

**REGION OF QUEENS MUNICIPALITY
REGULAR COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2014
9:00 A.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Christopher Clarke, Chair
Councillor Darlene Norman
Councillor Bruce Inglis
Councillor Brian Fralic
Councillor Susan MacLeod
Councillor Raymond Fiske
Councillor Jack Fancy
Councillor Peter Waterman
Kathleen Rafuse, Chief Administrative Officer
Jennifer Keating-Hubley, Director of Finance
Bobbi Jo Goulden, Recording / Management Secretary

1.0 CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

2.0 CHANGES / APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Councillor Inglis and seconded by Councillor Fiske that the Agenda be approved with the following deletions, addition, and changes:

Delete:

Item 8.2	Labour Market Profile
Item 17.1	Acquisition of Municipal Property

Add:

Item 16.2	FCM Green Municipal Fund - News Release
Item 17.1	Contract Negotiations

Renumber:

Item 8.3	changed to Item 8.2
Item 8.4	changed to Item 8.3

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 PRESENTATION(S):

3.1 RCMP Monthly Report

Corporal Victor Whalen was welcomed the meeting where he informed Council that the new District Commander, S/Sgt. Paul MacDougall hopes to be relocating to the area soon.

Cpl. Whalen then reviewed the RCMP Report for the month of December, 2013 and noted that the calls for services had increased slightly from the previous report, but are down from the same time period last year. He noted that Break and Enters are down from last year's high, but compared to the five year average, the numbers are up considerably.

Cpl. Victor Whalen advised that they are concerned about the high numbers of thefts from motor vehicles and are still trying to inform the public about keeping their vehicles locked to deter those activities. He noted that reports of property damage /mischief are at a four-year low.

Cpl. Whalen advised that Cst. Andrew Windsor is looking into the Mobile Speed Sign Display and will be applying to the Insurance Bureau of Canada to see if there is funding available to purchase the \$15,000 sign.

A discussion was held on surveillance cameras and how private property owners may want to invest in one as they may deter criminals from committing crimes on their property. Cpl. Whalen noted that they can be purchased at reasonable price.

Corporal Victor Whalen was thanked for his presentation and he left the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

3.2 2014 M&M Canadian Jr. Curling Championships Host Committee

This presentation will be held later in the meeting.

3.3 Department of Environment / Protected Areas

This presentation will be held later in the meeting.

4.0 **TABLING OF PETITIONS:**

There were no petitions to come before this meeting.

5.0 **PUBLIC QUESTION / COMMENT SESSION:**

Leon Robertson
45 College Street
Liverpool

Mr. Robertson commented on the M&M Jr. curling event that has just wrapped up and congratulated the curling Host Committee, the Region of Queens, and the volunteers who assisted with making the event a success.

Mr. Robertson stated that after reviewing the current conditions of the former Gorham School building. He agrees with taking the building down to make the property more attractive for future development.

Mr. Robertson noted that he reviewed the Financial Statement and asked about the change in the Forestry Tax amount.

Jennifer Keating-Hubley, Director of Finance, advised that the decrease of the Commercial Forestry Tax was due to the province taking over ownership of the former Bowater lands and was re-categorized under grants in lieu.

David Dagley
9 Meadow Pond Lane
Liverpool

Mr. Dagley congratulated everyone's efforts in assisting with hosting the successful curling event and then provided Council an update on the status of the Mersey Centre for Biodiversity. He noted that the Queens County Fish and Game Association are still trying to take over the facility, however; have been unsuccessful to date, due to the lack of cooperation from Department of Fisheries and Oceans. He noted that they once had the cooperation of Nova Scotia Power, the owners of the property, but that has since changed. Mr. Dagley advised that Tony Rogers, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters, has been speaking with Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, to make her aware of the situation and to seek her support, but does not currently know where they stand.

Mr. Dagley also wanted to comment on the advertisement for Lunenburg County that was in the Herald Magazine, which was inserted in the January 25, 2014, edition of the Chronicle Herald, and the quote from Dr. Peter Vaughan, South Shore Health Authority.

Mr. Dagley noted that Dr. Vaughan did not mention the Queens General Hospital expansion project, which concerns him because he feels that the Region of Queens has made many improvements in primary health care offerings and stressed that we need to maintain awareness of the level of service offered at Queens General for the residents of the Region of Queens.

Mayor Clarke noted that he was surprised as well that the Queens General Hospital was not mentioned as he is aware that this project is one of Dr. Vaughan's main objectives at this time. He surmised that perhaps since this was a paid ad for Bridgewater, that this could be the reason why he couldn't comment on what's happening at our hospital, but noted that he will contact Dr. Vaughan to get more information.

David Huskins
5718 Highway # 3
Hunt's Point

Mr. Huskins congratulated everyone who was involved with the curling event and noted that he hasn't heard a negative comment from anyone who attended the event.

Bill Cox
121 Bog Road
White Point

Mr. Cox thanked Council for their support with the New Year's Levee held at the Liverpool Legion and looks forward to co-hosting the event next year.

6.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

6.1 Regular Council Minutes – January 14, 2014

It was moved by Councillor Fiske and seconded by Councillor Norman:

THAT the minutes of the Council meeting held on January 14, 2014, be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 DANGEROUS OR UNSIGHTLY PREMISES:

There were no Dangerous or Unsightly Premises issues discussed at this meeting.

8.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

8.1 Economic Development Monthly Report

Jill Cruikshank, Director of Economic Development, reviewed the Economic Development report which was included with the Council agenda package.

Some topics discussed were:

- 2014 M&M Junior Curling Championships - very successful and are currently reviewing the visitor information from the surveys that were completed. Would like to have any comments passed along to her for future information.
- Queens Attraction Strategy - action team meetings took place in December and January.
- Saltscapes Expo – group of Council and Staff discussed the revitalization of the display booth which can be used for future events and trade shows.
- Ferry Readiness – Meetings are being planned with all partners and stakeholders to prepare for the return of ferry service.

8.2 Climate Data Study - Phase 2 - Pre-Budget Approval

It was moved by Councillor Fralic and seconded by Councillor Inglis:

THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality supports the proposed three-year Climate Data Study Project Phase 2 by providing pre-budget approval for a maximum of \$7,500.00 over three years (\$3,000 in 2014/15 & 2015/16 plus \$1,500 in 2016/17) from the Community Economic Diversification budget.

Councillor Norman advised that she supports this motion because the data collected in this study will be beneficial for agriculture in the Region.

Councillor Fralic requested that Krista Harding be invited back to a future Council meeting to provide a current update on the project.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.3 Consumer and Trade Show - Revitalized Booth Presence 2014

It was moved by Councillor Fralic and seconded by Councillor Fiske:

THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality approves the design and purchase of new display equipment and materials for the Region's presence at consumer and trade shows at the cost of \$9710 and that this be funded from the Community Economic Diversification budget.

Councillor Fralic noted that this is a good investment as we need to raise the bar with the display as the current display is old and getting worn.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 PRESENTATION(S):

3.2 2014 M&M Canadian Jr. Curling Championships Host Committee

Mayor Christopher Clarke welcomed members of the Host Committee to the meeting where he proceeded to explain that he wanted to bring some people together formally to thank them for their efforts in making this event a huge success.

Mayor Clarke noted that many of the residents of Queens played a role in making this event a success and contributed many hours to it. He noted that there were volunteers aged 9 to Beulah Smith who is 94. He stated it was nice to see the community come together to make those visiting the area feel welcomed. He noted that he received many comments from those visitors expressing how pleased they were with the hospitality from everyone in the area, from businesses staying open later to accommodate guests to the Region of Queens Work's Department's efforts in snow clearing of streets and sidewalks following the snow storm.

Mayor Clarke commented that it was nice to see the coverage on TSN and informed that he spoke to the organizers from the Canadian Curling Association who commented on how pleased they were with the Queens Place Emera Centre and the staff who maintain it. He also spoke to a gentleman who attended the opening ceremony who commented that he attended two Briers and five Jr. Curling Tournaments and this opening ceremony was the best that he has seen.

Mayor Christopher Clarke presented the following people with appreciation gifts: Greg Thorburne, Donna Hatt, Bob Wilkinson, Melissa Robertson, Heather Kelly, Roslyn Rowter, Steve Burns, and Adam Grant.

The meeting recessed at 10:00 a.m. and reconvened at 10:15 a.m.

3.3 Department of Environment / Protected Areas

Helen Smith, Consultation and Outreach Coordinator Nova Scotia Environment, Protected Areas and Ecosystems Branch, Sally Steele, Protected Areas Coordinator, Nova Scotia Environment, and Sandra Johnston, Geologist, Natural Resources, were welcomed to the meeting.

Helen Smith provided a Power Point presentation on the Parks and Protected Areas, A Plan for Nova Scotia, which included the following topics:

- Two Important Government Commitments:
 - 1) Update and Strengthen Nova Scotia's Park System
 - 2) Increase Nova Scotia's protected landmass to at least 12% by 2015
- Types of Protection
- Where are we now
- The Plan – Lands to be designated
- Lands in the Plan
- Map showing Parks and Protected areas in Nova Scotia
- Land Protection by Province
- Planning Approach
- Proposed Plan Consultation 2013
- Consultation Approach & Responses
- The Plan – Goals and Actions
- Next Steps
- Carters Beach Nature Reserve

Helen Smith spoke of their websites and advised people to visit them to review interactive maps, comments from the public regarding the plan, and more information on the Parks and Protected Areas Plan:

- <http://novascotia.ca/nse/protectedareas/map.asp>
- <http://novascotia.ca/parksandprotectedareas/>

Helen Smith advised that currently 15.3% of all Crown Land in the province is protected and the goal is to have 26.6% by 2015.

Mayor Clarke spoke of his concerns regarding the amount of protected lands located in the Region of Queens currently, compared to other areas in the province. Some counties do not seem to have as much protected land as we have here in Queens and noted that he hopes that there won't be a need for some counties to give up developable land in order to meet the provinces goal, due the amount of Crown land that the province took over from the closure of Bowater.

Helen Smith advised that 90% of the Bowater land is still available for commercial use and that HRM currently has the largest amount of protected areas.

Mayor Clarke asked to have Queens County numbers provided to him. He is concerned that in Western Nova Scotia, communities are struggling in rural areas to generate jobs. He doesn't want to lose productive land that can be used to create jobs. We need enough land to be productive as basis for viable industry in the future.

Sandra Johnston advised that the Department of Natural Resources are working on a plan to be released in the spring that will show what crown land areas will be available for forestry production. She noted that they are aware of his concerns.

Sally Steele provided information on Carters Beach Nature Reserve and provided a copy of the latest newsletter that will be distributed to residents in the area giving them the latest progress on the project. She also advised that there will be another public information session in Port Mouton held in the spring.

Councillor Norman advised that residents are concerned with the designation of Carters Beach to a Nature Reserve.

Mayor Clarke wanted to pass along that he appreciates the efforts being undertaken at Carters Beach and thanked the group for their presentation. They completed their presentation at 11:00 am. A copy of the presentation and the Carters Beach newsletter are attached at the end of the minutes.

9.0 CORPORATE SERVICES:

There were no items to discuss from this department; however, Councillor Inglis noted that the Fire Services Review Audit is almost finished and the Auditors will be bringing their findings to Council on February 11, 2014.

10.0 ENGINEERING AND WORKS:

There were no matters to be discussed at this meeting from the Engineering and Works Department.

11.0 FINANCE:

At this time the Chair was turned over to Deputy Mayor Darlene Norman so Mayor Clarke could report as Chair of the Finance Committee.

11.1 Financial Statements for Quarter Ending December 31, 2013

Mayor Clarke advised that there are no outstanding issues at this time.

Jennifer Keating-Hubley, Director of Finance, advised that to date our snow clearing expenditures are slightly higher than the same time last year but not significantly overspent considering the percentage of the season remaining.

Councillor Norman asked if the revenue from the curling event was in this statement.

Jennifer Keating-Hubley advised that the finances for the curling event will be included in the next period, as the event was held in January.

The Chair was returned to Mayor Clarke.

12.0 RECREATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES:

12.1 Request for Funding - Liverpool Lions Club

It was moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Fralic:

THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality approve sponsorship of \$250.00 towards the 50th Anniversary of Service to Queens County event of the Liverpool Lions Club, to be funded from the General Government Contingency budget line.

Norm Amirault, Director of Recreation and Community Facilities, provided information on the upcoming event and noted that it did not meet the criteria for funding, but advised that there was an exception made for this request due the long standing service the Lions Club have provided to the community and noted that other groups will not be eligible for this type of funding as it was a one-time exception.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

13.0 PLANNING:

13.1 Rezoning of Portion of 180 White Point Road, Liverpool

It was moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Fralic:

THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality adopt a bylaw respecting the rezoning of a portion of PID# 70019948, and located at 180 White Point Road in Liverpool, from General Residential (R2) to Light Industrial (M1).

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

14.0 QUEENS PLACE EMERA CENTRE:

14.1 Queens Place Emera Centre Monthly Report

Steve Burns, General Manager, briefly reviewed the regular monthly report that was included in the Council agenda package and spoke on the following topics:

- Track Usage
- Jack Frost Hockey tournament
- Zumbini - New program being offered - Zumba spin- off for children aged 0 – 3.
- Track Trial- began in December for runners and walkers on track at same time is going well.
- Upcoming Charlie Pride Concert – May 31st

Steve Burns provided comments on his experiences with the 2014 M&M Jr. Curling Championships and he thanked everyone involved for their efforts.

15.0 REPORTS:

The following reports were included in the agenda package for information purposes:

- 15.1 Bylaw Enforcement Officer's Report
- 15.2 Building Inspector's Report

16.0 OTHER:

16.1 Gorham School

It was moved by Councillor Waterman and seconded by Councillor Fiske:

THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality authorize the demolition of the Gorham School located at 20 Payzant Street, Liverpool, and that this demolition be undertaken by the Region of Queens Municipality's Engineering and Works Department.

Kathleen Rafuse explained that the demolition of the building will be completed in this fiscal year. The removal of the foundation and other upgrades to the property will be budgeted in 2014/2015. The building is in poor condition and the property will be more appealing for development if the building is taken down.

Councillor Inglis noted that he agreed to the motion as the Region has owned this property since 2011 and there has not been much interest with anyone wanting to purchase the building. He also noted that the building is being vandalized as well.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

16.2 FCM Green Municipal Fund - News Release

Kathleen Rafuse noted that this funding was the funding as originally announced in 2011.

17.0 **IN-CAMERA ITEMS:**

It was moved by Councillor Norman and seconded by Councillor Fancy that the proceedings go "In-Camera" at 11:40 a.m. to discuss the following:

17.1 Contract Negotiations

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

It was moved by Councillor Inglis and seconded by Councillor Norman that the proceedings come out of "In-Camera" at 12:09 p.m.

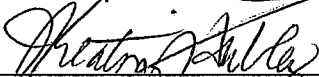
MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

18.0 **ADJOURNMENT:**


There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.



Mayor Christopher Clarke, Chair

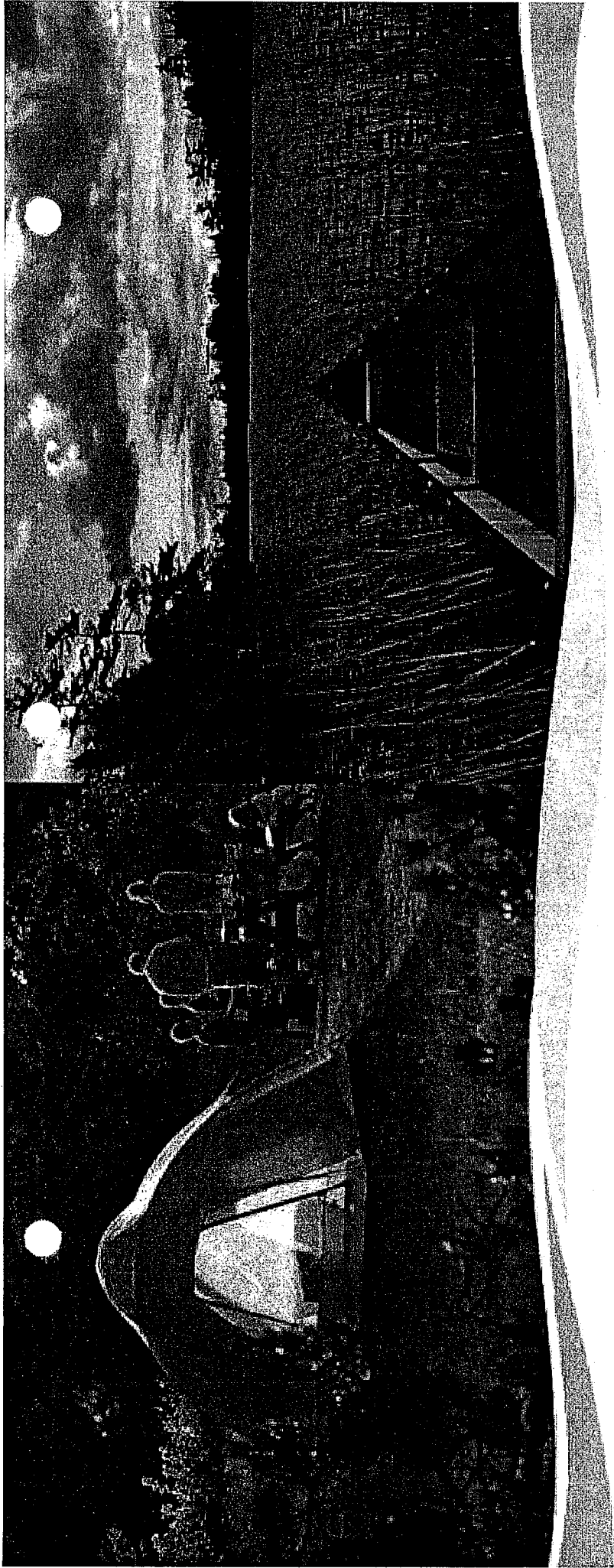


Jennifer Keating Hubley, Director of Finance



Bobbi Jo Goulden, Recording / Management Secretary

Date approved: February 11, 2014

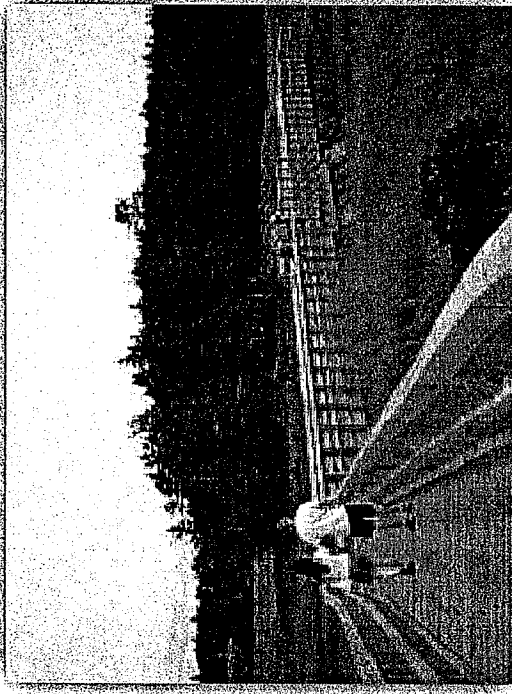


Our Parks and Protected Areas

A Plan for Nova Scotia

Two important government commitments

1. Update and strengthen Nova Scotia's park system



2. Increase Nova Scotia's legally protected landmass to at least 12 per cent by 2015.



Types of Protection

- Wilderness areas
 - protect nature and support wilderness recreation, hunting, sport fishing, trapping, and other uses.
- Nature reserves
 - offer the highest level of protection for unique or rare species or features; they are used mainly for education and research.
- Provincial parks and reserves
 - protect a wide range of heritage values and opportunities for outdoor recreation, nature-based education, and tourism.



Where we are now

12 PERCENT LANDS

Type of Land	Area (ha)	Portion of NS Land Base (%)
Administered by Government of Nova Scotia		
Wilderness Area	354,540	6.41%
Nature Reserve	5,000	0.09%
Provincial Park	6,380	0.12%
Other contributing properties		
National Park	137,740	2.49%
National Wildlife Area	2,400	0.04%
Land trust lands	7,260	0.13%
Protected by conservation easements	2,130	0.04%
Adjustment: nature reserves also in wilderness/land trust	-470	-0.01%
TOTAL (2012)	514,980	9.32%

The plan – lands to be designated

Intended for designation by 2015	206,020	3.73%
TOTAL (existing and intended by 2015)	721,000	13.04%
Intended for designation after 2015	10,610	0.19%
Potential for designation if certain conditions are met	36,800	0.67%
Potential TOTAL	768,410	13.90%

Lands in the plan

1. Lands to be protected by 2015
2. Lands with delayed protection
3. Lands for potential protection

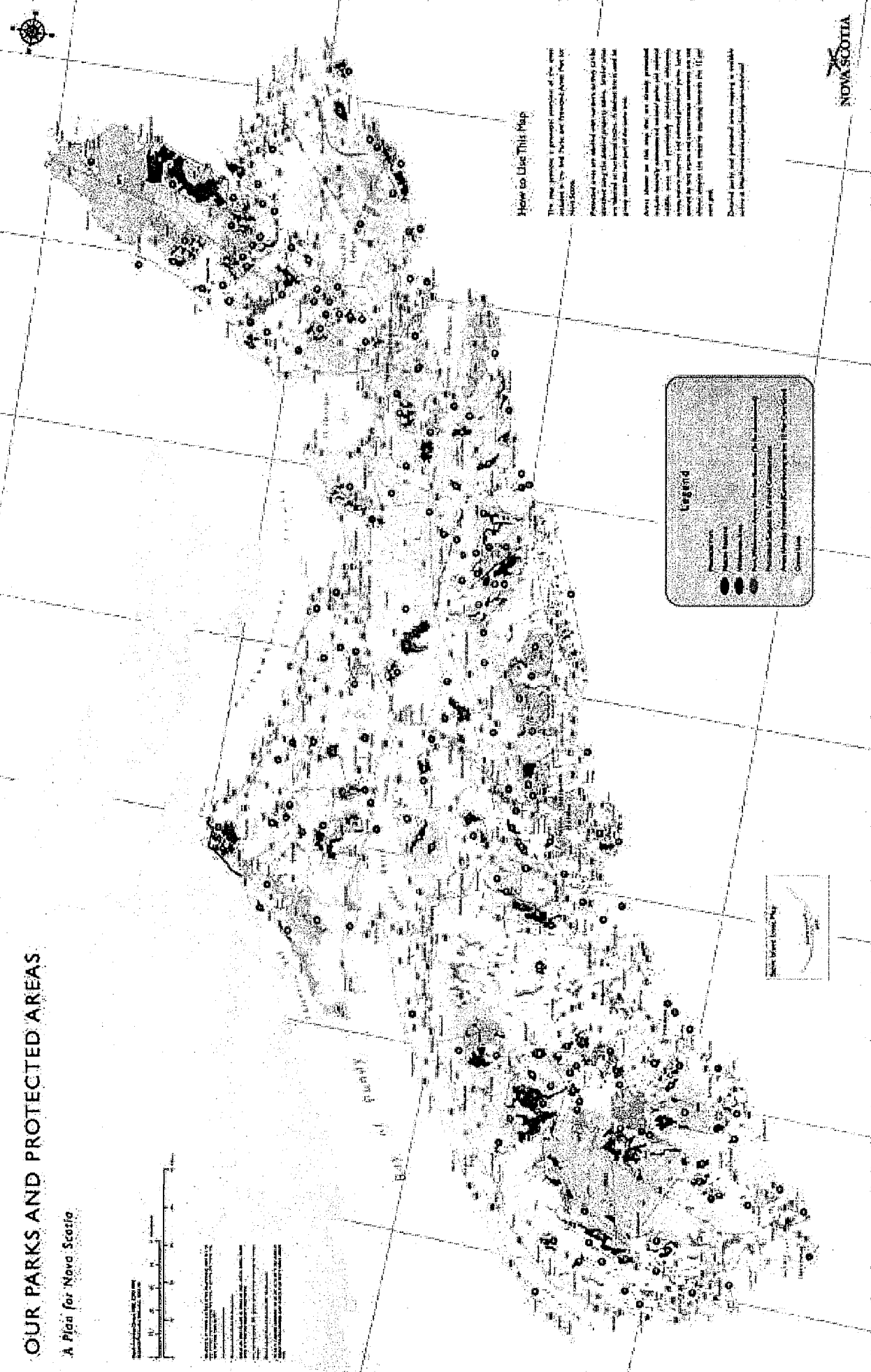


OUR PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

A Plan for Nova Scotia



Map prepared by the Department of Environment and Planning, Nova Scotia, in cooperation with the Department of Parks and Recreation, Nova Scotia.



How to Use This Map

The parks and protected areas shown on this map are those listed in the Parks and Protected Areas Plan for Nova Scotia.

Protected areas are indicated on the map by various symbols. The symbols are: a solid black circle for Provincial Parks, a circle with a dot for National Parks, and a circle with a horizontal line through it for other protected areas.

Areas shown on this map that are already protected include heavily forested areas, water bodies, and other areas of natural interest. These areas are shown on the map by a stippled pattern.

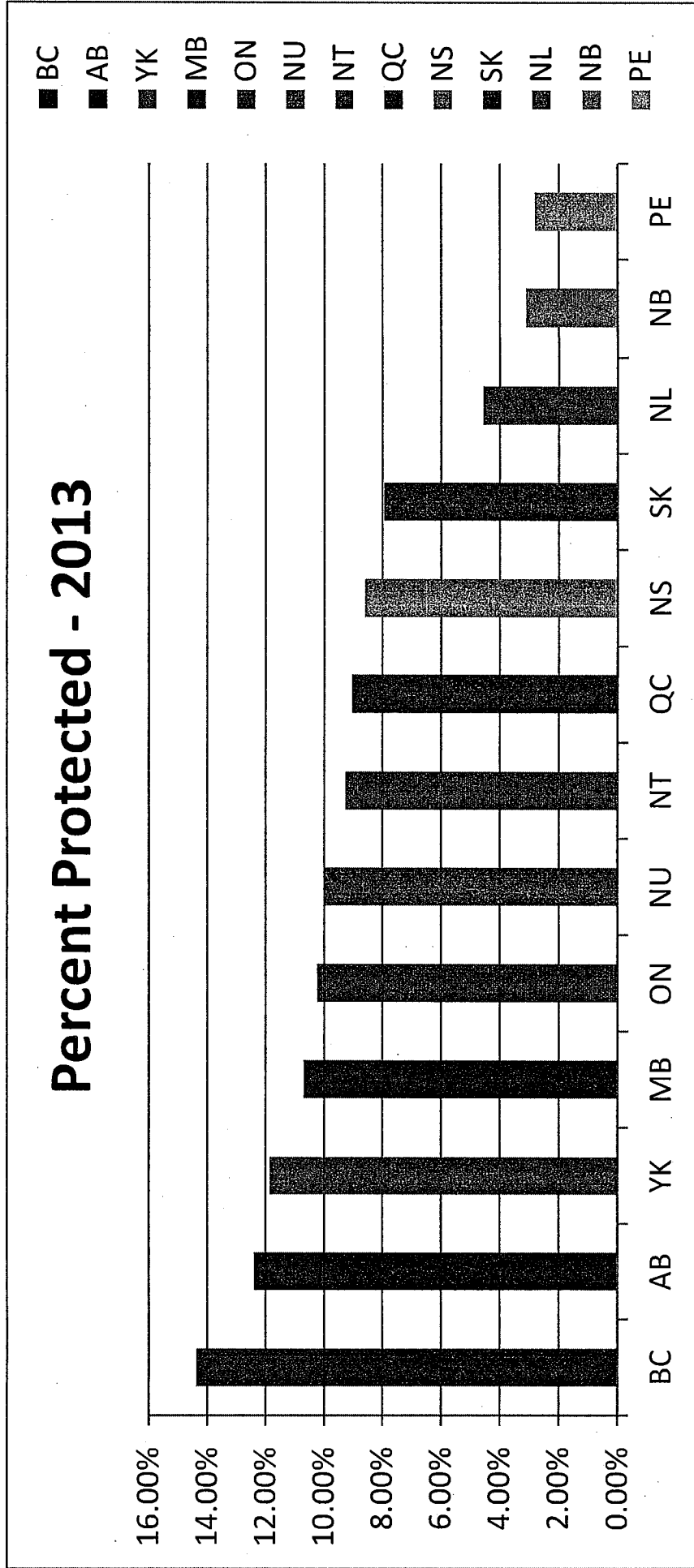
Detailed maps of protected areas are available from the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Legend

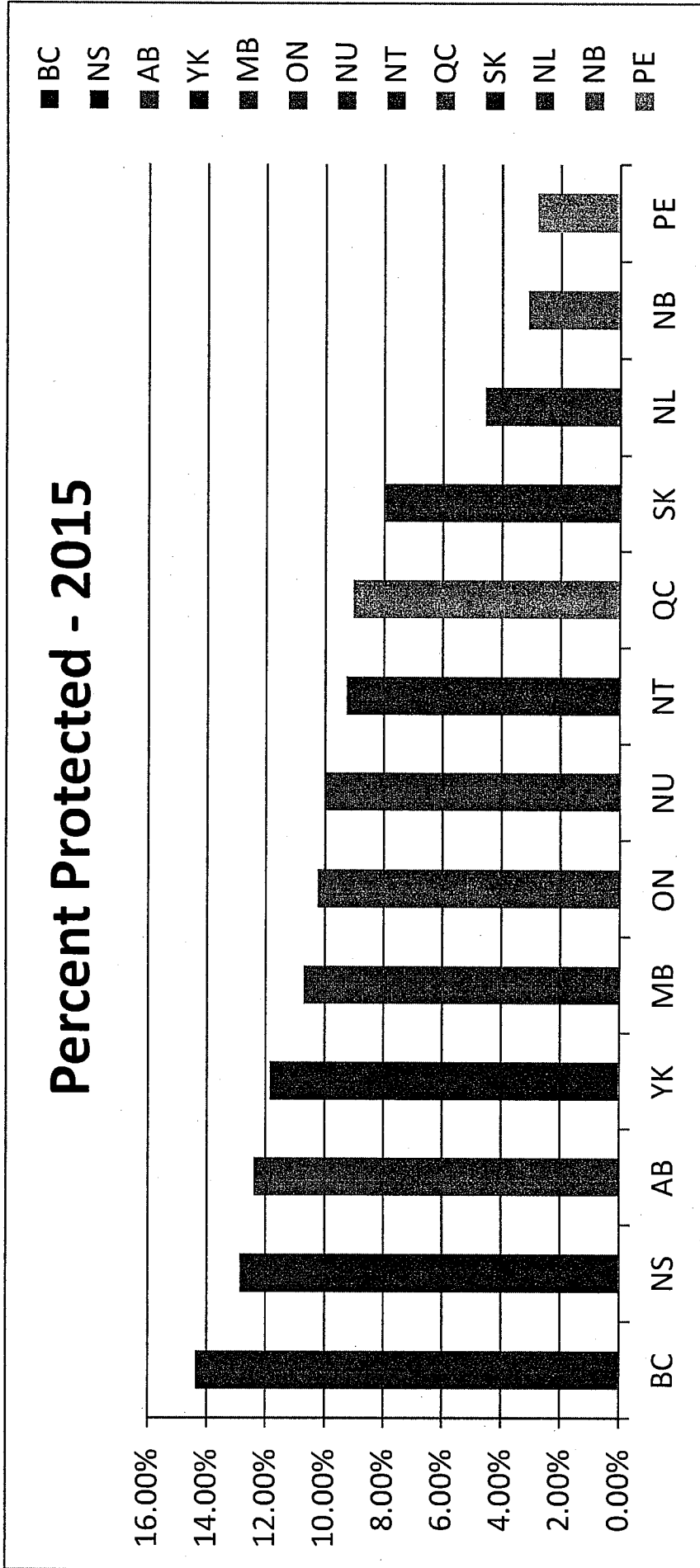
- Provincial Parks
- National Parks
- Other Protected Areas
- ▬ Parks and Protected Areas Plan for Nova Scotia
- ▬ Parks and Protected Areas Plan for Nova Scotia
- ▬ Parks and Protected Areas Plan for Nova Scotia



Land protection by province



Land protection by province



Planning approach

- Colin Stewart Forest Forum
- EGSPA
- Province-wide scientific analysis
- Natural Resources Strategy & Provincial Parks Review
- 12% lands review
- Proposed Parks and Protected Areas Plan

Proposed Plan Consultation (2013)

- We asked these key questions
 - Have the right areas been selected to meet our parks and protected areas goals?
 - Is the right type of protection being proposed for each area?
 - Should boundaries be changed to improve protection, avoid conflict, or accommodate other uses?
 - Have the right connecting vehicle routes been proposed?
 - Do the proposed goals and actions ensure the long-term success of our parks and protected areas?

Consultation approach

- 16 public open houses
- Write and stakeholder meetings
- Interactive web site



RESIDENTS VISITORS BUSINESS GOVERNMENT NEWS

Parks and Protected Areas

Photo Story

Why are areas of some Nova Scotia towns with the impressive parks of our new website. Please be patient as we improve performance.

On Twitter

Gracie Curran thanks for sharing! People can also follow this account to get the latest news on our projects and open house session. Mar 1, 2013

Gracie Curran Thanks for the @GracieCurran photo! We worked hard to develop it and think it is pretty fun too! Mar 1, 2013

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On Facebook

Visit the Nova Scotia Protected Areas Facebook page.

Photo Story

Parks and Protected Areas

Nova Scotia is one of the most beautiful places on earth. From the towering cliffs of the Margaree River to the sand dunes of Sand Hill Beach, Nova Scotia's parks and protected areas support recreation, tourism, research, and education.

They also preserve nature, and offer us a place to escape, be adventurous, and just have fun. And they make a big impact on local economies, providing jobs and attracting water, Robert is nearby communities.

Your input on Our Parks and Protected Areas: A Proposed Plan for Nova Scotia will ensure that these areas continue to thrive. The plan focuses on two important government commitments:

1. Update Nova Scotia's park system to secure and strengthen its long-term success.
2. Increase Nova Scotia's legally protected lands to at least 12 per cent by 2015.

Our Parks and Protected Areas project is still ongoing, and we're seeking a number of areas, including the following:

Add

- 4 new provincial parks (540 ha)
- 44 new wilderness areas (176,000 ha)
- 12 new nature reserves (31,600 ha)

Expand

- 12 provincial parks (2040 ha)
- 32 wilderness areas (12,070 ha)
- 11 nature reserves (4,000 ha)

Transfer

- 16 to create a more effective parks and protected areas system. The plan proposes to transfer 2500 hectares of provincial lands to protected areas and 5000 hectares of parks to Crown land (not available for public use).

With these changes, the proposed parks and protected areas system would include:

- 117 provincial parks
- 84 wilderness areas
- 142 nature reserves

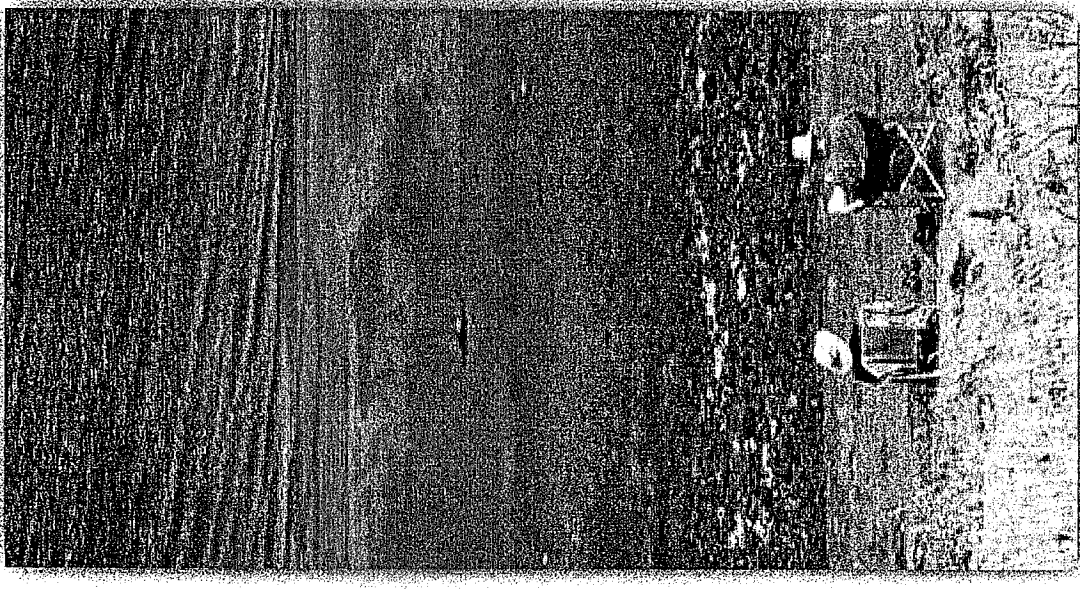


Consultation responses

- Over 13,000 viewed the interactive map
- Received over 2,000 public comments
- Majority online
- Almost 1,600 comments were site specific
- Almost 500 comments were general in nature
- Generally positive
- Diverse values

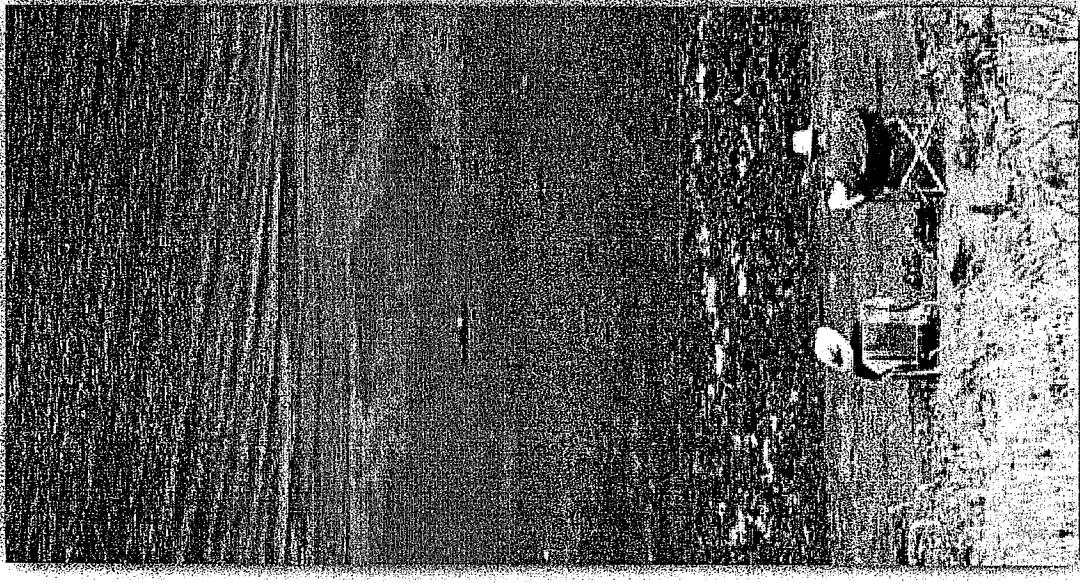
The Plan – Goals & Actions

- Ensure protection of Nova Scotia's natural and cultural
- Provide strategic direction to guide planning, management, and operations.
- Challenge Nova Scotians to work together to create a sustainable parks and protected areas
- Collaborate with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.
- Deepen appreciation of Nova Scotia's natural and cultural heritage.



The Plan – Goals & Actions

- Provide nature-based recreation while protecting natural and cultural heritage.
- Market and promote parks and protected areas.
- Encourage organizational excellence.
- Address gaps in the parks and protected areas system.



Next steps

- Address outstanding considerations for individual sites - as outlined in the P&PA plan
- Finalize boundary surveys and legal documentation to advance lands for designation under appropriate protection legislation

Carters Beach Nature Reserve

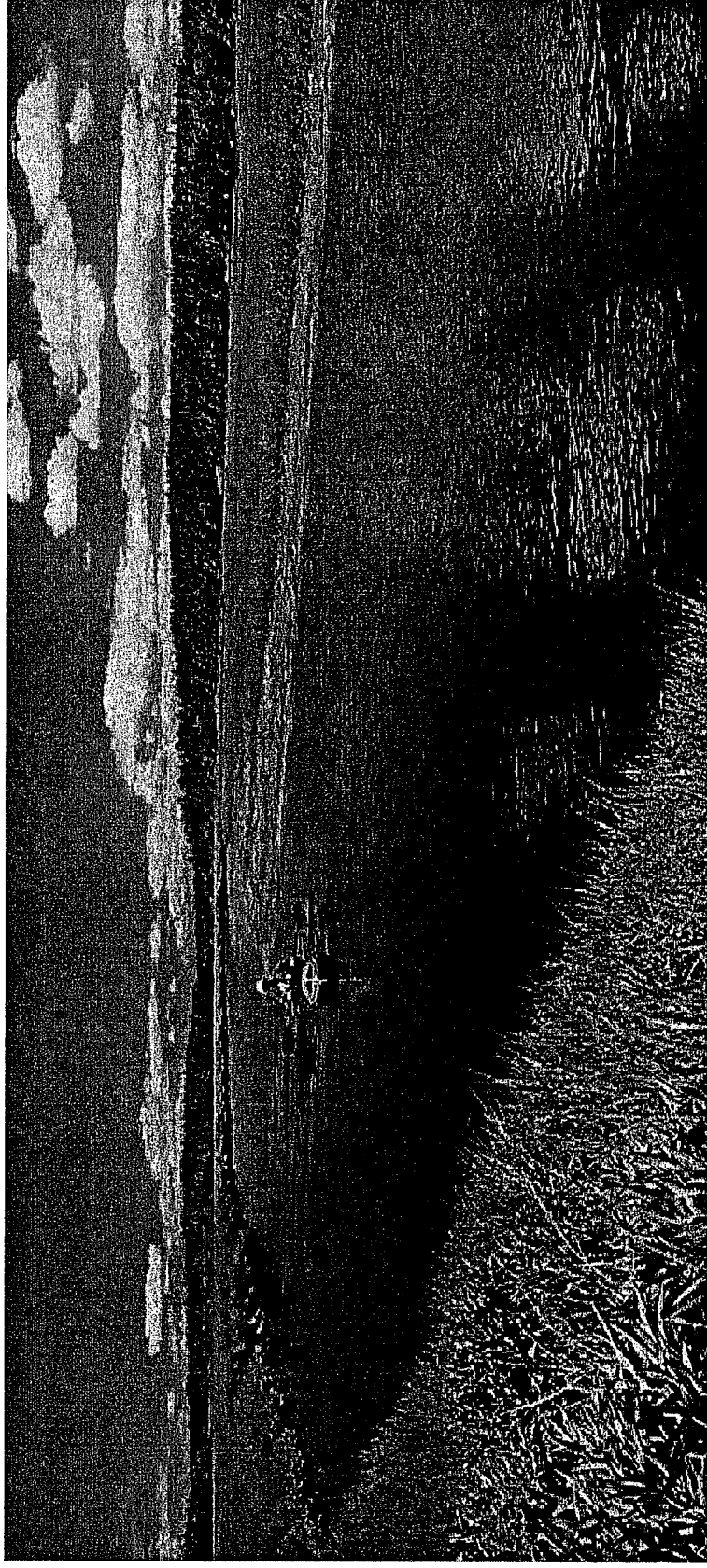
- Proposed as a Nature Reserve in February 2013
- Sensitive ecosystem
- Needs careful management
- A public information and planning session will take place this spring



Questions?

What to know more?

www.novascotia.ca/parksandprotectedareas



Parks & Protected Areas Plan

Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) would like to update you on the pending Carters Beach Nature Reserve. **We're also looking for your input and will hold an information and planning session this spring.** We will let you know when a final date is set and we hope you can attend.

The Parks and Protected Areas Plan was released in August 2013 and provides for the protection of approximately 13 per cent of our province's outstanding landmass by 2015.

The new parks and protected areas system will include:

- 205 provincial parks;
- 84 wilderness areas; and,
- 138 nature reserves, one of which will be Carters Beach Nature Reserve.

Provincial protected areas that count toward our legal protection goal include wilderness areas, nature reserves, and some provincial parks.

For more information on wilderness areas and nature reserves, visit:

http://www.novascotia.ca/nse/12percent/docs/12.percent.Quick.Facts_Wilderness-Areas.pdf

http://www.novascotia.ca/nse/12percent/docs/12.percent.Quick.Facts_Nature-Reserves.pdf

In 2013, the province hosted 18 open house sessions across Nova Scotia and received more than 2,000 suggestions and comments.

The final Parks and Protected Areas Plan reflects the extensive input received throughout the entire consultation process. For more information about what we heard, visit:

http://novascotia.ca/parksandprotectedareas/pdf/What-We-Heard_Our-Parks-and-Protected-Areas-2013.pdf

Carters Beach

In addition to the province-wide consultations, local residents invited NSE to a community meeting about Carters Beach in May, 2013.

During the community meeting, people told us how they used the beach, what they valued about it, and their future ideas for management of the area. We heard that many people support the nature reserve designation.

A large number of visitors come to the beach in the summer, and popular activities include swimming, picnicking, walking, boating, and other recreational activities. Many people value the area's natural beauty and want to see it kept for future generations.

Some concerns and suggestions from the community included:

- Improve walking trail to access Carters Beach and Spectacle Islands;
- Consider interpretive signs;
- Improve the parking lot;
- Reduce parking along the road; and,
- Address garbage disposal and human waste.

Sensitive site

The beach and islands are very sensitive and need to be carefully managed. We need to look after the dunes, as well as the ecological processes, and the plants and animals that keep the ecosystem together and working.



Beachgoers enjoy a sunny day at Carters Beach

Sensitive site with rich heritage

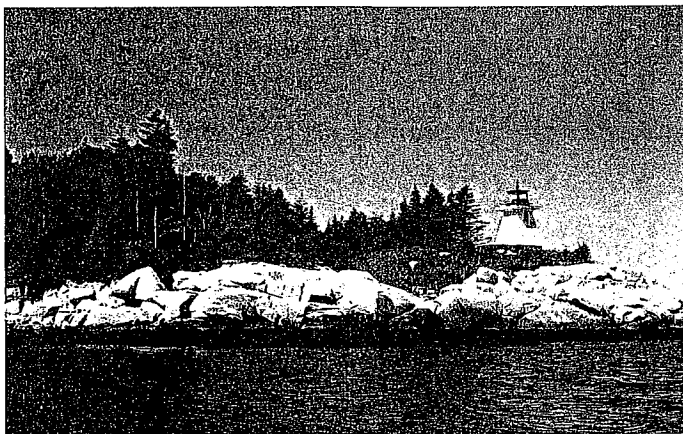
In addition to the natural erosion and deposition of sand, the dunes are also being eroded from people walking over them and Piping Plovers that once nested on the beach have not been observed for a number of years. Given the sensitivity of this site, Carters Beach is not planned to be a commercially developed tourist destination. Decisions around facilities will be linked to the goals for protection and education, while supporting some public access.

People may continue to visit the beach for day use, however, we want to ensure it is used in a way that doesn't erode the ecosystem, and is within the carrying capacity of the beach and islands. Carrying capacity refers to the maximum amount of human disturbance that the area can support without harmful effects. Monitoring of ecosystem health will be an important component of the future management of this site.

NSE Environment staff are also liaising with the Spectacle Light Society regarding stewardship of the Port Mouton Lighthouse on Spectacle Islands. We believe there is an exciting opportunity to combine efforts for maintaining and promoting the cultural heritage of the lighthouse with the protection of the area's important ecological values.

Over time, we would also like to gather more information about how and why the beach and islands are being used by visitors, and also learn more about the area's ecology. If you would like to read about the ecological values of the area, please check out the attached report.

The area also has a rich cultural heritage that includes Mi'kmaq, early French and then ensuing English settlement.



Port Mouton Lighthouse, Spectacle Islands

Additional Planning

Carters Beach is slated to become a Nature Reserve because of its unique ecosystems. This special place will require careful planning to ensure protection of its natural values, while continuing to support informal use by the local community that is consistent with the emphasis on protection.

As a first step, NSE will host a **meeting in Port Mouton this spring** to determine how to best work with the community to develop a comprehensive management plan.

Questions or comments

After this meeting, NSE staff will continue to work with the community, and groups like the Spectacle Light Society, to address suggestions for heritage appreciation and low impact recreational use.

More information and the interactive map can be accessed through the Parks and Protected Areas website at:

<http://novascotia.ca/parksandprotectedareas/>.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact: Sally Steele, Protected Areas Coordinator – Western Region

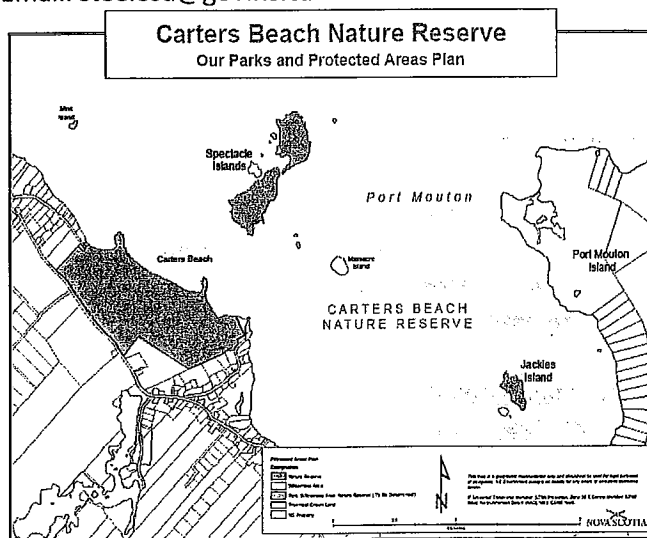
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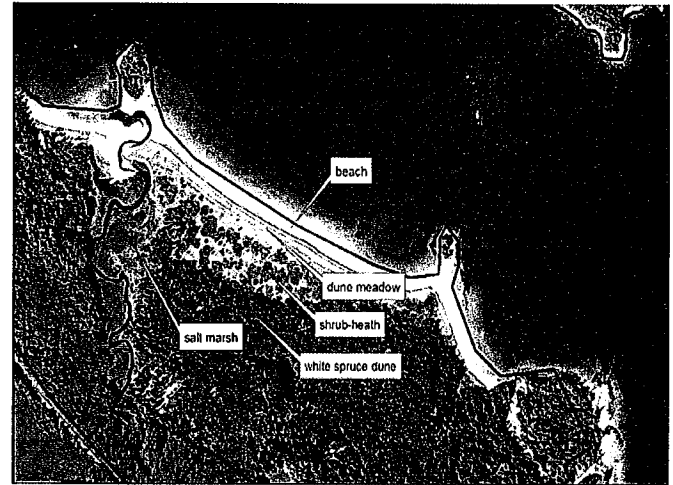


Beach Ecology

Carters Beach is more than just a beach: It's a beach-dune-salt marsh-stream-forest system - that works together and is heavily influenced by coastal waves, tides, and winds. Carters Beach is an outstanding example diverse ecosystems and habitats for several at-risk species in Atlantic Canada.

The beach itself is known as a *bay head beach*, and is made up of a series of pocket beaches connected to small islands, like Spectacle, Jackies, and Massacre. This type of beach only forms with enough sand and enough wind at the right orientation. Winds in this area of the province are greatest in the winter, with easterly and northeasterly winds having the greatest influence on Carters Beach. The beach was likely formed from offshore glacial deposits, however the southern end of the beach was formed from eroding old dunes.

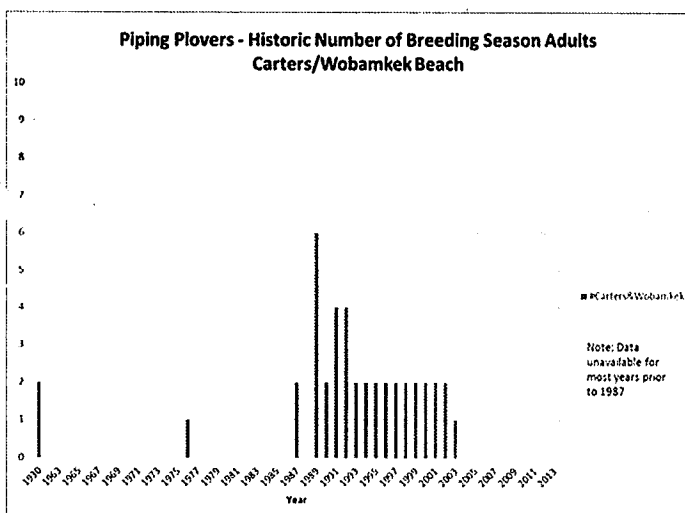
Carters Beach has been known to provide nesting habitat for the endangered piping plover. These small shorebirds nest on the dry beach between the dune vegetation and the high tide mark. Their nests are easily disturbed by human and animal traffic and they are declining in rapid numbers.



Ecosystem types — Carters Beach

On the backshore of the beach are small, salt tolerant plants like sea rocket and orach. These small plants capture and start to stabilize the sand and form embryo dunes. This backshore community is extremely sensitive to human trampling by foot or by motorized vehicle. Repeated trampling can result in the decline of this community and prevent new dune formation.

Immediately shoreward of the embryo dunes are the dune meadows, which are dominated by marram grass. Marram grass stabilizes the sand with its extensive rhizomes, which help begin the process of soil formation. The fore-dune at Carters Beach has the highest dunes on the Atlantic Coast.



Source: Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre



Piping Plover at Beach Meadow Beach. Photo by Ron Williams

Rare species

In the dune meadow are some very rare species. Scaly jellyskin, a lichen that is part fungi and part cyanobacteria, fixes nitrogen out of the air. Nitrogen is a nutrient in short supply in dune ecosystems. Two rare mosses have also been recently found at Carters Beach, one of which may be the only known location in Nova Scotia. Dune meadows are also sensitive to trampling and human traffic can cause blowouts. Blowouts occur where vegetation has been killed, leaving bare sand. Wind subsequently erodes the dune causing a breach in the ridge of dunes.

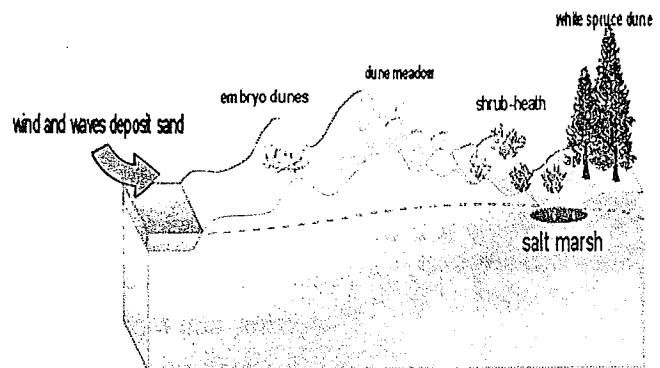
At the southern end of Carters Beach, the beach and dunes are prograding, which means they are growing and moving seaward. This is an unusual development for this type of system in this area. There are several ridges of dune meadow at Carters Beach but inland of the dune meadow is shrub-heath. Shrub-heath is made up mostly of bayberry, a sweet smelling low-shrub. Inland of the shrub-heath is a white spruce-dune forest. The oldest dunes are in the forest, then shrub-heath, then dune meadow, with the fore-dune being the youngest.

Dune systems are some of the few native grassland ecosystems in Nova Scotia to support the rare and provincially vulnerable, Short-eared Owl. Dune systems are also important habitats for a variety of more common species, such as the Northern Harrier, Red Fox, numerous small mammal species, and, during migration, Whimbrel and other shorebirds.

A small salt marsh is also present at Carters Beach. The salt marsh was formed from sediment deposits, partly from a brook that empties into Port Mouton Bay. The dunes also provide protection, allowing the sediment deposits and formation of the salt marsh. Otherwise, the sediment would be washed away by the brook, high tides, and waves. Salt marshes are one of the most productive ecosystems in Nova Scotia and provide important feeding areas for shorebirds and waterfowl,

Dynamic System

Carters Beach is a complex of different ecosystems, interacting to maintain a dynamic system. It provides an excellent example of dune development and contains a rich salt marsh ecosystem. Carters Beach provides habitat for rare and at-risk species and a diversity of ecosystems.



Cross section of a dune ecosystem

Spectacle Islands, Massacre, & Jackies Island



Spectacle Islands, Massacre & Jackies Island

The islands off Carters Beach - Spectacle, Massacre, and Jackies - have significant value as breeding habitat for colonial water birds such as cormorants, herons, gulls, eiders, and possibly other species. Different colonial species have different nesting requirements.

An array of life

Some, such as eiders, storm petrels, gulls, and terns, nest exclusively on the ground. Others, like cormorants, nest either on the ground or in trees, while herons nest primarily in trees. Ground-nesting species are essentially tied exclusively to islands for breeding because, as ground-nesters, they are extremely vulnerable to mammalian predators - predators that rarely spend much time on islands. Both tree- and ground-nesting species are also extremely sensitive to human disturbance of their colonies during the breeding season. Visitation of colonies during the spring and summer months can cause high rates of nest failure, or even complete colony abandonment.



Short-billed Dowitcher & Greater Yellowlegs. Photo by David MacKinnon

Some tree-nesting species, like cormorants and herons can, through their excrement, eventually kill the trees they nest in. Both Jackies and Massacre Islands exhibit this phenomenon, primarily due to cormorant nesting. Jackies Island is the southernmost known colony of Great Cormorants, while Massacre Island is currently occupied by Double-crested Cormorants and Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls.

Records indicate that both Massacre and Jackies Islands have supported several hundred breeding pairs of cormorants in the past, though these numbers appear to have declined in recent years, perhaps due to habitat change.

Once an island has been denuded of trees, tree-nesting species will search for other islands to nest on. Some ground-nesting species actually find denuded islands more suitable as breeding habitat than forested islands because the dense growth of herbaceous and shrubby vegetation provides good nesting cover. Other ground-nesters, such as Common Terns, which are often seen foraging in Port Mouton Bay, prefer rocky, cobble, or sandy areas largely free of vegetation. Over many decades, the forests on denuded islands often regenerate, and are once again able to attract tree-nesting species to breed. In the interim, however, such species need an ongoing supply of undisturbed, still-forested islands on which to breed.

It is important to limit disturbance on Spectacle, Massacre, and Jackies islands because they are either current breeding sites, or natural future breeding sites for colonial bird species. As noted above, such species are particularly vulnerable to human disturbance during the breeding season. Studies have shown that colonial species often require buffers of 400 meters or more from human activity to ensure successful breeding.

In addition, a rare orchid was found on Spectacle Islands this summer and staff are keen to do more research to discover what other species may call these spectacular islands home.



Piping Plover hatchlings — Wobamkek Beach. Photo by Ron Williams