



Welcome!

Pjila'si | Failte | Bienvenue



**YOUR
BRAS
D'OR**
BIOSPHERE REGION

Yours to **explore**
Yours to **enjoy**
Yours to **nurture**

**KI'LEWEY
PITU'PA'Q**
BIOSPHERE REGION

Ki'lewey **mili-ala'sin**
Ki'lewey **wlapesin**
Ki'lewey **Wli-anko'tmn**



Proud member of the
Canadian Biosphere
Regions Association



unesco
Man and the Biosphere
Programme



Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region Association 2026 Annual General Meeting

We would like to acknowledge that the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere is in **Unama'ki**, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. As Treaty People, we are all privileged to share this special place together in friendship.





Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

AGM Agenda – June 18, 2026



- ✓ Welcome
- ✓ Land Acknowledgment
- ✓ Guest Speaker:
Lyndsey Prosper, EFWC; Julia Gillette, Dalhousie University, Fred Baechler, exp Services; Colette Mesher, BLBRA
- 1. AGM call to order
- 2. Introductions
- 3. Approval of the agenda
- 4. Approval of September 2025 AGM minutes
- 5. Financial Statements
- 6. Nomination of new Board members
- 7. Annual Committee and Project Reports
- 8. Adjournment



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Qualifying United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization buffer zones as Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures within the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve of Nova Scotia.



Lyndsey Prosper, EFWC

Julia Gillette, Dalhousie University

Fred Baechler, exp Services

Colette Mesher, BLBRA





Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

AGM Agenda – June 18, 2026



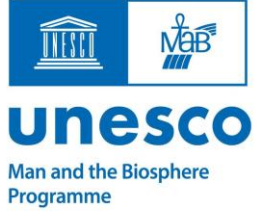
- ✓ Welcome
- ✓ Land Acknowledgment
- ✓ Guest Speaker Presentations:
Lyndsey Prosper, EFWC, (prerecorded); Julia Gillette, Dalhousie University (prerecorded), Fred Baechler, exp Services, (audio recorded live). ([View the three Presentations On YouTube](#) [Ctrl-Left Click]); Colette Mesher, BLBRA
- 1. AGM call to order
- 2. Introductions
- 3. Approval of the agenda
- 4. Approval of September 2025 AGM minutes
- 5. Financial Statements & Treasurer's Report
- 6. Nomination of new Board members
- 7. Annual Committee and Project Reports
- 8. Adjournment



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Introductions

(2025-2026 Board of Directors)



Allison McIsaac [Chair]
Member at Large / Dominion

Terri Shobbrook [Vice-Chair]
Member at Large / Kempt Head

Adele Hunt [Treasurer]
Member at Large / Port Hawkesbury

Megan MacInnis Bunyan [Secretary]
Member at Large / Coxheath

Anik Martin
Member at Large / Sydney

Jay Denny
Member at Large/ Eskasoni

Kathleen Aikens
Member at Large / Sydney

Rod Thompson
Member at Large / Glace Bay

Breah Sampson MacDonald
Member at Large / West Bay

Stan Johnson
Member at Large / Eskasoni

Tyler Cole
Ex-Officio [CBP] / CBRM

Tony Sylliboy
Member at Large / Eskasoni

Kate Cave
Ex-Officio [Rich. Co.]/ French Cove

Donna Lefort-Matheson
Ex-Officio [Victoria] / Victoria

Bonnie MacIsaac
Ex-Officio [Inverness] / Inverness

Steve Parsons
Ex-Officio [CBRM] / Sydney

Kirsty Lock
Ex-Officio [NSCC]/ West Bay



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region Association Annual General Meeting

Alexander Graham Bell Museum, Baddeck

Summary of Draft minutes Thursday, June 19, 2025



Administration: Vice-Chair Terri Shobbrook called the meeting to order, provided a Land Acknowledgement, and introduced the Board. The agenda and June 2024 minutes were formally approved.

Guest Speaker: Trish Nash (UINR) presented on the biocultural connectivity between the Kluskap IPCA and the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region.

Financials: Members approved the March 31, 2025, financial review presented by Doane Grant Thornton LLP. The assembly agreed that annual formal reviews are unnecessary unless issues arise.

Board Updates: Anik Martin, Tyler Cole, and floor-nominee Jay Denny were elected to the Board.

Reports: Executive and committee reports were tabled, with full details deferred to the *2024-2025 Impact Report*.



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region Association Annual General Meeting

Alexander Graham Bell Museum, Baddeck

Draft minutes Thursday, June 19, 2025



Annual General Meeting Alexander Graham Bell Museum, Baddeck Draft minutes

Thursday, June 19, 2025

Call to order:

Vice-Chair, Terri Shobbrook, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Welcome:

Terri welcomed those present at the BLBRA AGM and provided some housekeeping information.

Land Acknowledgement:

Terri acknowledged that the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere is located in Unama'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people.

Guest Speaker – Trish Nash, Director, Apoqnamatmu'k Wksitqamu (Working Together for Mother Earth) (UINR)

Terri introduces the guest speaker Trish Nash, Director, Apoqnamatmu'k Wksitqamu (Working Together for Mother Earth) (UINR). Trish has worked for First Nation and Inuit communities across Canada on projects that advanced sovereignty and self-determination. Since 2019, she has worked for the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources where she leads projects such as nature-based solutions, Mi'kmaw protected areas, and a nature plan for Unama'ki. Trish lives in Iona with her two children. Trish presented on Biocultural Connectivity between Kluskap Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) and the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region. There was great discussion after Trish's presentation.

AGM Call to Order

Introductions

Terri introduced the BLBRA Board of Directors as she called out their name and title.

Approval of the agenda

Eileen Crosby motioned to approve the agenda, second by Teresa MacNeil – motion carried.

Approval of June 2024 AGM minutes

A summary of the 2024 AGM minutes was provided by Allison McIsaac. Action items were addressed. Megan MacInnis motioned to approve the 2024 BLBRA AGM minutes, second by Pierre LaRochelle – motion carried.

Financial Statements

A financial review was conducted by Michael McKeigan, Manager, Independent Business Group, Doane Grant Thornton LLP. Michael presented the findings of the review which indicated that nothing came to their attention that causes them to believe that the financial statements do not present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region Association as at March 31, 2025, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for private enterprises.

Mike left so that the members could discuss the review, specifically repeating this exercise in future years. Consensus was that, unless there are issues, this is not needed every year.

Motion to approve the financial statements by Kathleen Aikens, seconded by Adele Hunt. Motion passed.

Board Nominations

Biographies for two nominees were reviewed: Anik Martin, Member-at-Large and Tyler Cole, Ex-Efficio Member representing Cape Breton Partnership. A nomination from the floor took place as Jay Denny, Eskasoni First Nation indicated a desire to be on the Board. A motion to accept the new board members was made by Eileen Crosby, seconded by Gordon Kerr. Motion passed.

Annual Reports:

The following reports were tabled:

- Chair report:
- Manager report:
- Membership Committee:
- Communication and Marketing Committee:
- Community Engagement and Learning Committee:
- Trails Committee:

More information can be found in the 2024-2025 Impact Report.

Adjournment

Terri thanked everyone in attendance for coming.



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Financial Statement

April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026



Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region Association

Income Statement

April 2025 - March 2026

	TOTAL
INCOME	
_Revenue Deferred from Last Fiscal	39,522.97
Clean Foundation Revenue	
Citizen Science Programming	3,000.00
Coastal Reach	25,000.00
Interpretive Panel Installation	2,500.00
Total Clean Foundation Revenue	30,500.00
ECCU Revenue	5,000.00
Environment & Climate Change Canada	231,569.00
Eskasoni Fish & Wildlife Commission	
Carbon & Wood Harvesting	12,500.00
Ecosystem Services - IPCA	12,500.00
Total Eskasoni Fish & Wildlife Commission	25,000.00
Explore the Bras D'or	3,000.00
MEOPAR Knowledge Mobilization	45,000.00
RBC Reconciliation Initiative	7,000.00
Trans Canada Trail	2,000.00
_BLBRA Revenue	
Donations	7,804.61
Interest earned	132.24
Map & Product Sales	157.04
Memberships	449.28
Total _BLBRA Revenue	8,543.17
Total Income	\$397,135.14
GROSS REVUNE	\$397,135.14

EXPENSES	
Bras d'Or Watch Expenses	947.10
Clean Foundation Expenses	
Coastal Reach Exp	9,583.50
Total Clean Foundation Expenses	9,583.50
ECCC Project	231,569.00
ECCU Expenses	1,182.64
Explore Bras d'Or Expenses	3,582.45
RBC Reconciliation Expenses	600.00
_BLBRA Expenses	10,215.34
Total Expenses	\$257,680.03
OTHER INCOME	
zRevenue Deferred to Next Fiscal	-139,455.11
Total Other Income	\$ -139,455.11
SURPLUS	\$0.00

Treasure's Year End Report



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Nomination of new board members



Patricia Nash
Member-at-Large



Ron Newcombe
Member-at-Large



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Nomination of new board members



Lyndsey Prosper
Member-at-Large





Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

AGM Agenda – June 18, 2026

- ✓ Welcome
 - ✓ Land Acknowledgment
 - ✓ Guest Speaker:
Trish Nash, Director, (University of Victoria)
for Mother Earth) (UIC)
 - 1. Meeting call to order
 - 2. Introductions
 - 3. Approval of the agenda
 - 4. Approval of September 2025 minutes
 - 5. Financial Statements
 - 6. Nomination of new Board members
 - 7. Annual Committee and Project Reports
 - 8. Adjournment
- a. Chair's Report**
 - b. Manager's Report**
 - c. Membership Records**
 - d. Fund Development**
 - e. Communication and Marketing Committee**
 - f. Community Engagement and Learning Committee**
 - g. Trails Committee**



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Chair's Report



The BLBRA had a productive year, expanding citizen science initiatives while continuing popular programs like Bras d'Or Watch and Walk the Watershed. We have strengthened regional and national collaborations and continued efforts in education and awareness.

The Board reviewed progress on the 2022–2025 strategic plan, reaffirming its mission and setting new priorities for the next five years, including stronger partnerships, increased youth engagement, and improved communications tied to the Atlantic UNESCO Tourism Corridor. Relationships with First Nations, municipalities, NGOs, and academic institutions have grown significantly.

The organization acknowledges the strong contributions of its board, staff, and volunteers. Leadership transitions includes new and seasoned members into the board, ensuring the organization remains well-positioned to move forward collaboratively.

Manager's Report

- The ECCC project started in 2022 and was a wonderful example of collaboration between EFWC, Dalhousie University, EXP consulting and the biosphere staff and board.
- Two masters students were engaged during the length of the project, along with a huge number of interns, research students and land guardians.
- We were able to contribute data and information to the Eskasoni Source Water Protection plan as well as the Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) above Eskasoni First Nation

Manager's Report

- We were able to strengthen our ties with the 2 other Atlantic biospheres and discuss on the national stage what is important for biospheres.
- Our branding was expanded through the project along with our commitment to celebrate the 4 languages that live on the island.
- We are hopeful with the help of CBRA that biospheres will remain in upcoming federal budgets.



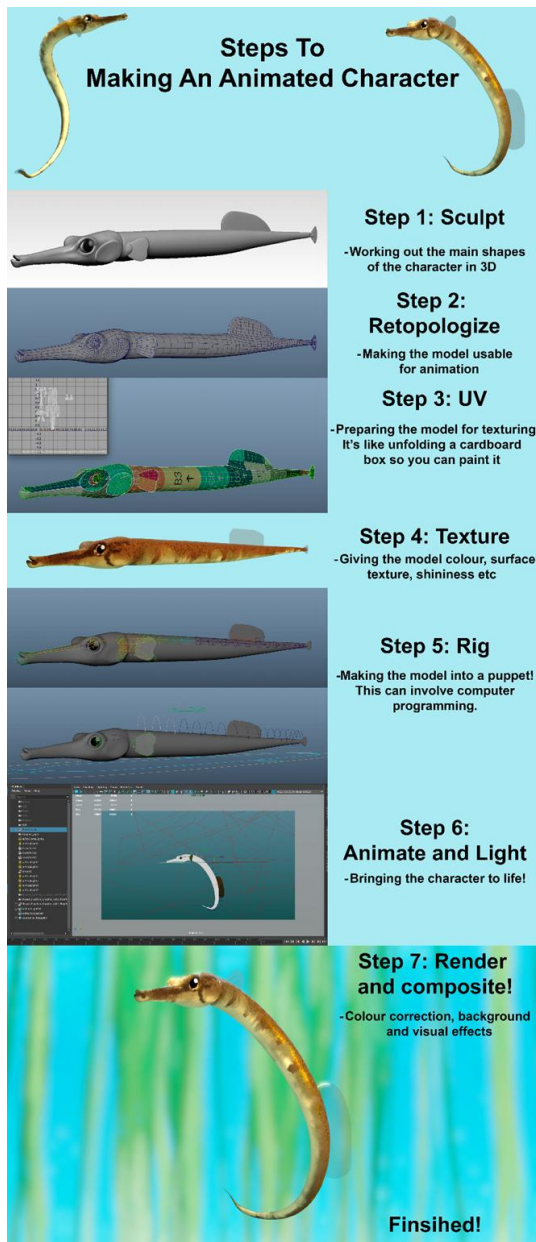
Environment and
Climate Change Canada
Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

Manager's Report

We were very fortunate to host Adryan Jones as the Clean Foundation intern

Support committee events, Explore the Bras d'Or, create graphics and even built a 3D model of a pipefish!

Theresa Harroun became on as our UNESCO youth rep



Manager's Report

Collaboration is core to what we do

ORB meetings

CEPI - Listening to the People of the Lakes

Waters Flowing Together - Iona

Sámi + Mi'kmaq meeting



Future direction

Natural asset training

CART - Climate Adaptation Resilience Training

Nature-based solutions for climate adaptation

Membership Records 2025-26

- ✓ 138 Members at end of 2025-26 FY (34 annual; 104 Lifetime)
- ✓ Membership administration: number of annual members has declined slightly. Event-based and peer-to-peer recruitment continues to perform better than online recruitment.

Priorities for 2026-27:

- ☐ Designate membership ambassador(s) + succession-planning for administration.
- ☐ Finance committee to create guidelines for streamlined payment for in-person recruitment to avoid future missed opportunities.



Fund Development Committee

- The Fund Development committee has been strategizing on how to engage and capitalize on membership as well as use social media more consistently.
- The pm also applied for 12 funding grants, some successful (hurray!), some declined and some still in process.
- We have a number of collaborative projects in process, but we are always looking for new and different ideas!

Please email info@blbra.ca if you find any grants (big or small) that you think would fit or would like to join the committee

Communication and Marketing Committee

- Published, created and/or sourced new media content from board members, committees, partners and individuals for online distribution via Facebook, Instagram and the BLBRA website.
- Created 4 Biosphere Highlights newsletters and 7 bulletins for direct emailing to 650 plus subscribers; averaged 50% open rate; exceeds non-profit avg of 30% - 40%.
- Member of CBRA's Communication Community of Practice receiving and sharing national concerns and initiatives.
- Completed acquisition of new branded canopy tent and feather flags.

Communication and Marketing cont'd

- Promoted biosphere with booth at St. Peter's Swim the Canal that attracts 300 swimmers and equivalent supporters; and at the Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network (NSITE'N) Tourism Tradeshow in Membertou.
- Engaged with University of Saskatchewan's "Entrepreneurship to Advance Sustainable Development" study of initiatives among the 19 biospheres.
- Made application to be recognized members of UNESCO's World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves and the World Network of Mountain Biosphere Reserves, both having similar concerns to ours and related resources

Priorities for 2026-2027

- ☐ Find new resource(s) for supporting communication projects.

Atlantic Canada UNESCO Tourism Corridor

- The multi-year Destination Canada initiative includes all seven World Heritage Sites, three Global Geoparks and two Biospheres. Budget still to be fleshed out.
- BLBRA Communications sits on project and marketing committee. First Nation perspective is entrenched in the project.
- A marketing contract to develop messaging about the site similarities and differences for stakeholders to use is expected end of June.

Priorities for 2026-2027

- ☐ Find new resource(s) for overseeing this and similar tourism promotion.

NSCC – COGS Capstone Project

- 120 hr project with the Centre of Geographic Sciences initiated in March with a GIS student assigned to us to source and/or create a series of key biosphere feature layers ex. core, buffer, transition, watersheds and municipal and First Nation boundaries.
- Developed a mapping template and documentation that brings mapping data in-house to support annual updates, CCUNESCO and UNESCO mapping needs.
- Added a GIS prototyping model to support shoreline movement as well as importation of point data for other Biosphere initiatives such as CoastReach.
- Project finished in May.



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association



Community Engagement and Learning Committee

Funding Successes Allow for Hiring of Facilitators

- Awarded grants of
 - **\$25,000** from Clean Foundation
 - **\$5,000** (x2 in June 2025 and May 2026) from St Peter's East Coast Credit Union
- Funded two Facilitator contract positions to implement the work of CEAL committee and CoastReach Project



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Community Engagement and Learning Committee



Highlights for 2025-26

- Participated in interactive facilitations of the teaching kits at schools in Wagmatcook, Potlotek, Baddeck, and Iona reaching over 200 students in gr 1-8
- Hosted Bras d'Or Watch events in Iona, Baddeck, Eskasoni, Ross Ferry and St Peter's reaching more than 150 people of all ages
- Distributed seven new water monitoring kits, trained community volunteers to complete a variety of tests with the kits, and supported data upload process to Water Rangers database to have a total of 12 citizen science monitoring sites Biosphere watershed
- Added QR code stickers with more detailed information to 16 tree identification signs on the Nicholson Trail
- In progress of installing Coast Reach camera stands for citizen scientists to contribute to the monitoring of coastal changes in Iona, Marble Mountain and Eskasoni



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association



Community Engagement and Learning Committee

Priorities for 2026-27

- Secure a new committee chair as Kirsty Lock completes six years in the role and on the Board
- Build on the existing activities
(e.g. additional Oak Tree signage for the Nicholson Trail)
- Increase engagement through interactive opportunities
(e.g. Adventure Labs for the three Coastal Reach projects)

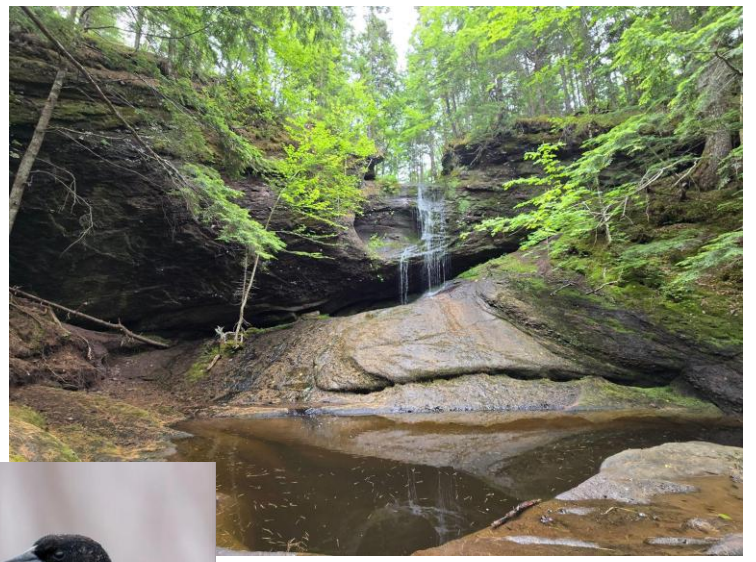


Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Trails Committee



“Walk the Watershed” Hiking Series





Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Trails Committee



- **Community Trail Groups in the Biosphere**

trailschair@blbra.ca



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association

Trails Committee



2026/2027 Plans and Goals

- “Walk the Watershed” Hike Series
- Hike Nova Scotia “Hiker Challenge” Badge
- Revise Trail Builder’s Toolkit



Bras d'Or Lake
Biosphere Region
Association



- Summary of BLBRA activities
- Align activities with Strategic Plan and Sustainable Development Goals
- Acknowledge Funders and Partners

Thank you! Wela'lioq Merci

Go raibh maith agat

See you around the Biosphere!



Proud member of the
Canadian Biosphere
Regions Association



unesco

Man and the Biosphere
Programme