

Haliburton Highlands Blue Dot Movement: The Who, What, When, Where, Why

The Who

The Haliburton Highlands Blue Dot Movement is part of the David Suzuki Foundation national Blue Dot Movement. Environment Haliburton! is the local lead organization.

The What

The Blue Dot Movement is a national campaign to have our right to a safe and healthy environment enshrined in the Canadian Constitution. The first step in the campaign is to achieve declarations by our municipal governments to do all they can to ensure that our local environments are safe and healthy. There is a petition campaign unfolding throughout the nation and in the Haliburton Highlands asking our local governments to “*recognize its citizens’ rights to a healthy environment. These rights include breathing clean air, drinking fresh water, consuming safe food, accessing nature, knowing about pollutants released into the local environment and participating in government decisions that will affect the environment. History shows that the greatest changes start with simple acts of local leadership. That is why I am calling on Reeve and Council to enact a declaration recognizing the Right to a Healthy Environment.*” The combination of signatures and municipal declarations provides a strong grass roots indication of our support for a healthy environment.

The When

The goal of the national movement is to achieve a Constitutional amendment within the next five years. The goal of the Haliburton Highlands Blue Dot Movement is to gather as many signatures as possible over the summer. In the fall, hopefully supported by many signatures, we will approach our municipal councils asking for a municipal declaration. We expect to have municipal declarations from all 5 Councils by the end of 2015.

The Where

The Haliburton Highlands Blue Dot Movement will be canvassing with the petition throughout the summer in the highlands. Look for us at events, markets, dances, festivals, wherever we congregate. Petitions will also be available in locations such as Nature’s Place, the Rails End Gallery.

The Why

The guarantee of a healthy environment in our Constitution will:

Promote equality: “by compelling governments to recognize that — regardless of who they are or where they live — every Canadian is entitled to a minimum standard of environmental quality.”

Protect health: through “the creation of new environmental laws, or require existing ones to be strengthened. This will have an immediate, direct impact on the quality of the air, water and land that our health depends on”

Stop attacks on environmental laws: through stopping “harmful law rollbacks — like the sweeping changes buried in the 2012 federal omnibus budget bills — before they happen, and ensure that efforts to protect the air, water and land on which we all depend stand the test of time” (quotes from *The right to a healthy environment. Canada’s time to act.* Ecojustice

www.environmenthaliburton.ca

www.bluedot.ca