

## County supports tidal power research efforts



Central Cape Breton Community Ventures' Randy Pointkoski (L) and Dana Morin, President, Fundy Tidal Inc., field questions posed at the community meeting about the potential of tidal power at the Barra Strait.

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The requirements include having 51% ownership by eligible proponents; Nova Scotia Power having the capacity to accept the electricity created (3 phase lines); Municipal support; a business case; First Nations consultations; a strategic environmental assessment which could take up to a year and a half to be approved; organize the local investment structure which Mr. Morin believes should be a CEDIF (community economic development investment fund); and the contribution of all the partners finalized.

Mr. Morin said with a small scale tidal COMFIT the rate presently being negotiated for electrical power is \$0.652 per kilowatt hour based on the costs of \$10 million per megawatt of power installed.

The eventual rate of return is expected

to be close to 15%.

Eligible proponents for the COMFIT's majority ownership are First Nations, Universities, Not-for-Profits, and Community Economic Development Corporations (CEDIFs).

Mr. Morin also said the Municipalities are no longer able to partner in the COMFIT program.

Both Mr. Pointkoski and Mr. Morin (by speaker phone) made similar presentations to County Council on September 12th. Council moved to write letters to support COMFIT projects for tidal energy not only for the Barra Strait but also for Great Bras d'Or Channel at Seal Island.

Council is also investigating why it can no longer partner with other groups for renewable energy projects under the COMFIT program.

## Forestry use for whom and at what cost?

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of Nova Scotia's electricity.

This was a good deal back when Nova Scotia Power was owned by the people of Nova Scotia.

More recently Nova Scotia Power has negotiated to build a 60 megawatt generating plant burning bio-mass which will use as much wood as was consumed during the budworm infestation every year for forty years.

The biomass plant is to be built beside the mill in the hope that it will help power the mill and be seen as being green for doing it.

A major source of biomass was to come from the mill's wastes.

Then the seas of commerce threw the mill onto the rocks of receivership.

The curious thing is, Nova Scotia Power is saying it is going ahead with its

plans for the biomass generator.

This may be good news for the short term fabrication work the boiler will require, but in the long term how will Nova Scotia Power find the biomass required to fire the generator?

Nova Scotia Power does not strike me as a corporation that would build a 60 megawatt electrical generator without having a back-up plan.

The resources in eastern Nova Scotia are vast. The potential for small scale sustainable power generation is massive. It remains to be seen if the province will allow small biomass or other sustainable energy development projects access to the Crown Land for local economic development or will Nova Scotians be required to buy back their own resource at increasingly escalating rates from Nova Scotia Power?

## A local diet? in September?

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And also what you can't get."

Lake holds Bachelors degrees from CBU in both Community Studies and in Political Science, and is working towards her MBA in Community Economic Development. She is currently employed as a Community Development Officer in the Political Science Department at CBU. She is also a founder of the Baddeck Community Market, which is an example of how local produce brings the community together, as the Community Hall is packed each Wednesday with residents looking to get their weekly share of veggies, baked goods, meat, chicken & fish.

Lake believes that food can be at the root of making our communities and the local economy stronger. "Everyone needs food," she says. "And you don't have to have a lot of money. You can invest in your local farmer just by buying a bag of lettuce." Supporting local food producers leads to a stronger community in several ways, she explains. "It means we're less dependent on foreign oil prices, foreign currency fluctuations, and foreign crops. And, we're more connected with our community members. So, we're in a more stable place in case of any kind of crisis. We can still eat, even if we can't truck food in. As well, local food producers in turn spend money in this community, raise their children here, and hire other local people. The money stays here, and builds the community."

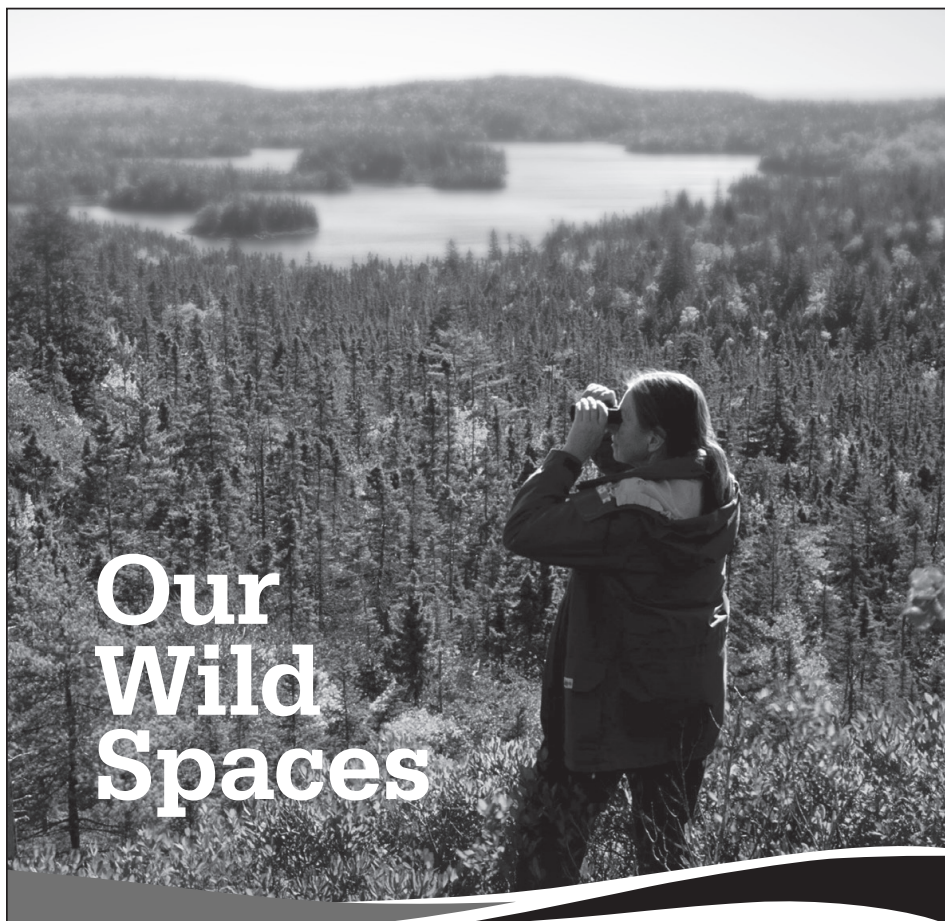
Safer communities, stronger communities, and fresher, healthier food - it seems like a no-brainer. Yet, it's still a revolutionary idea. Hence, why Alicia is doing this project - to raise awareness. "If nothing else, I just want people to think about

where their food comes from. Question it - if a price at the grocery store is low, there is something else, like someone's livelihood or environmental factors, that were compromised to make it that low."

I asked her what was surprising about this project. "I'm surprised by how easy it is to find a wide variety of meat," she said. "Lamb, pork chops, chicken, and the best steak I've ever had! There is also a wide variety of veggies." It's no mistake the project is during the month of September - Alicia remembers harvest time as an abundant time of year, from growing up on her parents' farm, and wanting to capitalize on that so she'd have the most variety possible available to her.

Another surprise has been how affordable it has been. "I have heard people saying that they would eat more local food, except it would be too expensive. Well, I've been finding it's about the same amount of money." Douglas cut in - "One place you're saving money is on snacks!" "That's true," said Alicia.

On the 30th of September, will she be glad to get back to coffee, ice cream, oil? "Yes, absolutely," she says. "But, I know I'll be much more aware of the local food producers, and I'll make more of an effort to eat those foods that are grown locally, and eat less imported food. And, after shopping at farmer's markets, it would be difficult for me to go back to shopping in the grocery stores and give up my personalized service. It is so nice to have the person that is selling you food also helping you to pick it out! You develop really important relationships with the people who grow your food. I love knowing that with each meal, I'm helping to support someone's livelihood in my own community."



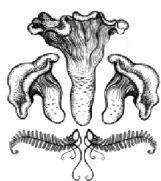
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