



**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE
DRAFT MINUTES
March 9, 2026**

PRESENT: Councillor Cathy Deagle Gammon, Chair
Councillor Laura White, Vice Chair
Councillor Sam Austin
Councillor Tony Mancini
Councillor Janet Steele
Councillor Nancy Hartling

STAFF: John MacPherson, Executive Director, Property, Fleet & Environment
Jonah Bernstein, Director, Environment & Climate Change
William Hatfield, Solicitor
Dorothy Maponga, Legislative Assistant

These minutes are considered draft and will require approval by Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee at a future meeting.

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, information items circulated, and video (if available) are online at halifax.ca.

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**Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee
Draft Minutes
March 9, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting took place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and that we are all treaty people.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 17, 2026

MOVED by Councillor Steele, seconded by Councillor Hartling

THAT the minutes of February 17, 2026 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOVED by Councillor Steele, seconded by Councillor Hartling

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE

7. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE

8. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

9. NOTICES OF TABLED MATTERS – NONE

10. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

10.1 Correspondence – None

10.2 Petitions – None

10.3 Presentation

10.3.1 Mike Lancaster - Proposal for a Protected Area called Ingram River

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- Request to present dated February 24, 2026
- Presentation dated March 9, 2026

Mike Lancaster, St. Margaret's Stewardship Association gave a presentation.

10.3.2 Marina McBride – Ecological Significance of the Ingram River Area

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- Request to present dated February 6, 2026
- Presentation dated March 9, 2026

Becky Parker, Nature Nova Scotia gave a presentation.

10.3.3 Darlene Gilbert and Marian Nicholas – Advocating for the Protection of the Ingram Wilderness Area

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- Request to present dated February 8, 2026

Darlene Gilbert and Marian Nicholas, Mi'kmaq Grandmothers, Land Defenders and Water Protectors spoke on the positive impacts of the Ingram River area to community members. Gilbert highlighted the importance of the protection of the land and water in the area.

Mike Lancaster, St. Margaret's Stewardship Association, Becky Parker, Nature Nova Scotia and Gilbert responded to questions of clarification from the Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Hartling, seconded by Councillor Steele

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a staff report to be brought to Halifax Regional Council, requesting that the Halifax Regional Council direct the Mayor to write a letter to the Premier of Nova Scotia, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and the Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables, asking them to:

- 1. reconsider proposed High Production Forestry in the Ingram River Wilderness Area within Halifax Regional Municipality; and**
- 2. consider protecting the Ingram River Wilderness Area as part of its goal to protect 20% of Nova Scotia's land by 2030, which has wide support from various community organizations.**

Jonah Bernstein, Director, Environment & Climate Change responded to questions of clarification from the Standing Committee.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Dierdre Moore, Ingram Action Group spoke to Ingram Rivers' potential as a protected wilderness, the importance of the protection of the area and advocated for the end to harmful forestry practices.

Peter Lund, Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust spoke on the Committee's work on watercourses and wetlands, the impacts of clear-cutting and the threat to protected areas and downstream ecosystems. Lund responded to questions of clarification from the Standing Committee.

Joanne Ubdegrove, Hants West spoke on the governments' recognition of the ecological harms, the vital role of hardwoods in forest health, wildlife displacement, and the prevention of destructive practices and protection of the Ingram Wilderness area.

Eben Fry, Ingram Action Group spoke on the community's strong engagement through the Ingram Action Group, the outdoor enthusiasm of the community and the significance of ecotourism in the Ingram River area.

12. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

13. REPORTS – NONE

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14. MOTIONS – NONE

15. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE) – NONE

16. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

17. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – April 2, 2026

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Dorothy Maponga
Legislative Assistant