

SEED

South End Environmental
Injustice SocietyANNUAL
REPORT

2019- 2020

Community Well

In partnership with actor and director Elliot Page SEED is working provide a community well and access to clean water to the Black community in the Town of Shelburne.

Water Quality Testing

In partnership with Rural Water Watch and Dalhousie University SEED has conducted multiple rounds of water testing in wells located in the Black community to monitor contaminants such as e.Coli and Coliform. DNA testing of water samples has also been completed in partnership with

Working Group

SEED has formed a working group and convened representatives of municipal, provincial and federal government including Housing Nova Scotia, Department of African Nova Scotian Affairs, Nova Scotia Public Health, MLA and opposition members, and representatives of the Town of Shelburne.

**About SEED**

Founded in early 2016 SEED was started by African Nova Scotian Shelburne resident Louise Delisle. SEED was awarded the Group Award at the 2018 Nova Scotia Human Rights Awards Celebration for our work addressing environmental concerns in the African Nova Scotian community in the south end of Shelburne. In 2019 and 2020 SEED made international news with the release of “There’s Something in The Water” a documentary by director Elliot Page based on the book by Dr. Ingrid R.G. Waldron of the same name.

There is a long history of environmental racism in Nova Scotia, with industrial pollution and other environmental hazards located near communities of colour and the working poor. In Shelburne, African Nova Scotian residents live primarily in the south end of town, which is also the site of a landfill that was used for industrial, medical, and residential waste over a period of seventy-five years. The South End Environmental Injustice Society (SEED) is a nonprofit community initiative that represents a direct grassroots response to the siting of the landfill near the African Nova Scotian and working-poor

Vision & Goals

Our Vision:

- To study & identify the experience and the lack of good health in the Black community living in areas close to the Town Dumps.
- To identify what might have caused high rates of cancer (living) through research, community capacity building and education working with community partners and government health organizations.

Our Goals:

- To increase awareness of chronic diseases that have a higher rates in the Black communities next to landfills and dumps.
- To ask health questions about what the lifestyle was like living next to the dump.
- Create a series of community-based conferences that provide education on what promotes good health while living in these areas within context of the social determinants of health and healthy environment.
- Compile and provide a report on the health of the Black community in Shelburne living or who has lived next to the dump.
- Increase partnership and cooperative networking among health organizations and government agencies.
- Increase awareness of damage of poor environmental exposure in the Black community because of the Town Dump in Shelburne.
- Increase awareness of accessible community environmental resources to promote health in the community of Shelburne.
- Increase engagement of community members in development & implementation of programs, initiatives and other research focused on the health and well-being of the Black community.

community in Shelburne. Members of this collective organization have developed an approach that allows for the contributions of all members, in an effort that addresses issues of environmental racism and responds in a way that is continually evolving. Ultimately, SEED hopes that evidence-based strategies will be used to improve health outcomes and reduce the prevalence of chronic disease as a result of everyday exposures to toxic substances experienced by Black community members in Shelburne.

Our Board of Directors & Membership

Our board of directors grew in 2019-2020 with the addition of new directors and creation of a registry of members. Founder Louise Delisle recently stepped down as chair while continuing to serve on the board and new co-chairs Michelle Jacklyn and Vanessa Hartley have been elected. Our current board is comprised of: *Michelle Jacklyn (co-chair), Vanessa Hartley (co-chair), Louise Delisle, Mary Manning (treasurer), Frank Herbert, Wallace (Gerry) Jacklyn, Stanley Jacklin, Jessika Hepburn (secretary)*. Membership to SEED is currently open to: those who support the objects of the Society; those whose name and address is written in the Register of Members by the secretary; those who pay an annual fee in an amount to be determined by the Society, and/or those who reside in the geographic area of Municipality of Shelburne; non-residents who support the objectives of the society.



SEED Directors Louise Delisle, centre, and Mary Manning, right, from the South End Environmental Injustice Society pictured with Vishal Bhardwaj, a commissioner with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission.

Selected Projects & Partnerships

The Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities & Community Health (ENRICH) Project



The mission of the ENRICH (Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities and Community Health) Project, is to use community-based participatory action research and publications, multi-disciplinary partnerships, student training, community engagement, mobilizing and capacity building, government

consultations, policy analysis and development, public education and workshops, media, art and other knowledge translation and mobilization approaches to support Mi'kmaw and African Nova Scotian communities in addressing and advocating on the socio-economic and health effects associated with environmental racism in their communities. The ENRICH Project formed the basis to the creation of the provincial bill An Act to Redress Environmental Racism (Bill 31) in April 2015 and the federal bill a National Strategy to Redress Environmental Racism (Bill C230) in February 2020. The ENRICH Project also formed the basis to Dr. Waldron's first book *There's Something in the Water: Environmental Racism in Indigenous and Black Communities*, which was published in 2018 by Fernwood Publishing. The book received the 2020 Society for Socialist Studies Errol Sharpe Book Prize and the 2019 Atlantic Book Award for Scholarly Writing. The Netflix documentary *There's Something in the Water* is based on Dr. Waldron's book and was co-produced by Waldron, actor Elliot Page, Ian Daniel, and Julia Sanderson, and co-directed by Page and Daniel. <https://www.enrichproject.org/>

Rural Water Watch Association

South Shelburne is the first community to work with Rural Water Watch in a water quality sampling assessment. Throughout the fall of 2018, Rural Water Watch volunteers collected water samples from 24 homes in the community. Many homes in the community tested positively for coliform bacteria, including e. coli. After a second round of tests to confirm the presence of these bacteria, homeowners were advised to chlorinate their wells. After the sampling was finished, members of Rural Water Watch's Board of Directors gave a presentation to the South Shelburne community explaining the general water quality results in the community. Rural Water Watch continues to work with the South Shelburne community to improve their water quality. ruralwaterwatch.org/projecto-1



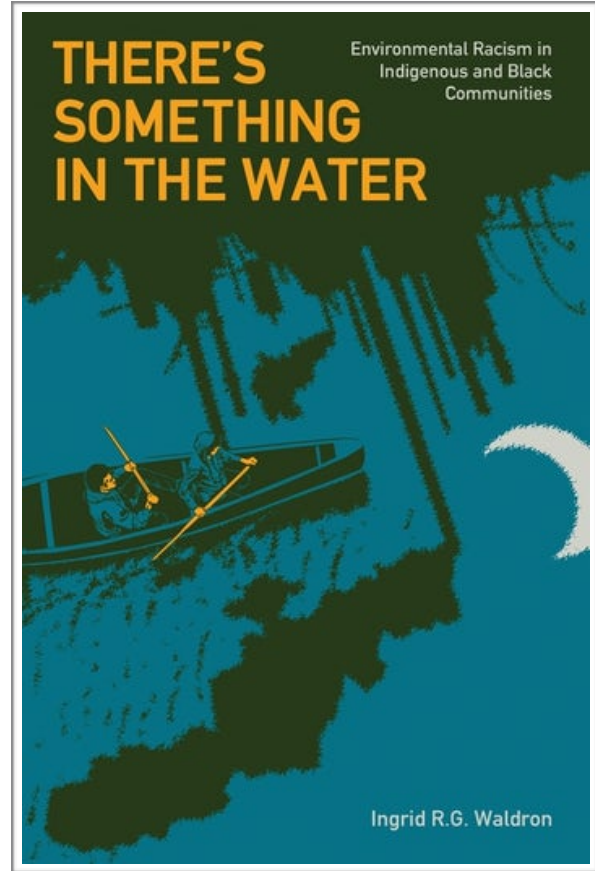
EcoJustice & East Coast Environmental Law

SEED continues to work on the vision to *study & identify the experience and the lack of good health in the Black community living in areas close to the Town Dumps* through partnership with advocates such as EcoJustice an environmental law charity and East Coast Environmental Law Association environmental rights working groups https://www.ecelaw.ca/images/PDFs/ER_event/Shelburne_final.pdf

Selected Press & Publication



"There's Something In The Water"
2019 Documentary



"There's Something In The Water:
Environmental Racism in Indigenous
and Black Communities", Ingrid R.G
Waldron, published April 2018,
Fernwood Publishing

Recent Press Highlights:

<https://signalhfx.ca/shelburne-activist-tackles-environmental-racism-with-new-video/>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/shelburne-water-supply-ellen-page-1.5445125>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/shelburne-water-quality-ellen-page-1.5354478>

<https://www.halifaxexaminer.ca/environment/ellen-page-the-more-we-filmed-the-more-incredible-women-we-met/>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/ellen-page-made-a-horrifying-discovery--and-it-sparked-a-film-about-environmental-racism/2020/03/25/a72b3940-6e95-11ea-aa80-c2470c6b2034_story.html

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/article-ellen-page-confronts-environmental-injustice-in-nova-scotia-with/>