

**State of Nova Scotia's Coast
Consultation for Strategy Development
Open House Summary
Wolfville - May 12th, 2010**

Introduction and Overview

The Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture held an Open House in Wolfville on May 12th, 2010 to present the State of the Coast Report and receive public comments. This was the 4th in a series of 8 events across the province. Local residents attended the session to review information, talk with department staff, receive printed materials and complete a brief survey to share their views on the State of the Coast and development of the Coastal Strategy.

The organizing structure for the open house and for the State of the Coast Report is identification and description of issues under six headings:

- Coastal Development
- Working Waterfronts
- Public Coastal Access
- Sea Level Rise and Storm Events
- Coastal Water Quality
- Sensitive Coastal Ecosystems and Habitats

A total of 26 surveys were received. This is a narrative summary of those responses. Also included is an overview of issue-specific comments left on butcher paper at each issue table, referred to as "table notes". A transcription of the written responses to survey questions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9 is provided, as well as the original table notes.

All of the survey forms were transcribed and quantitative results tabulated for each of the individual open houses. Results from the 8 open houses have been consolidated into a single report, however these and other specific session results are reported individually to support regional analysis and understanding. It should be noted however that all of those who attended a specific event were not necessarily local residents.

The main messages from the Wolfville Open House were:

- strong emphasis on good regulation, zoning and enforcement
- importance of clean water and health ecosystems
- affirmation of the precautionary approach
- importance of public information, education and engagement
- "one province, one coast"

Survey Results

1. What is your connection to the coast?

Nineteen respondents noted that they live on or near the coast, 13 mentioned recreation, and 8 indicated that their employment involved the coast in some way. Two individuals mentioned being members of volunteer groups, and 3 indicated that they were municipal councillors.

2. Prioritize six coastal issues and assess condition of the various aspects of the Nova Scotia Coast. (Note that a number of surveys were not completed correctly for this question.)

Following is the order of priority and average score on a scale of 1- 6 (1 = highest priority, 6 = lowest priority) for the six issues, and condition of the coast (with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent):

Issues in Order of Priority	Priority Score	Condition Score
1. Coastal Ecosystems & Habitats	2.2	2.4
2. Sea Level Rise & Storm Events	2.5	2.1
3. Coastal Water Quality	3.5	2.9
4. Coastal Development	3.8	2.3
5. Public Coastal Access	4.1	2.7
6. Working Waterfronts	5.0	2.9

3. Based on your understanding of these issues, what would your vision for the coast be in 2020?

Frequently cited elements of a vision included use of an approach that balanced environmental protection with use; the precautionary approach; regulation and zoning by-laws, strong and effective policies and enforcement; steps to maintain or increase water quality; limited or restricted coastal development; steps to limit the impact of sea level rise; and guaranteed public access.

Also mentioned was an integrated approach to management that includes precaution and protection, zoning and remediation of degraded resources and habitats. Public education and awareness were cited, as well as concerns about the impacts of aquaculture and drilling.

4. In your area, who needs to be involved in addressing these issues?

Everyone should have the opportunity for engagement, and full inclusion of citizens, the public, stakeholders and community were frequent comments. The view was strongly expressed that all three levels of government must be involved, with special mention made of the importance and key role played by municipalities. Also mentioned were NGOs, professors, planners, elected officials, agricultural stakeholders and individuals with diverse backgrounds, knowledge and experience.

5. What are some of the things that can be done to improve how we manage these issues?

It was noted that management of issues could be improved by having strong regulations and enforcing them; using incentives as well as disincentives to get behavioural change; and assisting property owners to do good coastal stewardship.

Acting quickly was noted to be important, as was increasing public awareness, education and engagement, and taking steps to develop a better informed public. The need for government departments to be able to work effectively in a crosscutting manner was affirmed.

6. Additional Comments?

Other comments included limiting large scale industry; not allowing foreign entities to purchase coastal lands; protecting special beaches (Carters was mentioned twice); restricting deep water drilling and aquaculture; increasing public awareness, education and engagement;

Enforcing regulations and using the precautionary approach were also mentioned, as well as giving the community the final say in coastal management decisions in their areas. It was also noted that credit should be given to land owners who were already doing this work. Several respondents noted that the open house forum and process was an effective way to get community and public input.

7. How did you become aware of the State of Nova Scotia's Coast Report?

This open house	7	Media	8
E-mail	17	Web site	10
Received a report	2	Received a letter	2
Other: word of mouth			

8. Which of the following versions of the State of Nova Scotia's Coast report are/will be most useful to you?

Summary 11; Fact Sheet 11 ; Full Technical Report 8.

9. How will use the State of Nova Scotia's Coast Report?

The report in all of its forms was considered to be valuable and important. Many respondents noted that the report would be used to increase their own knowledge, and help them make decisions. A number indicated that they planned to share the information (and the report itself) with friends and colleagues. It is seen as a good reference for future, and a support for research.

Table Note Summary

There was support for limiting residential and industrial development of coastal lands. Stable funds should be provided to municipalities for planning and management. Works should commence on dykes and

It would be helpful for the public to have a concise summary of rights and regulations relating to the coast. Priority for coastal lands should be on public ownership. Concern was expressed about the impact that ATV traffic can have on beaches and dunes, and on the general amount of garbage on the shores.

Special protection should be given to coastal ecosystems. Environmental standards should be high, and should be enforced. It was noted that poor logging practices (clear cutting) can have a negative impact on water quality, as can agriculture.

Survey on the State of Nova Scotia's Coast
Written answers to survey questions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9

Wolfville

3. Based on your understanding of these issues, what would your vision for the coast be in 2020?

- I think we owe it to ourselves and to future generations to keep our beautiful coasts as ecologically intact as is humanly possible. Industrial development (eg quarrying, drilling for oil) should be kept very far away from ecologically sensitive areas. The public should have access to these areas, but not allowed to use them in destructive ways, eg riding ATVs on beaches. Incentives offered to users to keep beaches free of garbage and detritus (eg 'token' offered in exchange for bags of garbage picked up from areas used by the public?) (1);
- 2 blank;
- Sea level will continue to rise and increasing damage will occur. Public access needs to be maintained to beaches, coastal trails, etc. Further coastal development must be kept to a minimum (3);
- Clear guidelines to municipalities on coastal management planning or provincial planning for coastal issues, removing responsibility from municipalities. Municipalities need funding to carry out adequate planning and enforcing of coastal land use bylaws (4);
- Our mission should be to make our coast a healthy, sustainable resource. I have seen great changes brought about by the effects of "Mother Nature" and also by poor planning. To achieve a good balance of commercial activity, residential development and the need for recreational pursuits, we require a strong policy (5);
- Excellent water quality; Citizens still able to buy, build, and protect the shoreline with private ???; Still have lots of coastal shore available to the public – beaches, lake shore (6);
- 7 blank;
- A strategic plan of action at each municipality based on a provincial set of principles. The plan would apply the principles to all six of these issues! This may need legislation: A coastal planning Act? (8);
- Less development along coastlines due to sea level rise and habitat protection (greater buffer zone). Increased recreation and public access (trails, etc) – sustainable, low impact activities; Protection from sea level rise – bank stabilization (erosion) and development of storm surge warning/protocols; Increased public awareness about sea level rise, storm surge, and habitat protection (9);
- Guaranteed public access everywhere. Government ordained access at reasonably short intervals to shores and water (10);
- Limited development; Controlled access points; Better water quality (11);

- Less development in flood risk areas; Ships and boats which contribute to pollution of the ocean; I am very concerned about any drilling, i.e. NO DRILLING (12);
- Any integrated management system that a) recognizes the significance of all land and water-based activities as stressors on coastal environments; b) aggressively addresses the effects of past activities; and c) implements a comprehensive, precautionary and long-term strategy to prevent future degradation of the coastal environment (13);
- A legal framework for protection and preservation (14);
- Without change and action by vision for 2020 or there about is a total collapse of the fishing industry and a loss of most coastal communities (15);
- I am deeply concerned with the direction that NS is going with fish farming along our coastal waters. A report in the Globe and Mail last week cited that BC is rethinking what they have been doing and ??? be having? inland farming. We should seriously. (16);
- I have no time during? this workshop, but I'm glad it and they are happening. My comments will come in June via internet and email. I am a naturalist and biologist and retired university biology teacher. My primary interests are in extremely careful coastal development couple with conservation, preservation of coastal habitats, especially dunes and salt marshes, and minimal losses of public coastal access (17);
- Excellent water quality to sustain local fisheries and tourism – the backbone of local & provincial economy; Coastal development restricted by municipal planning laws; Preservation of coastal ecosystems and habitats for future generations; Public coastal access defined by municipal planning laws (18);
- I would hope that what I understand about conditions today would not carry on to 2020. We need a comprehensive policy that supports and promotes long-term sustainability of our coast and its resources. This involves public education and leadership from a government that cares about the people and the province (19);
- First – the precautionary principle should prevail in all coastal issues – if it will cause harm, don't do it. If it costs more to do it right, pay it! By 2020, without change our coast will be in danger from wetland-filling, too close to the sea development, all inviting erosion and flooding (20);
- Specifically, that aquaculture be switched to land where it is proven that is more viable. Aquaculture is interfering with the ecosystem, communities and existing industries. Please do not allow aquaculture (on water) continue until you will be forced to realize that you made a mistake. Then the coast will be in huge danger (21);
- Make sure our farmland is being protected from the ocean. Our coastal area is kept clean and we use it more to benefit tourism (22);
- Less development directly on the coast, more public access but diverted from sensitive areas (23);
- Cleaner, full of fish, accessible (in different ways), closed to motorized vehicles (24);

- Coastal zoning in place that puts ecosystem protection as a top priority. No new development should be permitted in ecologically sensitive areas; Protection from sea level rise and storm events should take maximum advantage of natural features; Coastal water quality protection involves eliminating industrial discharges (including from fish farms) and increasing? domestic treatment with federal and provincial financial support (25);

- Some areas such as dykes need to be secured for future sea level rises. Some areas may need to be returned to the sea. No construction, development, etc. on known floodplains. Protection of coastal communities (26).

4. In your area, who needs to be involved in addressing these issues?

- Citizens' groups, municipal councils (1);

- The public, students (2);

- All levels of government, residents, biologists/other professionals (3);

- My area had [until recently] an effective land-use planning team (King's County). Provincial government needs to be more active as not all municipalities have the tax base that we do. Smaller municipalities may contain much greater coastal areas without a budget to plan their development. Local community groups, NS Nature Trust, etc. all are, and should continue to be involved (4);

- I live in Kings and Queens Co! I have seen the devastating effects of storms and lack of respect for the land. Any groups who have a vested interest should be able to consult. For example, in Port Mouton Bay there is an aquaculture that is having a negative effect on the beaches. The "Friends of Port Mouton Bay" are collectively involved in limiting this type of development. On another note, Ducks Unlimited is very much involved in coastal wetland work – they are experts in scientific based research (5);

- Citizens, Municipal Government, Councils & Planning ?? (6);

- 7 blank;

- The municipal planners, provincial coastal planners, legislators, politicians and federal government representatives (8);

- Public: professors from local universities – research; university, high school, elementary school involvement – info sessions, awareness campaigns, linking with student groups; radio stations and social media (Facebook); Industry: working with fisheries, land developers to work toward sustainable coastlines; regulations (9);

- The provincial and municipal government in all areas; Working waterfronts require maintenance; Regulation and upkeep of pollution prevention is required to make/keep coastal ecosystems healthy (10);

- Agriculture (11);

- A group of people who are from many backgrounds and are very committed to the health and wellness of the coast, and the ocean and its animals, mammals, etc. (12);
- a) municipalities – Kings & Annapolis counties, towns of Wolfville, Kentville, etc.; b) land-owners and other residents; c) NGO groups (ACAP, BOFEP, Blomidon Naturalists, etc.); d) Resource users (fishers, farmers, etc); e) Provincial agencies (13);
- Municipalities, province and ordinary Nova Scotians (14);
- Everyone. Community education/awareness is needed as a first step. Issues such as climate change have to be presented as impacts at a local level. Water quality needs to be presented in terms of the impact locally on community livelihoods. All levels of government need to work with communities to come up with practical solutions and these solutions need to be implemented (15);
- All levels of government – federal, provincial & municipal governments. Also the public should have some input in what is happening, eg Friends of Port Mouton Bay, also the newly formed group in Shelburne (16);
- 17 blank;
- Provincial, municipal governments in conjunction with the local communities (18);
- All stakeholders (19);
- Everybody in the community needs to be involved – local government and local residents and business people. If provincial and federal government will stop doing whatever corporations tell them too, they should be involved as well. It's time to do the right thing (20);
- Everyone! The people who live in the communities know their coasts. Government officials from municipal to provincial to federal need to work together to create quality in our coasts! Why has it taken so long for government to be working on a coastal policy. (21);
- Farmers, cottage owners, municipalities (government) (22);
- Our county, local municipal representatives as well as local residents (23);
- Everyone from the property owner to the Prime Minister – even those who don't own property but use the area for one reason or another (24);
- All levels of government and people (25);
- Municipal, Provincial, Federal governments working closely with the coastal communities, fishermen (26).

5. What are some things that can be done to improve how we manage these issues?

- Firm regulations, firmly enforced, about what kinds of activities (both private & industrial) are allowed on/near coastal areas; Strong regulation of water treatment, building on potential flood plains; Program of incentives for beneficial activities (protection of wildlife habitat; ecologically sustainable small-scale economic activities, etc.) (1);
- 2 is blank;
- Public consultation, priority funding (3);
- 4 is blank;
- We need to educate people about our resources. The school system is a good start – children learn to do what is right. People need to understand how fragile coastal ecosystems can be. It is sad to see beaches on the South Shore with litter and cigarette butts in the sand. Off-road vehicles in the dunes.; Fish farms – bring them to shore (5);
- Government may have to allocate funds to purchase shoreline for public areas as well as purchase land to protect environmentally sensitive areas (6);
- 7 is blank;
- This process is a good start. Policy must translate to implementation. Needs a cross-departmental commitment at the highest level for implementation. Coastal planners at provincial and the municipal level (8);
- More public awareness, and reaching out to students (9);
- Devise a complete coastal plan, and work continuously toward its goals (10);
- Access points defined and possibly developed (11);
- The general population needs to be better informed about the importance of these issues (12);
- a) Develop a plan that identifies zones of impact and influence for i) each portion of the coastline; ii) each issues.; b) These Coastal Management Areas should have multi-stakeholder advisory groups established (13);
- 14 is blank;
- Act now. Implement actions that will protect the ecosystems and coastal communities. All levels of government and all parties need to take those issues as well as the impacts of climate change seriously and work together to implement (not just find solutions). We need to make a difference not just the next generation (15);
- Listen to the people who are concerned and have done research to prove that fish farming along our coast will damage our coastlines and kill what is left of the lobster industry (16);

- 17 is blank;
- Will give this more thought and reply online!; Consultation with community groups and municipal governments is vital (18);
- Try to involve policies that do not undermine the coastal sustainability – do not cave in to development and corporate greed. Our government is supposed to think long-term, not to the next election. Our government should be responsible to the people for future generations (19);
- Listen to the people who live by the coast – who make their living because of a clean and beautiful shore line, ie – fishermen and women, tourist operators, boaters, swimmers, divers, etc., etc.; Insist that fish farms be installed on land, in tanks, with proper care of the effluent. The community should have the final say re: new development along the coast (20);
- Listen to the people. Aquaculture in Port Mouton Bay, for example, very clearly is harming the Bay. Listen to, meet with and plan with the people! (21);
- Assist those property owners who are already protecting the coastal areas by protecting their properties (22);
- Need to hear conversations between groups, individuals and representatives that are courteous. Regular meetings and/or internet chat groups with reports available to others without internet access (23);
- Do something about the garbage, legislate and enforce laws which will make these things happen (24);
- Putting priority on environmental preservation (25);
- See 4 (26).

6. Additional Comments?

- No large-scale industrial developments near coasts; No selling of coastal areas to foreign entities; No deep water oil drilling off our coasts; Active protection of wetlands, estuaries; Programs to raise public awareness of these issues, especially in the educational systems (1);
- 2, 3 & 4 are blank;
- Based on my experience in Queens County, beaches such as Summerville & Carter’s Beach need more care. The Province is not doing enough to maintain these beautiful places. Protect the dunes; clean up the garbage daily on the beaches and around the parking areas. Carter’s is being totally ignored and the human footprint is taking its toll (5);
- The public needs to recognize the issues involved with shorelines and encourage local and provincial policies that protect access, water quality and ecosystems (6);

- 7 is blank;
- I like your process of engagement. No presentation. Concentration on dialogue and listening to people. Good luck! (8);
- Great open forum! Good timing (4-8pm) (9);
- 10, 11 & 12 are blank;
- This initiative is similar to the Coastal 2000 concept that was announced in 1994. Regrettably, failure at the provincial government level has led to no significant improvement (except for the NS Water Strategy). We have no hope of improving our coastal environment, or of managing the competing demands (eg energy, mining, water) without such a policy/strategy in place (13);
- 14 is blank;
- Need to add impacts of climate change to list. Otherwise when the strategy is officially released it will be already dated (15);
- A friend of mine who has traveled the world said that Carter’s Beach, Queens County was the third most beautiful beach in the world – one being in Australia. One fish farm is already there and another was proposed. Because of concerns of Friends of Port Mouton Bay, this second farm has been “pout on hold”. Please do not destroy this beach and kill the lobster industry that is essential to the area (16);
- 17 is blank;
- Finfish farming affects all of the coastal issues identified with the exception of sea level rise/storm events, and cannot be ignored when planning a coastal strategy (18);
- Aquaculture and drilling must be under a legislated ban. Neither of these enterprises serves the long-term interests of Nova Scotians. We need departments supported to protect our environment and resources. ATVs are devastating to our beaches. No ability to prevent this and other destructive activities. Public education starting with little ones. We need government departments that advocate for future generations not that promote the destruction of our future.; Precautionary principle. Public education and dialogue. The government must lead (19);
- There are regulations in place that are being ignored (ex, the existing fish farm at Spectacle Island). Monitoring of commercial enterprises anywhere along the coast has to date been a joke. It’s needed.; Access to the ocean for the general public should be assured in a reasonable way. Why has it taken so long – 2010 – to start work on coastal policy? Our coast is our greatest asset (20);
- The community needs to have the final say in any development. I strongly recommend that these sessions come directly to the coastal communities so that the fishermen have a chance to ask questions and state their many concerns (21);
- Give credit to those who are already doing this work. Allow people to develop their shoreline or private property but they have to know that in the event of an emergency caused by storms there is only so much government can do (22);

- Need to protect people who own land (fishers & others) (small properties in their family for years) to continue to own that land (23);
- We must act quickly on coastal infrastructure – dykes, aboiteau work – I would also like to see an inventory of accessible points to beaches – also potential points (24);
- 25 is blank;
- I believe we will experience a major weather event greater than the Saxby Gale within the next 10 years. The Fundy shores and Minas Basin and Cornwallis River system will experience a devastating flood event (26).

9. How will you use the State of Nova Scotia's Coast Report?

- Share with others to help raise awareness (1);
- 2 is blank;
- Refer to for facts/general interest (3);
- 4 is blank;
- To promote awareness & to educate others (5);
- Allow me to become more informed about the issues and how I might play a part (6);
- 7 is blank;
- Reference material for coastal policy; To influence my municipal council!!!; To work with municipal planners! (8);
- Self-informing (9);
- To badger the government if action is unsatisfactory (10);
- Reference for when a policy starts to get developed (11);
- 12 is blank;
- In all aspects of my research, outreach and volunteer activities (13);
- Media (14);
- 15 is blank;
- I will take the report home and read (16);
- 17 & 18 are blank;

- I will talk with fellow citizens to advocate for a comprehensive coastal policy that will help allow for future generations to share in this significant and basic part of being a Nova Scotia (19);
- To educate myself further and perhaps challenge some of it (20);
- 21 is blank;
- To assist me in making decisions during meetings and discussions with coastal residents in my district (22);
- 23 is blank;
- It could help when dealing with issues of accessibility, environmental abuse and promote positive attitudes toward this eco-region (24);
- Lodging other levels of government and public education (25);
- To educate our municipal government and our coastal communities (26).

Wolfville Open House - Table Notes

(number in parenthesis represent check marks that indicate agreement)

Coastal Development

- work should commence on running dykes and aboiteau upgrades right away (2)
- need to help people who traditionally own land on coast (fishers and others) to maintain their property and homes
- stop residential development on coastal lands. This applies double to industrial development. (4)
- coastal planning at municipal councils
- ensure stable funding to municipalities (beyond property tax) so they can afford to carry out proper planning
- residential development on coastal land does not benefit Nova Scotians!

Working Waterfronts

- potential for tourist development is unlimited
- environmental standards must be high and enforced (3)
- meet with harbour authorities and get direct impact from stakeholders

Public Coastal Access

- I would like to see a map inventory of access points to coastal beaches in Kings County. (and whole province). (1)
- check out the Swedish policy about public/private land. A good model.
- make sure access is directed away from critical ecosystems (1)
- Government should provide an accessible and easy to understand summary of current rights and legislation related to public coastal access (3)
- policy should ensure a target level of coastal land is publicly owned for public access (2)
- policy should ensure opportunity for public access in each region.

Sea Level Rise and Storm Events

- Saxby Gale is the books.
 - Dr. David Duke an environmental historian re beaches & dykes
- strategic planning needed to deal with priorities at the municipal councils

Coastal Water Quality

- impacted by clear cutting on watersheds behind coastal areas (3)
- riparian zones are not respected
- new wastewater treatment standards are important but municipalities need financial help upgrading facilities
- agricultural runoff is also a problem (1)
- stay out of Georges Bank (2)
- have remote sensing monitoring devices at strategic places throughout the coastal areas to give daily account of water quality (1)
- municipal planning needed in the coastal zone!
- what regulations are in place concerning run-off and waste water from marinas?
- who plans development in coastal waters (i.e. anyone can put a mooring anywhere).

Sensitive Coastal Ecosystems

- somewhat concerned about ATV traffic in some beach areas (2)
- garbage/litter is out of control ((3)
- ATVs are an issue (3)
- the destruction of coastal ecosystems made the New Orleans floods much worse. Coastal plains are of great value in protecting us from serious storm events. (2)
- identify coastal ecosystems for special off-limits treatment for development (2)
- what is the relationship between watersheds and “sensitive coastal ecosystems”? One province, one coast!