.ecologyaction.ca/asrts>



Photo credit: www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

East Kings Ponders Multi-Use Trail Network

By Dr. John Janmaat, Acadia University

Many people know the Annapolis Valley for its apples, its peaceful country roads and the many small towns. It is also one of the best cycling areas of the province, particularly for those seeking refuge from busy roads. However, the Greater New Minas area, from Wolfville to Coldbrook, is also a growing commercial and residential center. As with so many communities, little attention was paid to accommodating active transportation until recently. Consequently, there are only a few corridors remaining that can provide for trail development within the greater New Minas area.

The desire to develop a trail network was given extra impetus by the unfortunate passing in 2004 of Kieren O'Malley. Kieren was a year-round cyclist, both for commuting and recreation. To honor Kieren's memory and make active transportation a viable option for more local residents, the Kieren Pathway's Society was formed. Its mission is the development of a network of pathways that will enable many local residents, both physically able and physically challenged, to enjoy safe and pleasant human-powered travel.

The Society's first objective is the installation of a pedestrian and bicycle pathway along Route 358, between Greenwich and Port Williams. At present there is neither a sidewalk nor a paved shoulder along this route, discouraging all but the most determined from walking or cycling here. This is particularly unfortunate, as the distance is less than 1.5 kilometres. The Society has convened meetings with stakeholders, and has found broad support for the concept of a trail network, in particular for actions to improve this route.

Inspired by the Kieren pathways vision, Dr. Brian van Blarcom and I, based at Acadia University, are measuring the demand for a trail network. We are focusing on an "along the rails" trail which would parallel the existing railway, from Grand Pre to Kentville. The survey, <http://ace.acadiau.ca/~jjanmaat/KP/KPsurvey.html>, collects information that will assess the impact of the proposed trail on both physical activity and visits to the area. It will also look at the impact on trail use of different levels of ATV access to the trail.



Community members participate in the 2005 Sydney Bike Festival, organized by Velo Cape Breton.

Velo Cape Breton Grows Through Chapters

By Jacques Cote, Rides Captain, Velo Cape Breton

Bicycling is expanding everywhere in Cape Breton, and the local population is noticing. Cape Breton Island is a little "gold mine" for cyclists. There are hundreds of kilometres of quiet roads, scenic touring routes and remote mountain bike paths still to be discovered by bike.

In order to bring more cyclists to the sport and give them the opportunity to explore the "gold mine", Velo Cape Breton is growing through the formation of Chapters on Cape Breton Island.

In forming Chapters, Velo Cape Breton's objectives are to regroup cyclists on the Island, help novices reap the benefits of bicycling and influence decision makers in the creation of a more bicycle friendly Island. A Chapter can start with only a very small group of cyclists who share the above objectives.

Why should you form a Chapter? Starting a bicycle club is rather easy. With four or five people and \$150, anyone can do it. However, maintaining the life of a club throughout the

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year, especially when the membership is small, is very demanding. With a Chapter it is different.

Because a Chapter is part of a larger organization (the Mother Club), the "load" of running the affairs of a club (clerical, registration, correspondence, etc.) is significantly reduced. Besides keeping people motivated and bicycling alive within the small group, Chapters contribute to the development of the sport in their communities through instruction for the ride leaders (provided by the Mother Club), organization

of events in the community for all the membership – VCB & Chapters – and advocacy over the entire season.

At this time, Richard McIntosh is forming a Chapter in St. Peters; Debbie Chandler, Gert Gielen-MacGregor and Brian Morrison are interested in forming a Chapter in the Baddeck area; same thing with Shaun Bond in Port Hawkesbury and Alec MacNeil in Inverness.

Should you wish to form a Chapter or join a Chapter in your area, please email velocb@inter.net. <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

Safe Wheelin'

By Andrea Cochrane, Health Promotion Specialist, Child Safety Link

With the end of winter drawing near, children, youth and adults everywhere are getting ready to ride a bicycle, a scooter, a skateboard or maybe in-line skates – maybe some are using them already! If you are heading out around town on any of these, then that trip should include a helmet. Not only is it the law in Nova Scotia to wear an approved helmet whenever you are taking part in any of the "wheeled" activities, but it may save you and your child from serious injury.

A helmet worn correctly can reduce the chance of a head injury by 85% and a serious brain injury by 88%. By making sure you and your child are wearing this simple piece of protective equipment, you may save years of pain and suffering. You may also save the money a fine would cost! As of May 1st, 2003 in Nova Scotia it is illegal for anyone not to wear a helmet while in-line skating, cycling, using a scooter or skateboard. For children under 16 years old, parents may be issued a \$25 fine.

When buying your helmets, make sure the person who will be wearing the helmet is with you so you can check the fit. All

helmets come with foam pieces that can be added to the inside to make it fit properly. In order for a helmet to do its job, it must be worn correctly. This means:

- ⇒ sitting level on the head approximately two fingers above the eyebrow
- ⇒ the helmet side straps should form a "V" under the ear
- ⇒ you should only be able to fit one finger between the chin and the strap

The results of a head injury can last a lifetime. Results of a concussion can last on a short term or long term basis – from headaches, concentration problems, memory loss and behavioural problems. If you are a parent, setting an example for your children by wearing your helmet can have positive effects that last a lifetime.

For more information about helmet safety, contact Child Safety Link at the IWK Health Centre at 1-866-288-1388 or <http://www.childsafetylink.ca>.

Roll With Bike Week

By Laena Garrison, TRAX Coordinator,
Ecology Action Centre

HRM's Annual Bike Week will be held this year from June 3-11, 2006. It will be an exciting, community driven event encouraging people of all ages and abilities from all of HRM to ride a bicycle for transportation, recreation or sport.

The HRM Bike Week Committee will host two events including HRM's annual Bicycle Auction and a Bicycle Festival on the Halifax Commons. Additional confirmed events include a bicycle scavenger hunt, a bike rodeo for children and a bicycle-theme movie night.

The HRM Bike Week 2006 Committee seeks the participation of groups or businesses to host events throughout the Municipality. Consider hosting an event for HRM Bike Week 2006 and help HRM become a healthier, more active community. Your event could be an organized bike ride, a slide show, a workshop, a bicycle race....anything! Just use your imagina-



Photo credit: www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

tion. HRM will advertise your event under the Bike Week umbrella, so you will get free advertising, not to mention the general media attention Bike Week usually attracts, further increasing exposure for your event and organization.

For more information, contact Ward Skinner, Chair, HRM Bike Week Committee at wskinner@ns.sympatico.ca. <http://www.halifax.ca/bikeweek>

AT Tidbits

MOVE MORE IN HALIFAX

Tailored to the beginner and those who haven't been active for some time, this eight-week program is offered throughout HRM. It provides basic information on physical activity and guidance on how to start enjoying the benefits of an active lifestyle on a daily basis. There's lots of variety from hiking on a local walking trail or stretching in a beginner yoga class. <http://www.halifax.ca/recreation>



NEW ONTARIO ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION WORKSHOPS

Go for Green received funding through the Ontario Communities in Action Fund for active transportation workshops across the province and an AT coordinator. The project will engage community leaders to encourage "walking to school, cycling to work and walking to the corner store." <http://www.goforgreen.ca>

NEW WALKING MAP FOR WHITEHORSE

Whitehorse has a new downtown walking routes map, thanks to Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon. The map encourages residents – especially those who work downtown – to try four short walking routes, each about one and a half kilometers long. <http://www.rpay.org>



Photo credit: www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

BICYCLE ESSAY CONTEST FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Held by the International Bicycling Fund, the Bicycle Essay Contest is for students aged 16 and under across the globe. With a deadline of May 1, there are three age categories for cash prizes. See details at <http://www.ibike.org/essays>.

GHOSTCYCLE RAISES THE ROAD AWARENESS

Ghostcycle uses its web site to collect data from cyclists involved in accidents in the city of Seattle. It identifies "trouble spots" where they place mangled bicycles to raise awareness. "Ultimately we hope that through information and education people will have a better understanding of the changes necessary to make our streets safer for everyone." <http://www.ghostcycle.org>

BICYCLE PRODUCTION AN ECO-ECONOMY INDICATOR

According to the Earth Policy Institute, bicycle production is one of twelve indicators used to measure progress towards an eco-economy. "In 2003, global production of bicycles hit 105 million – two-and-a-half times the record 42 million cars produced." <http://www.earth-policy.org/Indicators/Bike/2005.htm>

AUSTRALIA'S CYCLING STRATEGY

Austrroads recently developed a five-year, national cycling strategy. It's a review and a renewal of its previous five-year strategy. <http://www.austrroads.com.au>



Photo credit: www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

2006 TRAFFIC TAMING TOUR WITH DAVID ENGWICHT

Traffic Taming and Street Reclaiming guru David Engwicht is on tour from April to May and September to October this year. "Discover how your city can combine the DIY Traffic Taming KIT with Community Building Street Design Techniques to calm school and neighborhood traffic." Find out more at <http://www.creative-communities.com/Tours>.

Resources

PERILS FOR PEDESTRIANS

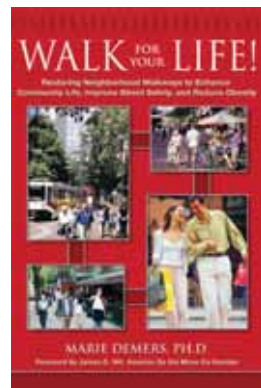
Highlighting the safety issues of pedestrians and cyclists, Perils for Pedestrians is a monthly TV series available online at <http://www.pedestrians.org>.

NEW BOOK: WALK FOR YOUR LIFE

"Walk For Your Life! Restoring Neighborhood Walkways To Enhance Community Life, Improve Street Safety and Reduce Obesity" by Marie Demers delves into how to recreate walkable environments. For community leaders, planners, policy makers, and health professionals it explores urban sprawl and auto dependence; physical inactivity and health; obesity; and urban design and

zoning laws.

<http://www.vitalhealthbooks.com/book/2414947630.html>



OUTDOOR AIR QUALITY AND RISING ASTHMA RATES

A report called "Children's Health and the Environment in North America" says asthma rates in Canada have "increased fourfold over the past 20 years, to the point where more than 1 in 10 Canadian children have been diagnosed with asthma." It points to outdoor air quality as one of two top culprits. <http://www.cec.org>

TRANSIT AND WALKING

"Walking to Public Transit: Steps to Help Meet Physical Activity Recommendations" found in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine (Vol. 29, Issue 4) shows walking to and

from the bus could contribute to 30 minutes of daily physical activity. <http://www.ajpm-online.net>

US STUDY ON BARRIERS TO CHILDREN WALKING TO SCHOOL

"Barriers to Children Walking to or From School—United States, 2004" is found in the Journal of the American Medical Association (Vol. 294, No. 17). It found distance followed by traffic-related danger as top barriers. <http://www.jama.ama-assn.org>

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF TRAILS

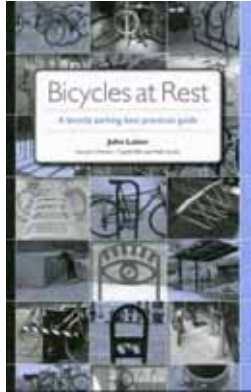
Economic Benefits of Trails and Greenways is from the Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse. It's

Resources (continued)

got more ideas, facts and figures to strengthen the argument that trails are a great idea. <http://www.trailsandgreenways.org>

BICYCLE PARKING RESOURCE

A new manual by the Victoria Capital Bike and Walk Society illustrates "best racks" and advises how to plan for bicycle parking. "Bicycles at Rest" targets architects, developers, planners, engineers and municipal staff dealing with the growing need for bicycling parking facilities. Order a copy from <http://www.capitalbikeandwalk.org>.

**HOW TO CONDUCT TRAIL USER SURVEYS**

"How to conduct a survey and win support for your trail: sample surveys and methods" is available through the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. This workbook has survey templates and advice on data collection, analysis and reporting. <http://www.trailsandgreenways.org>

WORKPLACE WALKABILITY AUDIT

"Walkability of the Workplace: A New Audit Tool" is found in the American Journal of Health Promotion (Vol. 20, Issue 1). It developed and tested elements

of walkability in the workplace including: pedestrian facilities, pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, crosswalks, route maintenance, walkway width, roadway buffer, universal accessibility, aesthetics and shade. <http://www.healthpromotionjournal.com>

GOOGLE MAP PEDOMETER

Google has figured out how to plot and estimate the distance of your walking route and calculate the number of calories burned. Check it out at <http://www.webwalking.com/googlemap.htm>.

Events

March 11-18 Highlands Winterfest, Cape Breton, NS, <http://www.nhn.xcski.ca>

March 28 On The Move Workshop (national initiative to increase opportunities for inactive girls and young women (ages 9-18) to participate in sport and physical activity, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Halifax, RSVP to Lana McMullen at mcmulll@halifax.ca.

March 29, Theory on bike mechanic and maintenance through Velo Cape Breton from 5-7 p.m., Sydney, NS, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

April 5 Cycling Ride Leaders Workshop through Velo Cape Breton, Sydney, NS, register at veloch@inter.net, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

April 7 World Health Day, <http://www.who.int/world-health-day>

April 9-11 41st annual conference of the Québec Transport Association, Québec City, QC, <http://www.aqtr.qc.ca>

April 22 Earth Day, <http://www.earthday.ca>

April 22 Hands-on Bike Maintenance and Repair Workshop through Velo Cape Breton, Sydney, NS, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

April 29 Bike Clinic, Swap and Sale through Velo Cape Breton at 9 a.m., Sydney, NS, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

April 29 Velo Cape Breton Season's Opening Banquet at 6 p.m., Sydney, NS, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

May 6 Road Cycling 101 – 104 through Velo Cape Breton on four weekends, Sydney, NS, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

May 22 Third Edition of Victoria Day Bike Fest through Velo Cape Breton, Sydney, NS, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

May 28 "Going the Distance For Diabetes" Fundraiser Cycling Tour for the Canadian Diabetes Association, Boularderie Island, NS, <http://www.velocapebreton.com>

June 3 Trails Day, <http://www.internationaltrailsday.com>

June 4-10 Bike Week in HRM, <http://www.halifax.ca/bikeweek>

June 4-10 Commuter Challenge, <http://www.commuterchallenge.ca>

June 4-10 Canadian Environment Week, <http://www.ec.gc.ca/e-week>

June 5 World Environment Day, <http://www.unep.org/wed>

June 7 Clean Air Day, <http://www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair-airpur>

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES

March 1-3 National Bike Summit, Washington, DC, <http://www.bikeleague.org/events>

March 5-10 Velo Mondial bicycling conference, Capetown, South Africa, <http://www.velomondial2006.com>

March 28-30 Transportation and Economic Development 2006, Little Rock, AR, <http://www.ted2006-littlerock.org>

May 9-11 Thunderhead Training, Washington, DC, <http://www.thunderheadalliance.org>

Pathways for People Active Transportation



CONTRIBUTORS & SOURCES

Editor: Janet Barlow, Ecology Action Centre

Graphic Design: Craig Durling, Nova Scotia Health Promotion

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- ◆ University of South Carolina Prevention Research Center Notes e-newsletter <http://prevention.sph.sc.edu/Newsletter/index.htm>
- ◆ Streettalk list serve from the Conservation Law Foundation Transportation Project <http://www.clf.org/general/index.asp?id=351>
- ◆ CenterLines e-newsletter from the National Center for Bicycling and Walking http://www.bikewalk.org/technical_assistance/resources_information/ri_intro.htm
- ◆ World Carfree News E-Bulletin <http://www.carbusters.org/bulletin>
- ◆ Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy from the CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion <http://www.cdc.gov/pcd>
- ◆ Active Transportation ListServ from Go for Green <http://www.goforgreen.ca/at/eng/reglistserv.aro>

About Walking & Wheeling Quarterly

Walking & Wheeling Quarterly is an electronic publication of Pathways for People, a project of the Ecology Action Centre (<http://www.ecologyaction.ca>) in partnership with the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Program Area of Nova Scotia Health Promotion and part of the Active Kids, Healthy Kids Physical Activity Strategy for Nova Scotia (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/ohp/physicalActivity>). Its aim is to share information on active transportation (walking, biking, in-line skating, skateboarding, scootering, etc.) initiatives in Nova Scotia and beyond. Walking & Wheeling Quarterly is published four times per year in September, December, March and June. Submissions are due by the 15th of August, November, February and May. The views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Ecology Action Centre or Nova Scotia Health Promotion. Contact us at:

Pathways for People
c/o Ecology Action Centre
1568 Argyle Street, Suite 31
Halifax, NS B3J 2B3
Tel: (902) 442-5055
Fax: (902) 422-6410

E: asrts@ecologyaction.ca
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/ohp/physicalActivity/activeTransportation.asp>

Sign Up

Anyone interested in active transportation may sign onto the distribution list for Walking & Wheeling Quarterly. Send a message to asrts@ecologyaction.ca and ask to be added to the list. Please send this to a friend or colleague!

If you do not wish to remain on the distribution list for Walking & Wheeling Quarterly, please send a message to asrts@ecologyaction.ca and ask to be removed.