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PERCENT BY

2015



IDENTIFYING NEW PROTECTED AREAS FOR NOVA SCOTIA

OUR

WILD

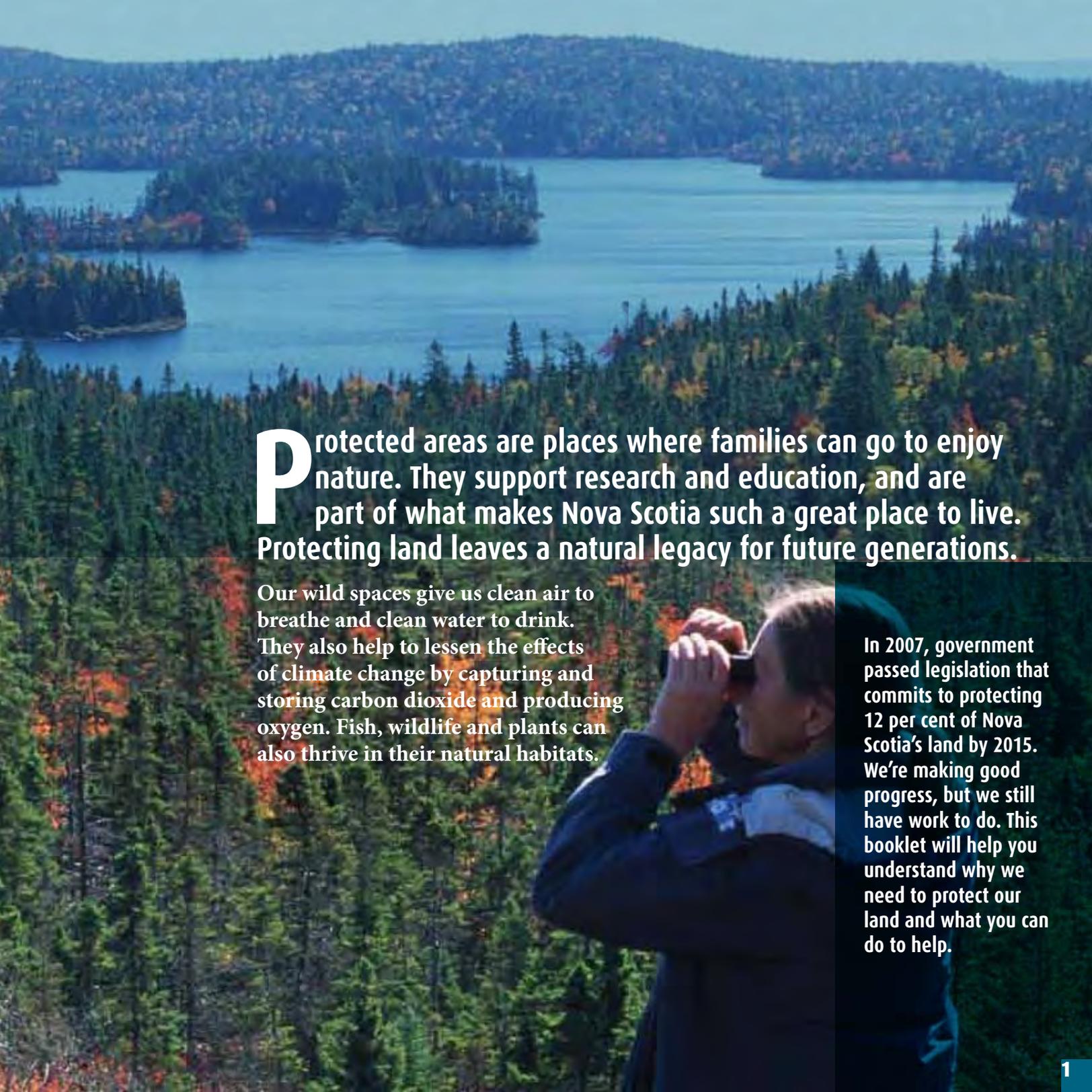
SPACES

12
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IDENTIFYING NEW PROTECTED AREAS FOR NOVA SCOTIA

OUR WILD SPACES



Protected areas are places where families can go to enjoy nature. They support research and education, and are part of what makes Nova Scotia such a great place to live. Protecting land leaves a natural legacy for future generations.

Our wild spaces give us clean air to breathe and clean water to drink. They also help to lessen the effects of climate change by capturing and storing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. Fish, wildlife and plants can also thrive in their natural habitats.

In 2007, government passed legislation that commits to protecting 12 per cent of Nova Scotia's land by 2015. We're making good progress, but we still have work to do. This booklet will help you understand why we need to protect our land and what you can do to help.



THE WORLD'S PROTECTED AREAS

are the greatest legacy we can leave to future generations – to ensure that our descendents have access to nature and all the material and spiritual wealth that it represents.

IUCN – World Commission
on Protected Areas

WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY “PROTECT”?

When we protect our land, we keep it natural. Protected lands in Nova Scotia are areas for people to enjoy that are free from development.

There are no homes, no factories or farms. The trees are left to grow, die, and feed the forest in a natural life cycle. When we refer to protected “land” we also mean lakes and rivers.

WILD SPACES

have been part of our heritage for centuries. This is an image of a Mi'kmaq petroglyph of a moose.



**“Miamuj maliaptemu'kw msit Mi'kma'kik, mita wetapeksi'kw aq weji mimajultikw.
Klo'tmuanej ujit elmi'knikewak.”** *Mi'kmaq*

**“We must take care of all of Mi'kma'kik because we grew out of it and survive from it.
Let us keep it for those of the future.”** *English*





REACHING 12 PER CENT

WHY 12 PER CENT?

Twelve per cent is rooted in the World Commission on Environment and Development's 1987 Report - Our Common Future. In Canada, 12 per cent was promoted by the 1989 World Wildlife Fund's Endangered Spaces Campaign. In 1992, the figure was part of a commitment by federal and provincial ministers to complete Canada's network of protected areas. Science tells us that a higher percentage is needed to fully protect biodiversity. Twelve per cent is a meaningful goal that we can achieve in Nova Scotia.

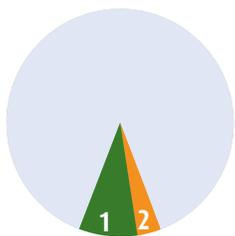
To some, it may not seem like enough, but 12 per cent is an ambitious goal. Most of the land in Nova Scotia is in private hands. For generations, people here have owned and developed land and built communities.

We will continue to need our land to build our homes and our economy. We will still farm, fish, cut wood, use the natural energy from the sun, wind, and tides, and mine our underground resources. We also need wild spaces.

That is why the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* (2007), sets a goal to protect 12 per cent of the land in Nova Scotia by 2015. Sustainable prosperity means a healthy environment, healthy people, and a healthy economy go hand in hand.

PROTECTED AREAS
help sustain our
wilderness traditions.





PROTECTED LAND PERCENTAGE

(as of January 1, 2011)

The **TOTAL BASE** of Nova Scotia is approximately **5,528,000 hectares**

1. LEGALLY PROTECTED is **8.6% (474,399 ha)** and is comprised of wilderness areas (314,819 ha), nature reserves (4,972 ha), larger provincial parks (10,319 ha), national parks (134,988 ha), national wildlife areas (2,397 ha), land trust areas (6,905 ha)

2. TO MEET THE 12% TARGET (663,360 ha) an additional **3.4% (188,961 ha)** needs to be protected.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* defines the kinds of areas that count toward our 12 per cent goal.

They include

- nature reserves
- wilderness areas
- some provincial parks and reserves
- conservation easement lands
- lands owned by land trust organizations
- national parks
- national wildlife areas

These areas have three things in common. First, they are dedicated to protecting biodiversity and natural processes. Second, the protection is legal and permanent. And third, long term management of the areas is free of industrial uses.

Some lands in Nova Scotia play an important conservation role, but don't count towards the 12 per cent. This may be because they focus on managing individual species or activities, or because the protection is not legal or permanent. It may also be because they are mainly protected for recreation, rather than nature, or perhaps allow some industrial uses.

As of January 1, 2011, about 8.6% of the Province (474,399 ha) was legally protected. That means that we need to protect about 3.4% more (188,961 ha) to achieve the 12 per cent goal.

To reach 12 per cent, we need to;

- protect Crown land;
- buy and protect land;
- help land trusts and land owners protect private land.



THIS MAP shows the different types of protected areas in Nova Scotia that count towards the 12 per cent goal and other provincial Crown land.

- Land Trusts and Conservation Easements
- Wilderness Areas
- Provincial Parks and Reserves
- Nature Reserves
- National Parks
- National Wildlife Areas
- Provincial Crown Land

Private Land Conservation

- **Land Trust** – Lands owned by charitable organizations. Usually small pieces of land, they are selected to protect plants, animals, or other important natural features. Light recreation, education, and research are usually allowed.
- **Conservation easement lands** – The private land owners agree to leave the land in its natural state. The rules for conservation easement lands are set out in Nova Scotia's *Conservation Easements Act*.

Provincial Government Protection

- **Wilderness areas** – Large areas selected to protect nature while supporting wilderness recreation, hunting, sport fishing, trapping, and other uses. Some off highway vehicle (OHV) use can be permitted on certain routes. Wilderness areas usually do not have facilities or organized campgrounds. The rules for wilderness areas are set out in Nova Scotia's *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*.

- **Provincial parks and reserves** – Areas selected for natural or cultural reasons. Many have developed areas for camping, hiking, picnicking, or other recreational activities. Some parks do not count towards the 12 per cent goal because of size or use. The rules for provincial parks and reserves are set out in Nova Scotia's *Provincial Parks Act*.

- **Nature reserves** – Small areas selected to protect unique or rare species or features. They provide our highest level of protection and are used mainly for education and research. The rules for nature reserves are set out in Nova Scotia's *Special Places Protection Act*.

Federal Government Protection

- **National parks** – Large areas of national importance. National parks have three goals:
 - to protect a particular kind of natural environment
 - to teach us about that environment
 - to offer us places to enjoy nature
 They often have large areas of wild spaces as well as developed areas for camping, hiking, and other recreational uses. The rules for national parks are set out in Canada's *National Parks Act*.
- **National wildlife areas** – Land selected for the protection of particular animals, often migratory birds. The rules for national wildlife areas are set out in the Canada *Wildlife Act*.



SELECTING AREAS

ANIMALS

like the Lynx are declining. Our wild spaces protect them and their habitats so that they can continue to exist and evolve.



Here in Nova Scotia we face several challenges to land protection

- 70 per cent of our land is in private hands
- there are many competing demands for the use of provincial Crown lands
- land prices continue to rise – our government has a limited amount of money to buy land
- we are running out of opportunities to protect unique landscapes and features

Guiding principles for selection process

Leadership – As a government, we are committed to leading this process. We also recognize the leadership role of the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, municipalities, industry, and non-government organizations.

Knowledge – We will use the best scientific information, and the knowledge of local communities and individuals.

Partnership and consultation – We want to hear from and work with everyone who is interested in protecting our wild spaces, particularly Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, other levels of government, communities individual Nova Scotians, industry, non-governmental organizations and private land trusts.

“

Since time immemorial, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia have maintained a special relationship with the land and its resources. This relationship is founded on ancient spiritual and ecological beliefs where the land and all that it provides is recognized as the foundation of the Mi'kmaq world. The Mi'kmaq recognize that without the land, there can be no existence for human beings, and because of this, special care must be taken to protect the land and its' resources.

The Mi'kmaq understand that the 12% Protected Lands goal is an important step in ensuring that the ecological integrity of the lands and resources of Nova Scotia are here for all future generations. As a manner in which to collaborate on this important initiative, the Mi'kmaq and the Province of Nova Scotia will establish the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia – Nova Scotia Protected Areas Technical Advisory Group whose purpose will be to advise on the selection, acquisition, designation and management of the protected lands in Nova Scotia.

Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs

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COLIN STEWART FOREST FORUM

The Colin Stewart Forest Forum was formed in 2005 by major environmental groups and forestry companies. It is named in memory of the highly respected biologist and conservation leader. Over five years, the Forum did a scientific review of all provincial Crown lands and lands owned by the participating forestry companies. Government provided technical support.

The Forum set out to identify the best lands to protect, and ways to reduce the impacts of protection on the forestry industry.

Natural Values

Protected areas are needed to help maintain biodiversity. They give us clean air and water and habitat for wildlife. We want to protect the best natural areas in our province. One way to think about this is through a 4-Rs approach.

- Remote – areas in a mostly natural state with few human impacts
- Representative – examples of the full variety of lands in Nova Scotia
- Rich – places where plant and animal life flourish
- Rare – places with unique or rare landscapes, plants, or animals

Science helps us figure out the best way to protect these natural values. Much of the scientific work to identify important natural areas in Nova Scotia was done by the Colin Stewart Forest Forum, with assistance from the departments of Environment and Natural Resources. This work applied the 4-Rs approach to all provincial Crown land and lands owned by the participating forestry companies. You can learn more about the science-based approach by reading the Colin Stewart Forest Forum report, or visiting the Nova Scotia protected areas website.

BIODIVERSITY

is another way of saying nature. It includes all living things on Earth and their relationships to each other.



SELECTING AREAS

(cont'd)



OUR WILD SPACES

offer us a refuge from busy, modern life. They refresh our spirit.

Social Values

Preserving biodiversity is the main reason for protecting land. But, we also need to consider how areas will be used and enjoyed.

For many, protected areas also provide a place to re-connect with nature, and find peace and quiet in a busy world.

Protected areas provide some of our province's best outdoor recreation experiences. Hiking, canoeing, camping, fishing, and hunting are a few of the cherished ways we enjoy the land – protected areas help ensure that we have a place to keep doing these things in the future.

Protected areas also enhance Nova Scotia's natural image for tourism, business, and economic development. They are important for education, research, and also inspire art and culture.

As we select new protected areas, we need to consider how people connect with nature.



TOURISTS have been enjoying our wildspaces for generations. If we protect these spaces, tourists will continue to enjoy them well into the future.



OUR WILD SPACES

teach us a lot about our environment and how we affect it. They have already taught us a great deal about how animals behave, where they survive and thrive, and how damaged habitats recover.



Minimizing Conflict

People use land for many different things in our small province. Some of these uses, like settlement, agriculture, roads, forestry, mining, and energy development, don't fit well with protected areas.

As we choose new protected areas, we need to consider all land uses. With good information, open discussion, and planning, most conflicts can be avoided. We need to pick the right areas, and design boundaries with all land uses in mind.

In some cases, we can find other ways to reduce conflict. For example, with help from the Colin Stewart Forest Forum we are finding creative ways to minimize the impact of land protection on the forest industry. In other cases, the government has entered into agreements to ensure important connector routes for off-highway vehicles (OHV) through a wilderness area are maintained.

PROTECTED AREAS

are a reference point so that we can see how our environment is changing. We need these reference points to make sure we can sustain activities that affect our environment.



2009-11

STEP 1. 12% LANDS IDENTIFICATION

COLIN STEWART FOREST FORUM (CSFF)

GOVERNMENT REVIEW - Interdepartmental process led by Environment and Natural Resources

MI'KMAQ ENGAGEMENT - Collaborative approach

2011

STEP 2. 12% LANDS REVIEW

REVIEW BY GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS and INDIVIDUALS to identify key interests and potential land-use conflicts

DRAFT PROTECTED AREAS PLAN COMPLETED

2012

STEP 3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

BROAD PROVINCIAL CONSULTATION on draft protected areas plan

2013-15

STEP 4. FINAL PLAN - DESIGNATIONS

GOVERNMENT DEVELOPS FINAL PROTECTED AREAS PLAN and designates new protected areas

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MAKING IT HAPPEN

Nova Scotia Environment is leading a five-year process to reach the 12 per cent goal. We have divided this process into four steps.

Step 1 – 12% Lands Identification (2009-11)
Once current designations are complete, about 150,000 hectares of additional land need to be protected to reach 12 per cent. In November 2009, government received the Colin Stewart Forest Forum report. This report identifies land with high conservation values.

Nova Scotia Environment and the Department of Natural Resources have reviewed lands identified by the Colin Stewart Forest Forum. Other government departments and the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq also provided information on these lands. This review focused on assessing the natural quality of the lands and confirming ownership.



NATURAL AREAS
can act as a buffer
against natural hazards
like flooding and
erosion.

As a result of this step, government has identified possible “12 per cent lands” for further review in Step 2. These include provincial Crown lands, and some lands owned by major forestry companies. To provide flexibility in decision making, more than 200,000 hectares of land is included in these 12 per cent selections. **These 12 per cent lands are not proposed protected areas.** However, government will select most of the proposed protected areas from these lands.

Step 2 – 12% Lands Review (2011)

The goal of this step is to learn as much as possible about all lands under review before drafting a list of potential protected areas. Consultation will include municipalities, and Mi’kmaq communities, as well as forestry, mining, and energy interests. Community, wilderness recreation, hunting, fishing, trapping, OHV, and environmental groups will also be included. Participants will receive maps and information on all land under review. Individuals are also invited to provide written comments on these lands.

As a result of this step, government will create a draft protected areas plan.

This draft plan will include maps and descriptions of all proposed areas. It will also show the type of protection being considered, such as wilderness area, nature reserve or provincial park.

Step 3 – Public Consultation (2012)

In 2012, there will be many chances to comment on the draft protected areas plan, through community sessions, write-in opportunities, and in-person meetings. People will be able to look at maps of proposed areas, ask questions, and confirm that their views are heard and considered.

We expect the draft protected areas plan to change based on these consultations. This is the stage where people can share their support or concern for individual areas. This is also a time to identify how proposed boundaries could be changed to reduce conflict, or enhance protection or public enjoyment.

As a result of this step, government will create a final protected areas plan.

Step 4 – Final Plan (2013-15)

The final protected areas plan will consider all the feedback received during public consultation (Step 3). It will identify the areas to be protected, along with their boundaries. It may also describe special agreements for area use or management.

Once the final protected areas plan is released to the public, government will then take the steps needed to legally protect each area.



GET INVOLVED

We need your help as we identify new protected areas in Nova Scotia. Here are a few things you can do.

Be part of the process

- Learn more
- Share your knowledge and engage others to take part
- Trust the process – everyone has a voice, and every voice is important
- Tell us what is important to you and why
- Ask questions – staff are here to help

If your group or organization would like to be involved in the 2011 lands review step, please let us know by August 1, 2011 by calling (902) 424-2117 or by emailing protectedareas@gov.ns.ca. After August 1, we will meet with interested groups and organizations. Regional workshops will be set up for municipal governments and Mi'kmaq communities. At each meeting, we will provide detailed maps (including GIS files if needed). Staff will answer your questions, and provide additional details on the 12 percent process or individual sites.

As an individual, you can also provide written comment during the 2011 lands review step. First, review the information about individual lands found on the protected areas website at www.gov.ns.ca/nse/protectedareas. Then, fill out an online form, email your comments to protectedareas@gov.ns.ca, or send your comments by mail to:

Nova Scotia Environment,
Protected Areas Branch
Box 442, 5151 Terminal Road,
Halifax, NS B3J 2P8

Written comments will be accepted until December 1, 2011.

In 2012, a draft protected areas plan will be released for broad provincial consultation.

Take a long view

- Focus on what can be gained - for you (and your grandchildren), your communities, your region, and the province
- Protection is for today and the future... think about the province we want to see in 100 or more years



There are other things you can do to support land protection in Nova Scotia.

- If you are a private landowner you may want to protect your own land. There are many options to do this. Contact the Protected Areas branch of Nova Scotia Environment or a private land trust to find out more.
- A very rewarding action can be to join or support a private land trust such as the Nova Scotia Nature Trust or the Nature Conservancy of Canada.
- Get involved in other discussions about land use and conservation. Protected areas are only one way we care for our land and environment.

MORE INFORMATION

If you want to receive updated information on the 12 per cent process, please add your name to the Protected Areas e-mail list by contacting us at protectedareas@gov.ns.ca or (902) 424-2117.

Find more detailed and up-to-date information on protected areas and the 12 per cent process at www.gov.ns.ca/nse/protectedareas.

You can also reach us at:

Eastern

Nova Scotia Environment, Protected Areas Branch,
Box 714, 295 Charlotte Street, Sydney, NS B1P 6H7
Tel (902) 563-2100

Central

Nova Scotia Environment, Protected Areas Branch
Box 442, 5151 Terminal Road, Halifax, NS B3J 2P8
Tel (902) 424-2117

Western

Nova Scotia Environment, Protected Areas Branch
60 Logan Road, Bridgewater, NS B4V 2J8
Tel (902) 543-4685

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**NOVA SCOTIA**