

**Item No. 10.1.6**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**June 18, 2013**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed by

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Mike Labrecque, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

Original Signed by Director

Greg Keefe, Director of Finance and ICT/CFO

**DATE:** June 6, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Area Rates for Crosswalk Guards

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**ORIGIN**

Changes to the student catchment areas for Harrietsfield Elementary School and Atlantic Memorial School in Shad Bay which have crosswalk guards funded from area rates.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Charter section 96 (1) The Council may spend money in an area, or for the benefit of an area, for any purpose for which the Municipality may expend funds or borrow.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve, to take effect April 1, 2013, the revised mapped areas for the crosswalk guard area rates for the Harrietsfield Elementary School and Atlantic Memorial School in Shad Bay as depicted in Maps A and B of this report so that they match as closely as possible the student catchment areas for those schools as shown in Maps C and D of this report; and
2. For 2013-14, set both area rates at \$0.0035 per \$100 of taxable assessment on the residential and resource assessment within the revised mapped areas.

## **BACKGROUND**

Under HRM's current Tax Structure, the cost of providing crosswalk guards is funded from the Urban and Suburban General Tax Rates. If the service is required in the Rural area of HRM, it must be funded from area rates. During the Tax Structure review which took place in 2002, it was originally suggested by the Tax Structure Committee that the cost of crosswalk guards also be included in the Rural (Base) General Tax Rate. However, following public consultations, it was decided by Council that crosswalks guards continue to be excluded from the Rural (Base) General Tax Rate because most of the Rural area was unlikely to ever require this service.

For many years, there have been two crosswalk guards in the rural area. One is located at Harrietsfield Elementary School, and the other services Atlantic Memorial School in Shad Bay. While each crosswalk guard is funded from a separate area rate applied to a separate area, the cost of both crosswalk guards and the assessment bases are combined to calculate a rate which is the same for both. This is to ensure that property owners do not pay different rates for the same service. The current catchment areas for these area rates are shown in the mapped areas in Maps E and F attached to this report.

## **DISCUSSION**

Because of some recent feedback from residents in these areas, staff has reviewed the student catchment areas for these two schools to determine if they match up with the corresponding catchment areas for the area rates.

It was determined that the current area rate catchment area for Harrietsfield Elementary School approximates the student catchment area for that school except that it should be extended further south on Route 306 (Old Sambro Road) from civic 3016 near Gusty Lane to civic 3285 which is just before Viewpoint Lane. The proposed revised area rate catchment area is depicted in Map A, the school catchment area is shown in Map C, and the current area rate catchment area is attached as Map E.

The discrepancy between the current area rate catchment area and student catchment area for Atlantic Memorial School is much more significant. The proposed revised area rate catchment area is depicted in Map B, the school catchment area is shown in Map D, and the current area rate catchment area is attached as Map F. The community of Terence Bay is within the school catchment area but outside the area rate catchment area. The communities of Goodwood, Hatchet Lake and Brookside are outside the school catchment area but within the catchment area for the area rate.

The following table indicates the difference in area rates between the current catchment areas and the proposed revised catchment areas. The impact on the average property is indicated for three scenarios: (1) properties which would remain in the area rate catchment areas, (2) properties that would become part of the catchment areas, and (3) properties that would no longer be part of the catchment areas.

<b>2013-14 Area Rates for</b>	<b>Properties Remaining in Catchment Area</b>	<b>Properties Entering Catchment Area</b>	<b>Properties Leaving Catchment Area</b>
Current Catchment Areas	\$ 0.0027	n/a	\$ 0.0027
Proposed Catchment Areas	\$ 0.0035	\$ 0.0035	n/a
<b>Change in Area Rate</b>	<b>\$ 0.0008</b>	<b>\$ 0.0035</b>	<b>- \$ 0.0027</b>
<b>Impact on average property (assessment of \$210,000)</b>	<b>+ \$ 1.68</b>	<b>+ \$ 7.35</b>	<b>- \$5.67</b>

The area rate would increase from \$0.0027 to \$0.0035 per \$100 of taxable assessment because the total residential and resource assessment base would drop by about 24% following the realignment of the area rate catchment areas. A smaller assessment base results in an increase to the area rate to cover the same cost. The current total compensation cost of one crosswalk guard working 3.5 hours per day is about \$9,600 annually.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Because crosswalk guards in the Rural area are funded from area rates, there is no impact on the Operating budget funded from the general tax rate. Also, the operating budget for the two crosswalk guards would remain unchanged as would the total amount of area rate revenue required (\$19,200).

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Staff are correcting an error in the area rate catchment areas so that they match the school catchment areas as closely as possible. Therefore, community consultation is not required.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications resulting from the Recommendations in this report.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Council could retain the current area rate catchment areas. This is not recommended because there are currently entire communities being charged the area rate which are outside the school catchment areas, and properties not being charged the area rate which are within the school catchment areas.
2. Council could retain the current area rate catchment area for one of the crosswalk guards and change it for the other crosswalk guard. This is not recommended because it would treat the two areas differently and therefore be inconsistent.

3. Council could request that the service costs and assessment bases for the two areas not be combined for the purpose of calculating the area rates. If determined separately, the two area rates would be very different from one another because the total assessment base for the Harrietsfield Elementary School catchment area is only 25% of the total assessment based for the Atlantic Memorial School catchment area. This would result in an area rate of \$0.0064 per \$100 of taxable assessment for the Harrietsfield Elementary School catchment area, and \$0.0024 per \$100 of taxable assessment for the Atlantic Memorial School catchment area. Because there would be two very different area rates for the same service, this approach is not recommended.
4. Council could decide to eliminate the area rates and instead fund these two school crosswalk guards from the Rural (Base) General Tax Rate effective with the 2013-14 fiscal year. This was originally suggested by the Tax Structure Committee during the Tax Structure review which took place in 2002. However, following public consultations, it was decided by Council that crosswalks guards continue to be excluded from the Rural (Base) General Tax Rate because most of the Rural area was unlikely to ever require this service. If Council did decide to proceed with this alternative, there would be no change to the 2013-14 general tax rates approved by Council on April 30, 2013. Instead the expense of \$19,200 would be accommodated by reducing Fiscal Services account M310-6999 by this amount.

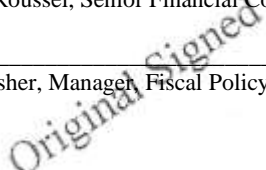
#### **ATTACHMENTS**

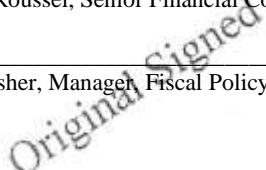
Map A:	Proposed Catchment Area for Harrietsfield Elementary School Crosswalk Guard Area Rate
Map B:	Proposed Catchment Area for Atlantic Memorial School Crosswalk Guard Area Rate
Map C:	School Catchment Area for Harrietsfield Elementary School
Map D:	School Catchment Area for Atlantic Memorial School
Map E:	Current Catchment Area for Harrietsfield Elementary School Crosswalk Guard Area Rate
Map F:	Current Catchment Area for Atlantic Memorial School Crosswalk Guard Area Rate

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

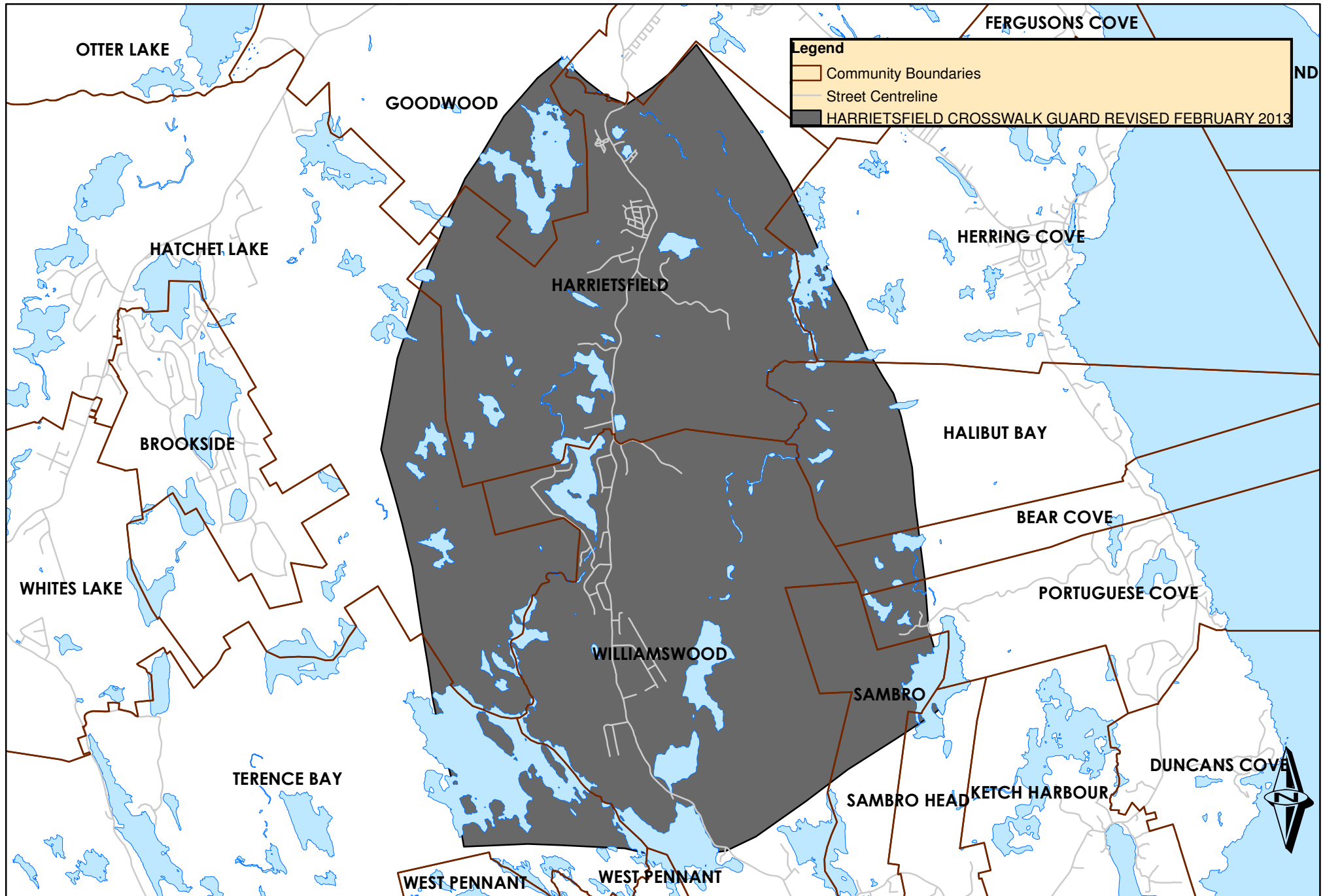
Report Prepared by: Gordon Roussel, Senior Financial Consultant, 490-2500

Report Approved by:   
Bruce Fisher, Manager, Fiscal Policy & Financial Planning, 490-4493

Financial Approval by:   
Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & Information Technology/CFO, 490-6308

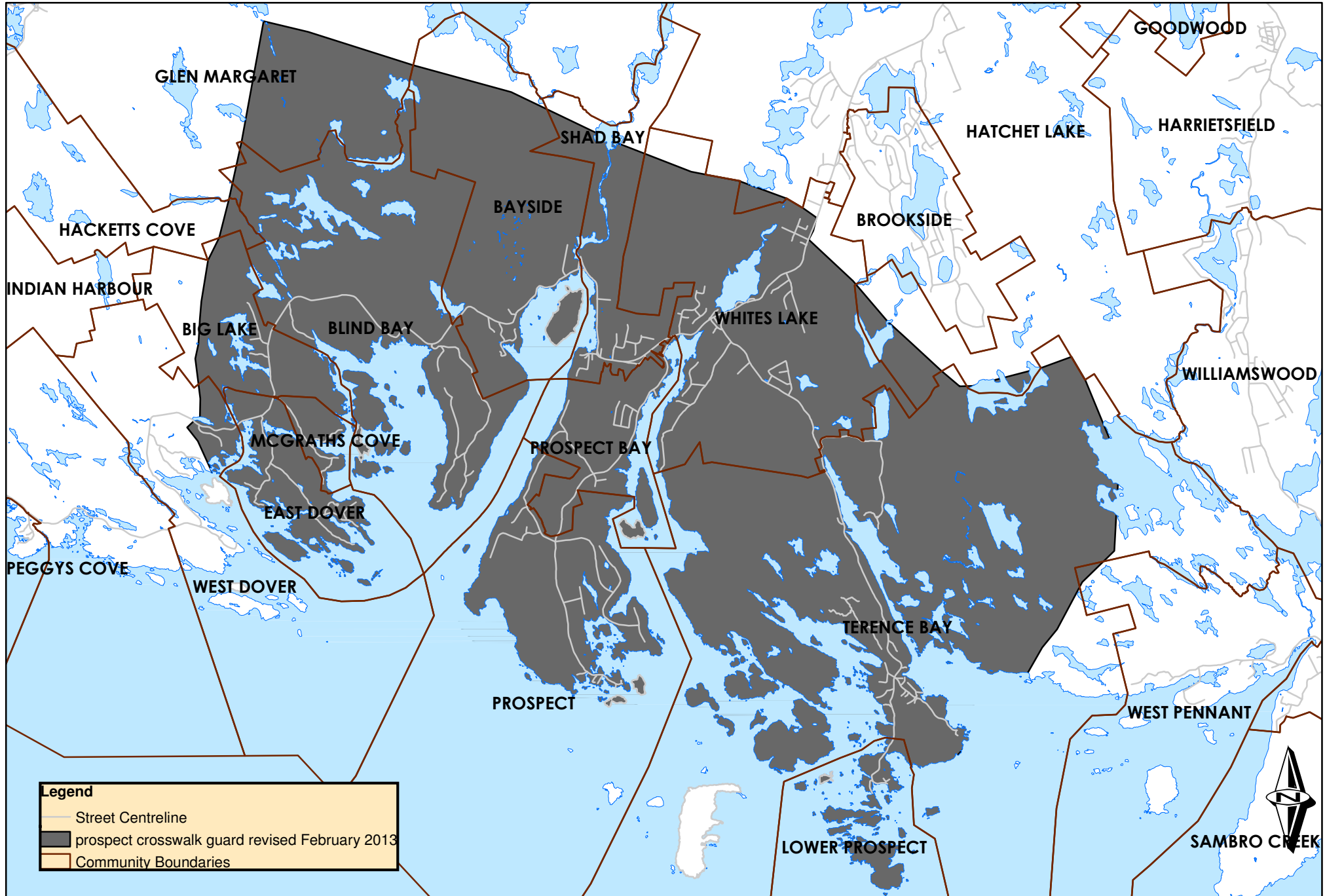
Map A

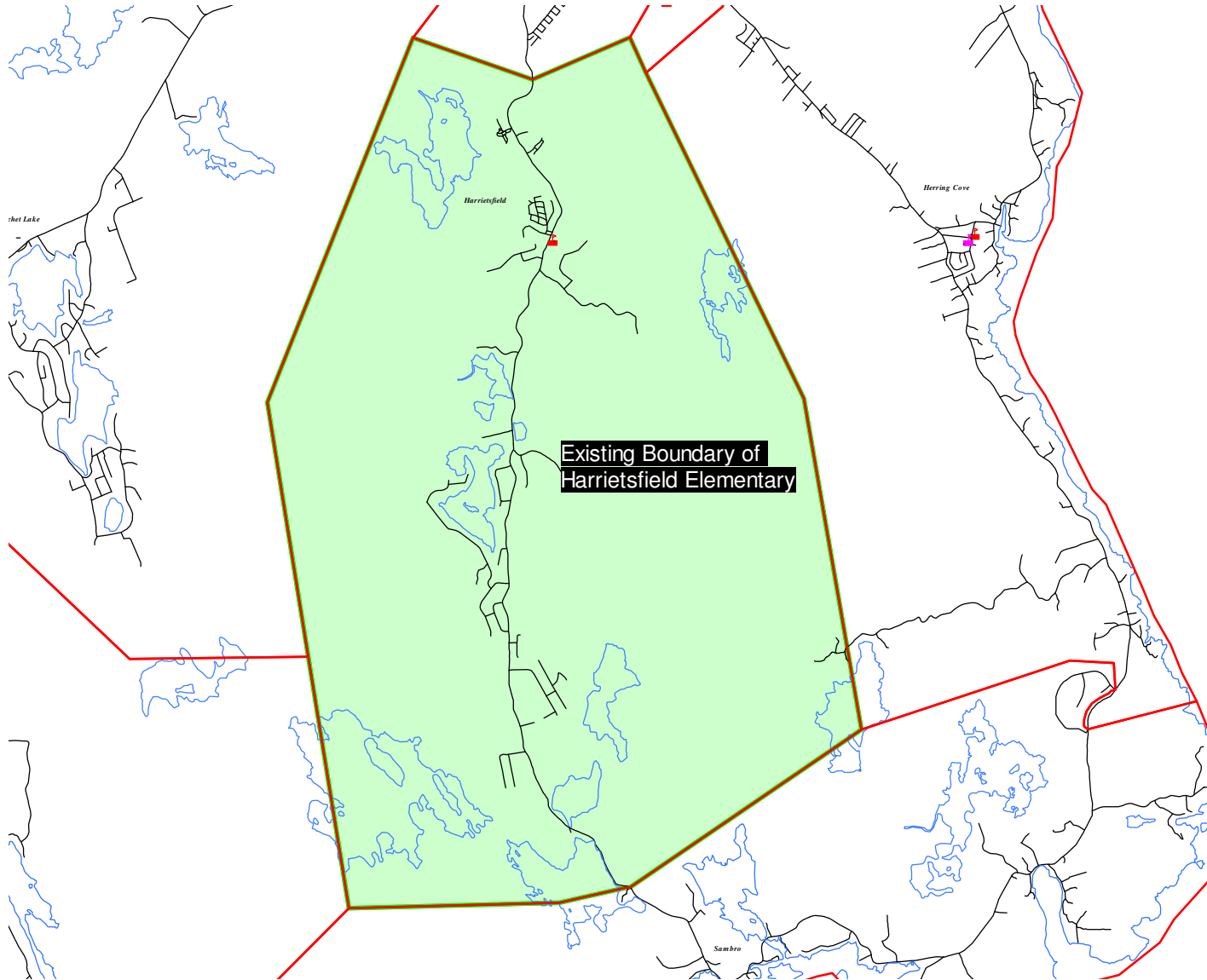
# HARRIETSFIELD CROSSWALK GUARD REVISED FEBRUARY 2013



Map B

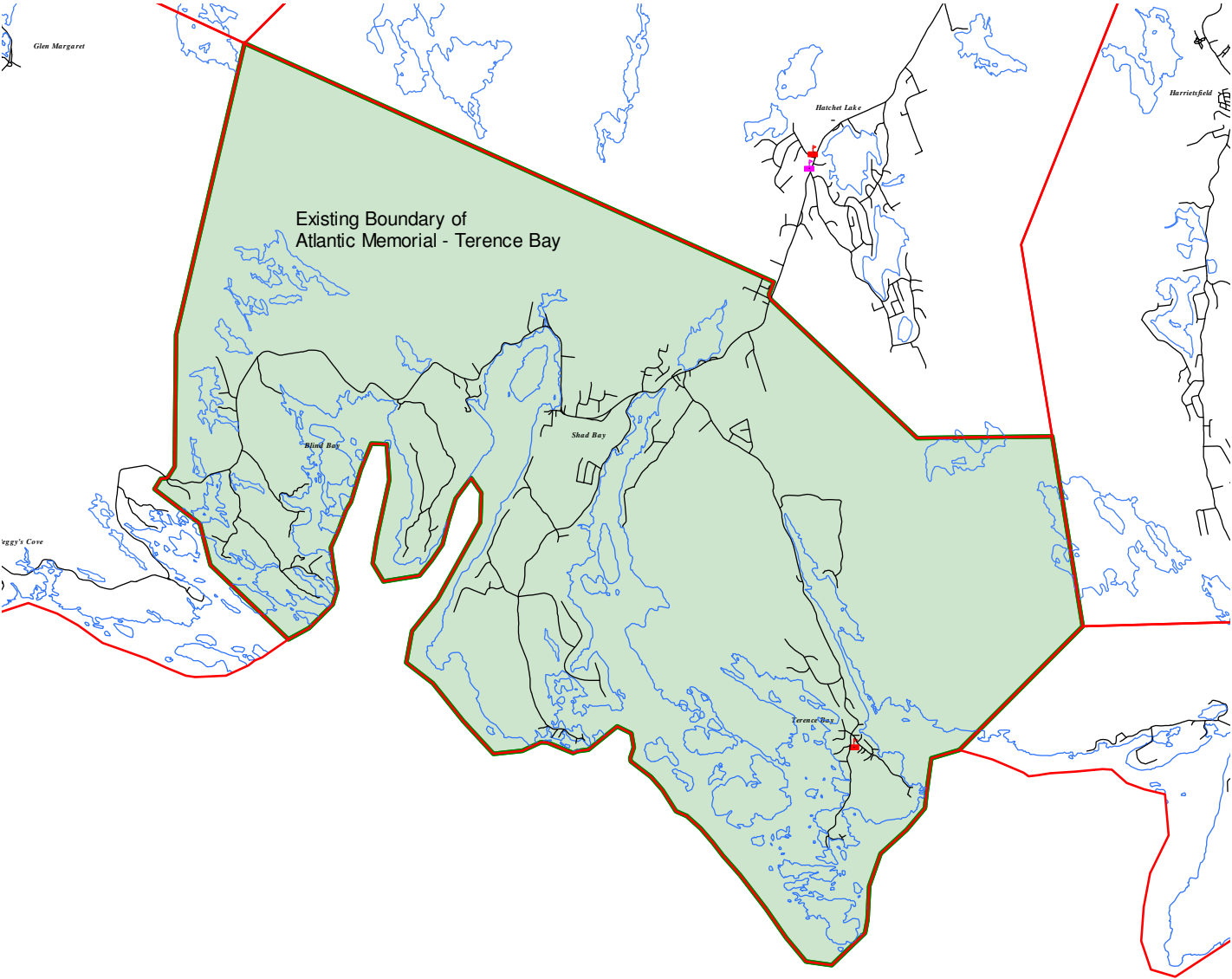
# REVISED MAPPED AREA FOR PROSPECT CROSSWALK GUARD FEBRUARY 2013





Disclaimer:  
The Halifax Regional School Board has made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of this mapping; however, there may be some anomalies.

Please be advised that in accordance with Policy B.003, the Halifax Regional School Board may direct students to another school within the Board should circumstances warrant it.



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Please be advised that in accordance with Policy B.003, the Halifax Regional School Board may direct students to another school within the Board should circumstances warrant it.



**Map E**

**Harrietsfield Crosswalk Guard Area Rate**

Property Line  
Crosswalk Guard

**HALIFAX**  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Produced: August 2009

Lakes and Ponds labeled include: Peters Lake, Flat Lake, Cranberry Lakes, Narrow Lake, Round Lake, French Lake, Bayer Lake, Snowshoe Lake, Bennett Lake, Dryhill Lake, Lizard Lake, Little Cranberry Lake, Harry Lake, The Two Lakes, Weaver Hole, Sandy Lake, Ragged Lake, Grand Lake, Fish Brook, Fish Brook Pond, Weavers North Lake, Weavers South Lake, Spruce Hill Lake, Henry Lake, Sheas Lake, Silver Lake, Little Rock Lake, Bluff Lake, Doyles Lake, Moody Lake, Still Lake, Flat Lake, Mud Lake, Rocky Pond, Grover Lake, Sheehan Lake, Donovan Pond, Governors Lake, Jimmys Pond, The Ocean, Davidsons Third Pond, Charley Pond, Fourth Pond, Cranberry Pond, Semmindinger Pond, Cocked Hat Pond, Third Pond, Second Pond, Long Pond, McIntosh Run, Roachs Pond, Three Corner Pond, Sheehan Pond, Grovers Lake, Flat Lake, Mud Lake, Rocky Pond, Grover Lake, Sheehan Lake, Ragged Lake, Grand Lake.

Other labels: GOODWOOD, WILLIAMSWOOD, HARRIETSFIELD.

**Map E**

**Harrietsfield Crosswalk Guard Area Rate**

Property Line  
Crosswalk Guard

**HALIFAX**  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Produced: August 2009

**HARRIETSFIELD**

**WILLIAMSWOOD**

Lakes and Ponds labeled include: Fish Brook, Weavers North Lake, Weavers South Lake, Spruce Hill Lake, Henry Lake, Sheas Lake, Silver Lake, Little Rock Lake, Run Lake, Bluff Lake, Doyles Lake, Moody Lake, Grover Lake, Sheehan Lake, Ragged Lake, and many others.

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REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Produced: August 2009

**HARRIETSFIELD**

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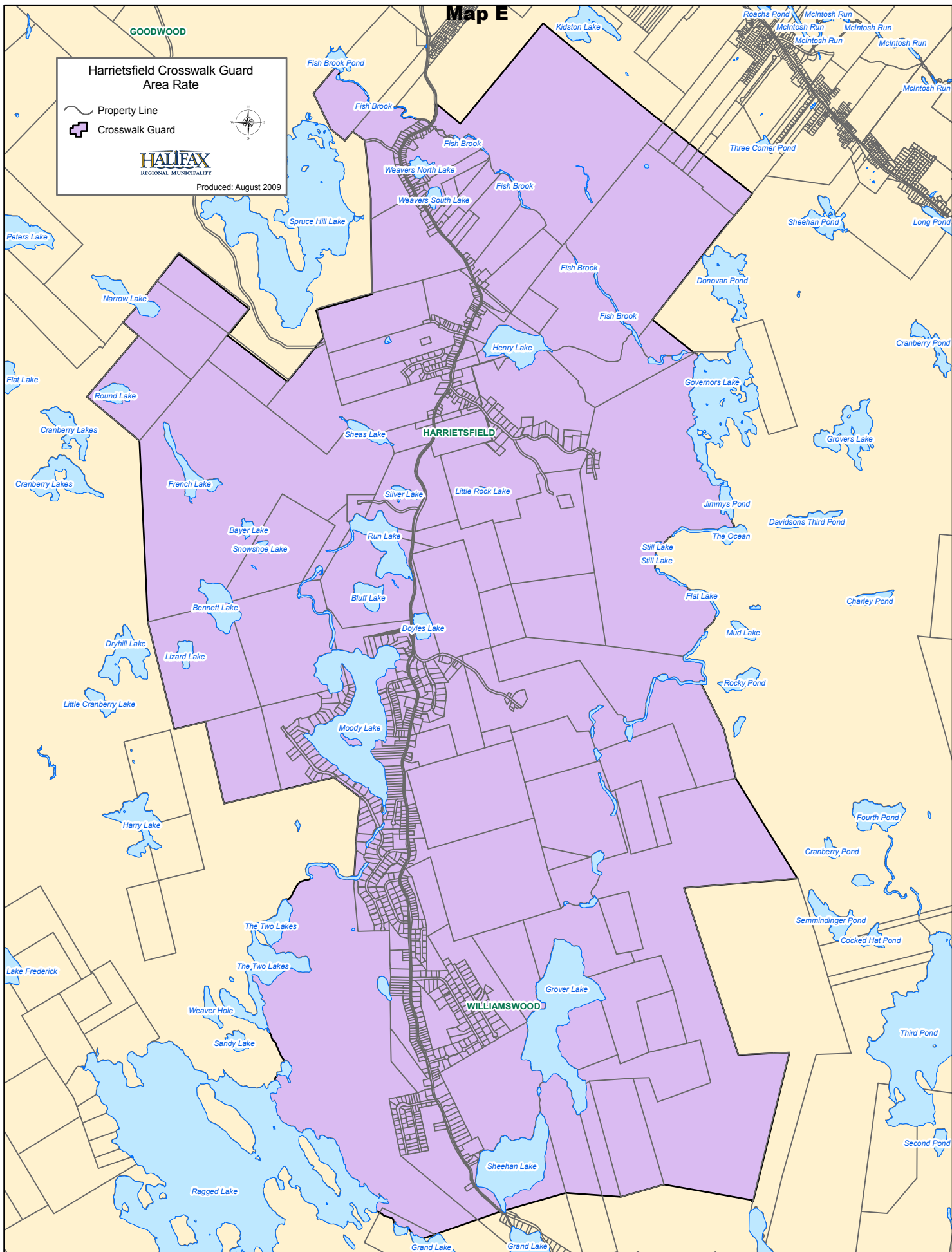
Property Line  
Crosswalk Guard

**HALIFAX**  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Produced: August 2009

Lakes and Ponds labeled include: Peters Lake, Flat Lake, Cranberry Lakes, French Lake, Bennett Lake, Dryhill Lake, Lizard Lake, Little Cranberry Lake, Harry Lake, Lake Frederick, The Two Lakes, Weaver Hole, Sandy Lake, Ragged Lake, Grand Lake, Fish Brook Pond, Fish Brook, Weavers North Lake, Weavers South Lake, Spruce Hill Lake, Henry Lake, Sheas Lake, Silver Lake, Little Rock Lake, Run Lake, Bluff Lake, Doyles Lake, Moody Lake, Grover Lake, Sheehan Lake, Fish Brook, Kidston Lake, Roachs Pond, McIntosh Run, Three Corner Pond, Donovan Pond, Governors Lake, Jimmys Pond, Still Lake, Flat Lake, Mud Lake, Rocky Pond, Charley Pond, Davidson's Third Pond, The Ocean, Grovers Lake, Sheehan Pond, Long Pond, Cranberry Pond, Semmindinger Pond, Cocked Hat Pond, Third Pond, Second Pond.

Other labels: GOODWOOD, WILLIAMSWOOD, HARRIETSFIELD.



**Map E**

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Crosswalk Guard

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REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Produced: August 2009

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**WILLIAMSWOOD**

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Neighboring Areas: **GOODWOOD**, **WILLIAMSWOOD**.

Other labels: **HARRIETSFIELD**, **WILLIAMSWOOD**.

[illegible]

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**Harrietsfield Crosswalk Guard Area Rate**

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Crosswalk Guard

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# Map F

