
DECEMBER 2014 NEWSLETTER

INTRODUCTION

2014 has been a great year at Hiking NB. We had several epic adventures and posted lots of content to the web. Interest in the website has grown substantially. This is our first Newsletter and we hope you find value in it and find it interesting. Along with the Newsletter we have created a 14 page Hiking NB User Manual to help you use the Hiking NB resources to their full potential. Subscribe to the [Hiking NB email list](#) to get a copy of the User Manual and the most recent copy of the Newsletter.

Hiking NB's goals have remained the same throughout our history. We hope to raise **awareness** about all the awesome trails that exist in the province through social media. We hope to **inspire** you to have your own adventures with our blog posts, pictures, and videos. We hope you **plan** your next adventure using the maps and trail information on the website. The next step is the most important part. **We hope that you go out and have your own adventures.** When you do have your own adventures we hope that you **share** them in pictures or words so that others can be inspired. All of our content is for sharing and we encourage you to share your own stories on any of our social media pages.

Why do we do all this? The simple answer is because we love doing it. Wherever we go we have difficulty finding accurate, consistent information about all of the hiking trails in an area. Hiking trails are created and maintained by many different organizations. Large group sharing websites like [Trail Peak](#) or [Every Trail](#) usually only have the most popular trails and don't provide consistent information. We want to provide consistent information about every trail in the province.

We also believe in the use it or lose it philosophy. There are always pressures on trails. These pressures include using a trail for other purposes or simply the pressure (or lack of pressure) to



not maintain a trail. If more people use the trails, then more people care about the trails. If more people care about the trails, then the better chance there is of those trails existing into the future.

So get out and find your own adventure. We hope we have just taken away all your excuses not to.

HIKING NB HISTORY



Hiking NB was conceived of in the year 2000. The internet was all the rage because of the tech boom and I had just started my love affair with hiking. On a whim I decided that I had to go climb Mount Katahdin in Maine. I had seen it from the lookout on route I-95 and couldn't get my head around the fact that people climbed to the top of it in a single day. My brother in law agreed to go with me and he knew even less about what he was getting himself into than I did. We

climbed the mountain that day including the infamous knives edge but we were ill equipped and ill prepared. It wasn't as warm as we had planned so our frozen water bottles stayed mostly frozen. We didn't even have hiking boots. We crawled on our hands and knees across the Knife's Edge, taking twice as long as other hikers, simply because we couldn't get our head around the height of it and the exposure. It was beyond anything either one of us had ever experienced but I was hooked.

In the years following that adventure I explored local trails such as [Pokiok Park](#) and made a few trips to [Fundy Park](#) with different people. I explored the trails at [Kouchibouguac Park](#) and went camping and hiking at [Mount Carleton](#). I created the outline of a website but that's as far as it went. Life became busy with marriage and kids. The mill I worked at went bankrupt and then reopened so I changed jobs and moved a few times. I even got a second degree in there somewhere. When my first marriage didn't work out I started hiking for a different reason. I hiked to find solace and it helped me to think about all that was going on in my life. I traveled extensively between Nackawic where I was living, and to the Miramichi to see the kids, so I got to see a lot of the province on a regular basis. All of the time I was exploring new hiking trails.



In 2009 I returned from an epic adventure to Newfoundland, including Gros Morne Park (that's a story for another day), with a renewed sense of adventure. I met my current wife not long

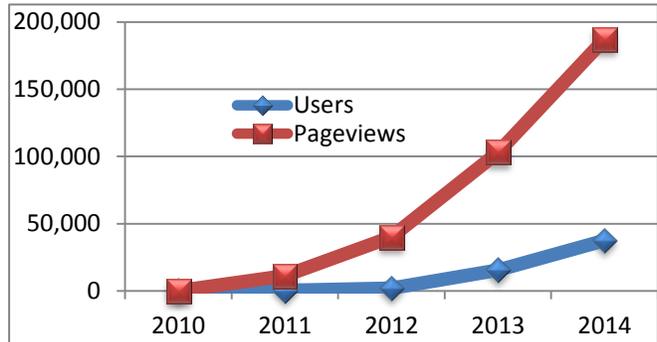


after and was amazed to find that she actually wanted to join me on my crazy adventures. This included a trip to England to visit my sister that we planned on the night we met. We went on the trip to England in June of 2010. The trip included several days hiking in the Lake District, ending in a day trip up Mount Helvellyn.

My wife convinced me that I needed to develop the Hiking NB website. It may have been just to shut me up about it but she was completely supportive. She even bought me an SLR camera and persuaded me to get a GPS. I started the website in the fall of 2010. She continues to be my biggest supporter and still looks forward to

our adventures.

Since the website was created it has grown exponentially. There are now 324 trails and 1461 trail photos on the site. A [Facebook page](#) was also created in 2010 and has grown to just under 2000 likes. There is also a [Twitter page](#), [Instagram page](#), [YouTube Account](#) and [Blog](#). More details on each of these to follow.



Our plans are to put every trail in New Brunswick on the webpage. When that is complete we don't plan to stop. We will continue to return to our favorite spots, capture better photos, and continue to share our adventures. We hope to see you on the trail.

2014 ADVENTURES

For a complete list of the trails we hiked in 2014 go to the [Trail Log](#) page on the website. The following is a list of our top 10 most memorable hikes (I tried to narrow it down to 5 but couldn't):

Mount Bailey at Mount Carleton Park – I made several attempts at snowshoeing up [Mount Bailey](#) in January and still haven't made it to the peak. My last trip was in -30°C weather but well worth it. The climb kept me warm and the batteries in my



camera lasted long enough to make a full [trail video](#). The lookout just before the junction near the peak offered a spectacular view across the valley to the frosted tops of [Mount Sagamook](#) and [Mount Carleton](#).



Minister's Face – I had known about the [Minister's Face Nature Preserve](#) on Long Island near Saint John for a while. I just didn't know how to get to it. The options I had in mind were using a boat in the summer, or crossing the ice in the winter. In March we decided to go see if crossing the ice might be an option. We arrived at the dock in Rothesay and were happy to see many people and ATV's out on the ice. This confirmed the safety of our crossing. After checking out the ice falls near Ministers Face we climbed up a steep hill and found the [Crow's Nest Trail](#). We explored the trail and then followed it back to the [Ministers Face Trail](#). We were running out of light so we didn't make it all the way to the end at Ministers Face. We did however have a great time sliding down a frozen waterfall to get back down to the river. A blog post for our trip can be found at [Minister's Face on Long Island](#).

Mapleton Acadian Forest Trail – We had previously seen the little hiking man sign at the exit to Petitcodiac. We even exited once and drove a short distance looking for the [Mapleton Acadian Forest Trail](#). We finally found the time to find and hike the trail in May. We had a great time with the kids exploring the small peaks and valleys. The kids were excited when we saw a porcupine in a small tree adjacent to the trail. A blog post for our trip can be found at [Kids and the Mapleton Acadian Forest Trail](#).



Goose River Trail – We had a kid free weekend in June and were planning to spend it exploring [Fundy Park](#). A few days prior to our trip I noticed a call out for volunteers to help cut a new trail at Goose River. The new trail would provide access from the [Goose River Trail](#) and the Fundy Footpath during high tide. This fit into our plans perfectly so we thought it would be a great chance to give back and to meet people with common interests. After a long hike into Goose River we got to work at trimming back the trail



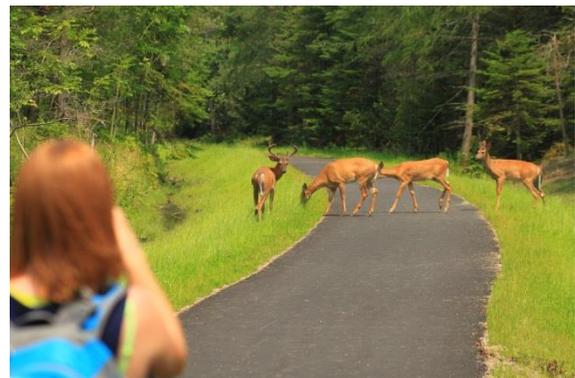
and making switchbacks on a steep hill. We eventually made it to the starting point of the Fundy Footpath, where Goose River flows into the tidal bay. After enjoying the area for a short time we had to make our way back to the [Goose River Trail](#) for the long hike back to the car. We helped out and met some great people. A blog post for our trip can be found at [Building the Fundy Footpath Link Trail](#).

Pritchard Lake Trails – In July I had the opposite problem than what I had on my Mount Bailey climb in January. On the day I hiked in to Pritchard Lake it was +36°C with the humidity. I was happy to get to the lake and dunk my head in the water to cool down. I thought about returning to the car but continued on to circle the whole lake. I had to dunk my head in the lake a few more times to keep cool but the views were beautiful. The lake was a peaceful place to explore.



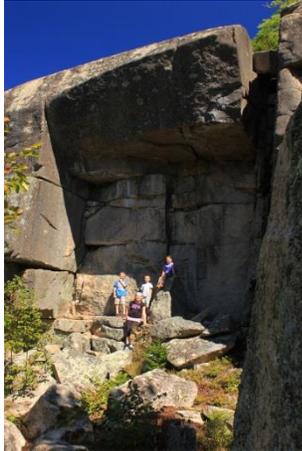
New River Beach Trails – [New River Beach](#) seems to be a favorite place to many. I had only been there once for a short time many, many years ago. We had another kid free weekend in July so we planned to spend the weekend camping and hiking in the park. For photography purposes I always check moonrises and sunset angles before a trip. I noticed that our trip coincided with the rising of the first super moon of the year. We got some good pictures as the moon rose but even more interesting was the moonlit landscape of the beach at night. We stayed too long and almost lost a shoe in a tidal stream but had a great time. The next day we explored the [Chitticks Beach](#) and the [Barnaby Head](#) trails out around the point at the park.

St. Andrews Trails – Exploring [St. Andrews](#) has been on our to-do list for quite a while. We started at [Langmaid Park](#) and followed the newly paved [Van Horne Trail](#). There were many tame deer along the trail eating the new grass along the trail. We explored the beach at the [Pagan Point Nature Preserve](#) before continuing on to the trail at [Katy's Cove Beach](#) and the [Ballfield to Bar Road Trail](#). We returned across town and rested in the chairs on the front lawn of the [Algonquin Resort](#). After a day of hiking in the heat we were amused at how much we stood out against the well-dressed patrons of the resort.



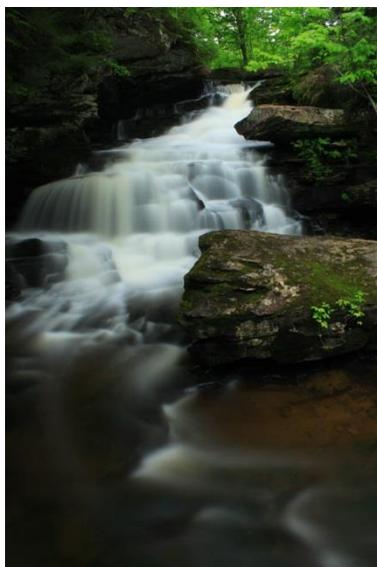
After we were rested we continued through town and back to our campsite.

The next day on our way out of town we climbed [Chamcook Mountain](#) and enjoyed views of the bay and the town in every direction.



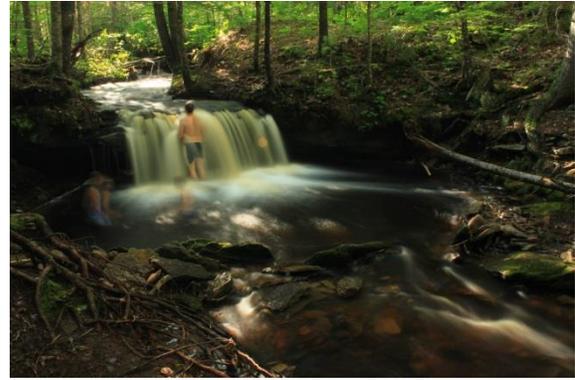
Bald Mountain Adventure Trail - The Bald Mountain Adventure Trail was a surprise. It is an amazing little mountain, with strange rounded rocky cliffs, a large shallow cave caused by large boulders separating from the cliff face called Nature's Boardroom, and a flat rocky top with spectacular views of the surrounding forest. I thought it would be an easy trail when I decided to take all 4 kids on an adventure. The climb down to the bottom of the cliffs was strenuous. The climb back up to Nature's Boardroom had ropes to help with the climb. It was strenuous was not too difficult. A trail page for this trail is coming soon.

Fredericton Area Waterfalls – There were several waterfalls around Fredericton that we explored for the first time this summer. After having so much fun swimming in [Raggedy Ass Falls](#) the previous summer we decided to find more places to swim. In July my wife and I hiked up to [Coac Falls](#) for the first time. This impressive waterfall is only about 10 km from our house, which made it even more special. We swam and climbed up the falls. A crayfish scared me by nibbling on my foot while I was standing in the pool below the falls.



I finally had the chance to stop at [Garden Creek Falls](#) on the way back from Fredericton one evening. I was quite impressed with the waterfall. I have passed this waterfall on the highway for many years. Not a good place to swim but great for photography or just quiet reflection.

[Scribner Brook Falls](#) is equally accessible. It has a small pool below the falls just deep enough for a quick swim. We only had time for a quick dip but it was fun standing in the falls and looking upstream at eye level. It was a weird feeling to have my body in the opening beneath the falls. The kids had fun too.



On our trip to the Bald Mountain Adventure Trail we also checked out Sand Brook Falls. This waterfall was more difficult to access, especially since they are rebuilding the road. It was a beautiful little falls that dropped over an overhang in the rocks. It was possible to climb underneath the in the rock cut. The pool below the falls was deep and made a great swimming pool. It was too bad we ran out of time. We will have to return next summer when we have more time to spend. A trail page for this trail is coming soon.

[Lindsay Falls](#) on Base Gagetown in Oromocto was another great find. In November I had the chance to explore the icy falls. It is another substantial waterfall that falls into a deep ravine. There is no pool for swimming but it is an amazing place to explore.





Mount Sagamook to Mount Head – Our hike to [Mount Head](#) in October was my favorite for the year. The park season was extended for a few weeks in October. This aligned perfectly with another kid free weekend. I hiked the west trail up [Mount Sagamook](#) in September. This time we chose the East Trail and were not disappointed. The lookout side trail provided amazing views of the valleys and the lakes below. After we reached

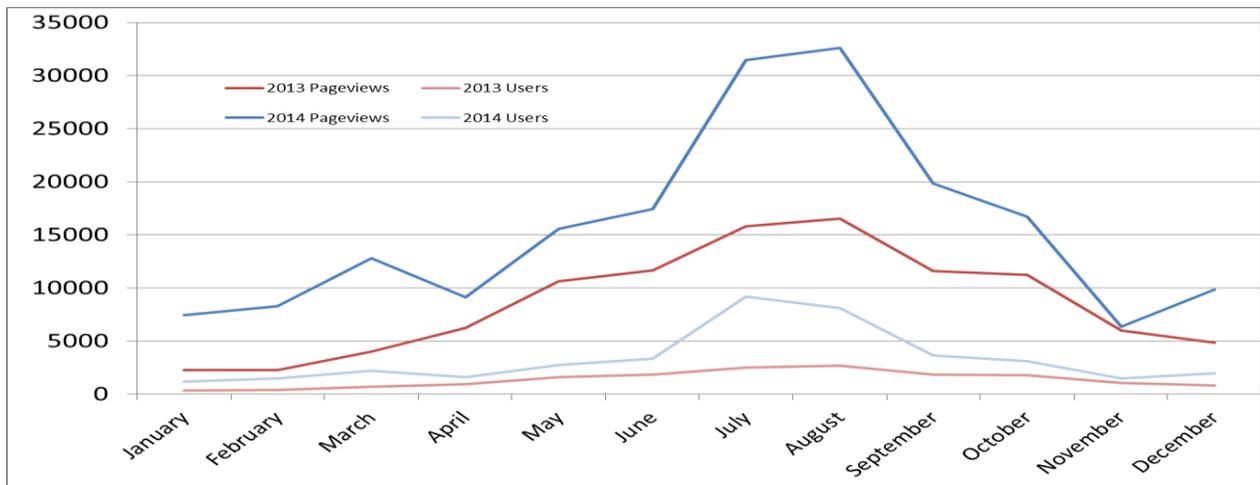
the peak at Mount Sagamook we continued across the plateau to Mount Head. This was the first time we had ventured into the plateau so we didn't know what to expect. The hike was nice and not too difficult. The peak at Mount Head provided views of the valleys and lakes below in every direction and also of [Mount Carleton Peak](#). We climbed down via the [Bald Mountain Brook Trail](#) and were amazed by the many substantial waterfalls along the trail.

TRAILS

There were 60 trails added to the Hiking NB website in 2014 bringing the total number of trails to 324. We are still amazed that we keep finding more trails to explore. We hope to get to 400 trails in 2015. This will be a challenge since we have covered all the easy trails. We are always up for a challenge.

WEBSITE STATS

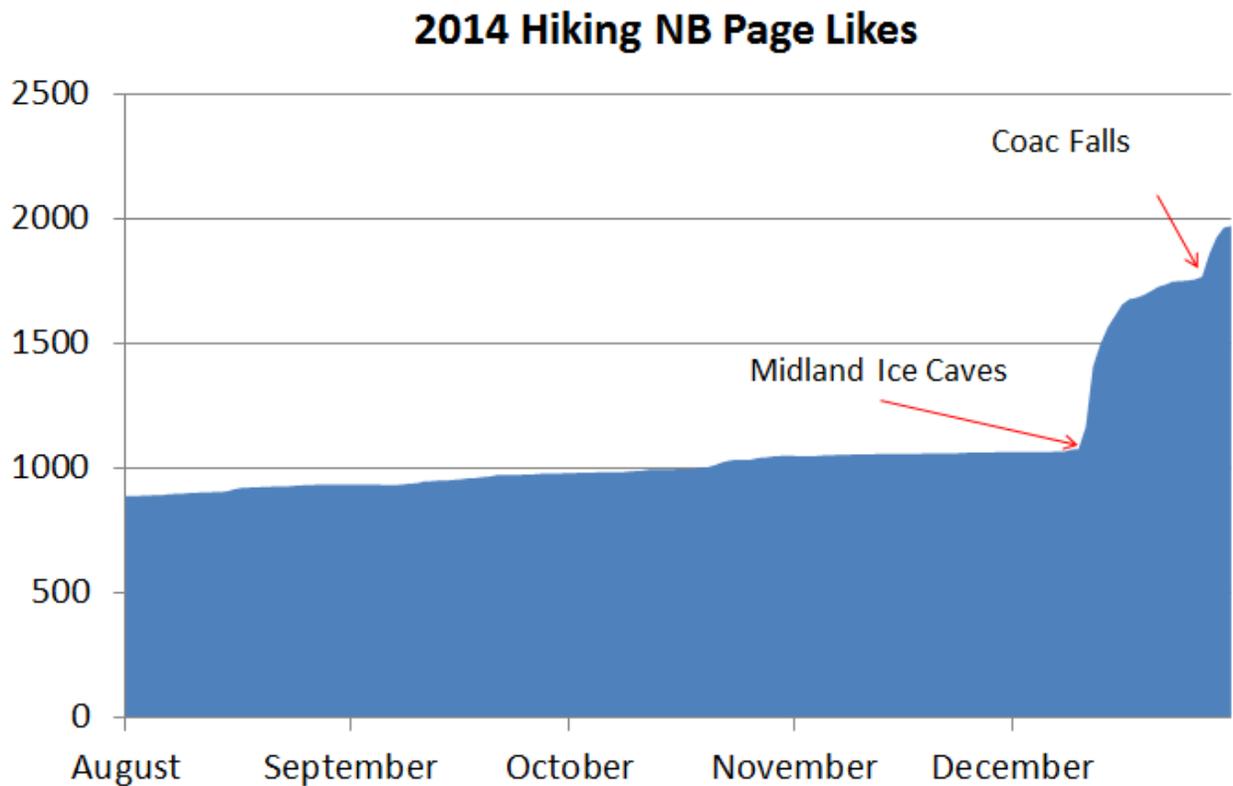
The Hiking NB website had 37,594 users in 2014 vs. 15,501 in 2013. This resulted in 187,657 pageviews in 2014 vs. 103,057 in 2013. There was a monthly record of 9,199 users on the site in the month of July and a record of 32,619 pageviews in August. We can't wait to see what 2015 brings.



SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK

Facebook remains our primary social media platform. This is the place where we post photos from our adventures and updates to the website. Even with changes to the Facebook filtering algorithms we reached 1000 Likes in October and are on the cusp of reaching 2000 page likes at the end of 2014. It took us 3 years to reach 1000 likes and 3 weeks to reach almost 2000 likes. It is a great way to start 2015.



The Facebook page likes mean we are inspiring more people to get out and enjoy the trails. Our largest post to date was our [Midland Ice Caves](#) post on December 11 which reached 12,512 people. Many people shared it with their friends. With the increase in popularity of these trails it is critical that everyone respects the trails. If you see garbage on the trail please don't leave it for someone else to find. The cleaner the trails, the less likely someone is going to litter. Bring back more than you took in and it will assure that these trails are accessible into the future.

If you do not already Like [Hiking NB on Facebook](#) please check us out.

EMAIL LIST

The Hiking NB email list was created in mid-November. The intent was to create a forum for sending out a regular newsletter by email. This would assure that you get all the Hiking NB content regardless of how much the social media sites change their filtering algorithms. Currently my plan is to have a quarterly newsletter that summarizes all that has happened in the past 3 months. The newsletter may be sent out more frequently in the future. If you want to receive the newsletters as soon as they are published please subscribe using the [Subscribe](#) button at the top of the main website pages.

By subscribing to the email list you will also receive a copy of the Hiking NB User Manual. The user manual has been created to help you make the most of the Hiking NB resources. The user manual will only be available through subscribing to the mail list.

If you've subscribed to the email list and have not yet received a copy of the newsletter or user manual please let me know at james.donald@hikingnb.ca.



HIKING NB USER MANUAL

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TWITTER

Although I have had a Twitter account since 2010 I have only recently started using it on a regular basis. I have made 25 tweets and there are now 38 followers. I hope to focus more on the twitter account in 2015. The twitter account will be used to give real time snapshots of our adventures while they are happening. We may post more on the twitter account in the future but for now that will be the focus.

If you are interested in following our adventures in real time check us out on [twitter](#).

YOUTUBE

I added 3 videos to the [Hiking NB Playlist](#) on YouTube in 2014. They include [Mount Bailey at Mount Carleton Provincial Park](#), [Turtle Mountain](#), and [Hiking NB Time Lapse 1](#). There are now a total of 5 videos (25 minutes) on YouTube with 984 views. You can subscribe to the Hiking NB YouTube account by clicking the subscribe button below any of the videos.



INSTAGRAM

I started using Instagram a bit this year. There have been 2 posts made to our Instagram account and we have 12 followers. I plan to use Instagram more in 2015 as I figure out where it fits into the Hiking NB community. If you want to follow [Hiking NB on Instagram](#) check us out.

GOOGLE+

I created a Hiking NB page in Google+. I hope the use of Google+ will help with my Google search results so I will continue to post more content in 2015. As I learn how to use Google+ more effectively I will define how it fits into the Hiking NB community. If you are a Google+ user check out the [Hiking NB Google+](#) page.

PINTEREST

I started using Pinterest in 2013 but didn't do much on it in 2014. I currently have 6 pins on the Hiking Board with 30 followers. I will be posting more pictures to the board in 2015. If you use Pinterest then check out the [Hiking Board](#) on the [Hiking NB Pinterest Account](#).

OTHER MEDIA

This summer I wrote an article that was published in the Mighty Miramichi River Guide. The article described the hiking trails in the Miramichi area.

I had a phone conversation with a reporter this summer. Following our conversation there was an article published in the Dailey Gleaner that referenced Hiking NB. I didn't get to see the article but my aunt confirmed it after reading the article.

GIVING BACK

In June we volunteered on a new bypass trail at [Goose River](#) in [Fundy Park](#) that allows hikers to access the Fundy Footpath at high tide. For more information see the adventure summary above.

Hiking NB provided GPS for trails in Nature Preserves to Nature Trust NB. A trip was made to the [Connors Brothers Nature Preserve at Pea Point](#) and to the [Caughey-Taylor Nature Preserve](#) to help out with Nature Trust NB's mapping efforts.

Hiking NB also tried to help promote an Aviva Fund initiative that would have resulted in funding to help maintain the trails on Grand Manan Island. We didn't win the funding but hopefully we get a chance to try again next year.

PHOTOS

There are now a total of 1,461 trail photos on the site. This is up from 1,089 at the first of 2014. I now have more than 40,000 trail photos and am accumulating more all the time. Many more photos will be added to the site in 2015.

MAPS

Google maps caused me some anxiety this year. They sent me an e-mail explaining how they were switching to the new Google maps and how all of my maps would need to be converted. I was relieved when I found out that my old maps were going to be automatically converted but I still had to learn how to create maps in the new format. For more information on the new format check out the *Maps* section of the Hiking NB User Manual. You can get a free copy of the user manual when you [subscribe](#) to the Hiking NB email list.

TIPS & TRICKS

Trail Search – The easiest way to find a trail on the sight is to go to the trail list page and push <ctrl> and f. This should bring up a search box on the top right (Google Chrome) or top left (Internet Explorer) of the web browser. Then type the name of the trail you are looking for in the search box and hit the <enter> key.

For more information on how to use the Hiking NB websites check out the Hiking NB User Manual that you get for free when you [subscribe](#) to the Hiking NB email list.

I continue to find better ways to use the Hiking NB website. If you have an interesting way to use the website please let me know. I would be interested in sharing it with the rest of the group.

PLANS FOR 2015

This first Newsletter turned out to be much larger than I originally expected. Future Newsletters should be shorter because they will cover a shorter time frame. I hope to maintain the same sections in the future (except maybe the History section) but these may evolve over time.

We have hiked many of the trails in the province but there are still many that we have left to explore. We have completed many of the shorter, easier trails. This means bigger adventures in 2015. We hope to make our first multi-day hiking trip this year, maybe on the Fundy

Footpath or the Dobson Trail. Our focus this year will be on Fundy Park and the trails between the Park and Riverview along the coast. Another focus for us will be Grand Manan and Campobello Islands. There are also many trails between Saint John and Sussex that we have to explore. It should be an exciting year.

I am heading into 2015 with my first pro-series lens for my camera so I hope that our photos and videos will only get better.

Thank you for all your interest in Hiking NB. We hope to see you on the trail.

James Donald

December 31, 2014