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Bonshaw trail naming honours Mi'kmaq heritage

Bonshaw, Prince Edward Island, November 21, 2016 – The traditions and history of Prince Edward Island's First Nations will be recognized with the naming of the main trail at the newly-expanded Bonshaw Provincial Park.

Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy Minister Paula Biggar joined Chief Brian Francis of Abegweit First Nation and Chief Matilda Ramjattan of Lennox Island First Nation to officially designate the park's main trail as Ji'ka'we'katik Trail – after the traditional Mi'kmaq name for the West River. Ji'ka'we'katik means “the place where bass are plentiful” in Mi'kmaq.

“The expanded park and trail system at Bonshaw will allow Islanders to spend time experiencing and enjoying our province's natural heritage. It is fitting to acknowledge the Mi'kmaq people – the first Islanders – as a part of this park,” Minister Biggar said.

“Ji'ka'we'katik Trail will be the main connection to a four-season trail system covering 25 kilometres within this expanded park.”

Bonshaw Park has been **expanded greatly** in recent years and consists of **more than 400 acres of riverfront land**.

The Bonshaw Hills **Public** Lands Committee has been instrumental in the development of the park and construction of many kilometres of new trails. An accessible, natural play **playground** is being developed at the park, **with official opening of the playground and expanded park trail system anticipated in 2017**.

“We are delighted to have this main trail named to honour the Mi'kmaq heritage of the island”, said Chief Brian Francis. “All of Prince Edward Island is traditional Mi'kmaq territory and the Indigenous Mi'kmaq have been here for over 10,000 years. It is an appropriate gesture that this trail system incorporates a name from our language”.

“The name given to this trail is an important reflection of the culture of our people”, said Chief Matilda Ramjattan. “It is vital that all Islanders be exposed to our traditions and language, and this trail represents a step in that direction”.

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