



Nova Scotia Environment
Business Plan
2009-2010

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Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister of Environment

We are pleased to present Nova Scotia Environment's 2009-2010 Business Plan. This upcoming year brings many opportunities to contribute to the advancement toward a sustainable Nova Scotia.

The establishment of a stand-alone Nova Scotia Environment in April 2008 created the opportunity to undertake a strategic planning process designed to ensure that the department is current and relevant. The department's vision, mission, goals and priorities were reinvigorated and will serve to inform our business planning in the upcoming years.

This year's Business Plan sets out an ambitious agenda. Several key activities include:

- leading and championing the goals of the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (ESGPA)* which will result in:
 - improved air quality;
 - a wetland policy to prevent net loss of wetlands;
 - regulatory tools to stimulate the redevelopment of contaminated land; and
 - a comprehensive water-resource management strategy.
- coordinating and implementing the *Climate Change Action Plan* which is designed to reduce Nova Scotia's contribution to climate change by reducing our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as well as prepare us for changes to our climate. Actions this year will include:
 - the release and implementation of a GHG regulation for the electricity sector;
 - expansion of web-based educational information and public awareness programs; and
 - development of a discussion paper looking at the next phase of GHG emissions reduction policies and regulations.
- contributing to the province's *Better Regulation Initiative* by reducing administrative burden and turn around times for our clients; and
- implementing the department's *Winning Workplace Strategy* to ensure that Nova Scotia Environment continues to be successful in recruiting and retaining high quality staff.

It is no question that there are challenges facing the environment today. By continuing to face those challenges with current science, responsive public policy and maximized partnerships, we will succeed. We look forward to leading Nova Scotia Environment in the implementation of this Business Plan for 2009-2010.

Honourable Sterling Belliveau
Minister of Environment

Nancy Vanstone
Deputy Minister of Environment

1. Vision/Mission/Mandate

Vision

Nova Scotia's environment is healthy, well-managed, and supports prosperous communities.

Mission

Nova Scotia Environment leads the way to ensure that our environment is valued, protected, and enhanced in partnerships with all Nova Scotians.

Mandate

The mandate of Nova Scotia Environment is to:

- support and promote the protection, enhancement, and prudent use of the environment (*Environment Act*);
- provide for the establishment, management, protection and use of wilderness areas (*Wilderness Areas Protection Act*);
- provide for the preservation, protection, and study of ecological sites which are considered important parts of the natural heritage of the Province and promote understanding and appreciation of same among the people of the Province (*Special Places Protection Act*);
- conserve and allocate water resources to ensure long-term self-sufficiency and utilization to the greatest benefit of the population and ecosystem (*Water Resources Protection Act*); and
- promote the interconnections between the health of the economy, the environment and the people of the Province and promote the Province's environmental assets as essential to the long-term prosperity of the Province (*Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*).

2. Planning Context

The department is mandated to protect and promote a healthy environment, while at the same time contributing to a competitive business climate. This mandate is based on the understanding that economic strength is an essential condition for a sustainable environment, and a healthy workforce and a sustainable environment are essential for a strong economy.

The department administers the following laws, along with many supporting regulations: the *Environment Act*; *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*; *Special Places Protection Act*; *Water Resources Protection Act*; and the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*. While there is an enforcement component in achieving compliance with these laws, the department relies heavily on public education, communications and the application of “best practice” instruments to help accomplish its mission.

Challenges:

- A broad regulatory mandate requires Nova Scotia Environment to reconcile competing priorities and focus on key areas to maximize resources and impact;
- the department’s responsibilities are multi-dimensional in many issues such as climate change, and cut across departmental lines, providing staff with the challenge of operating horizontally with other departments and levels of government to address jurisdictional and service issues;
- the department must make decisions that balance the desire for responsible growth and resource use with the commitment to protect and sustain the environment;
- an increasing number of partnerships are necessary to ensure that there is shared ownership and involvement in addressing key issues, with the ensuing challenge of providing resources to support these partnerships;
- a large proportion of our workforce is concentrated in inspection, enforcement and compliance and there is a need to balance our resources in ways that promote environmental protection through knowledge, skills transfer and innovation while reducing the administrative burden on our stakeholders;
- there is a continuous need to build knowledge, skill and capacity to meet the challenges of a changing workforce and marketplace, and ensure necessary tools are in place to allow them to work effectively; and
- ever-emerging products and innovations require assessment on both an economic and environmental basis.

Opportunities:

- The state of the environment continues to be on the fore front of the minds of Nova Scotians as 2009-2010 emerges. This creates an informed and engaged public that results in opportunities to collaborate, partner and achieve results;
- the current economic climate reinforces the need to seek partnerships and focus our resources where they are most needed and best used;
- government has made the environment a key priority and demonstrates that by having entrenched performance commitments contained in clear legislation, the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*. This focuses the department and its partners and allows the public to monitor our progress;
- there is an increasing opportunity to integrate protection of the environment with sustainable growth and development of the economy;
- exploration of new markets may boost opportunities to export Nova Scotian environmental technologies and governance expertise to other nations; and
- Nova Scotia has enjoyed remarkable success in the past, including but not limited to, extraordinary reductions in the volume of solid waste that goes to landfills. This success serves as a flagship and a model for problem solving.

The planning context for the department is based on the following principles:

(1) Interconnectedness: The economy relies on the market and the environment for its supply of natural resources and human capital. Environmental and economic initiatives must take this relationship into account.

(2) Sustainable prosperity: Sustainable workplaces and environmentally sustainable economic growth recognize the economic value of the province's natural capital and its intrinsic link to social prosperity and economic competitiveness which are essential to Nova Scotia's long-term sustainability.

(3) Shared responsibility: A healthy environment and the economy are the shared responsibility of all levels of government, the private sector, and all citizens of the province.

(4) Stewardship: The environment, human capital and the economy must be managed for the benefit of present and future generations. Today's decisions must consider tomorrow's impacts.

(5) Innovation: Innovative solutions are necessary to mutually reinforce the workforce, the environment and economy rather than trade off the priorities of one against the other.

(6) Long-term Approach: A long-term approach to planning and decision-making is necessary to harmonize the goals of the environment and economy.

(7) Continuous Development of our People: One of the key challenges of the department continues to be the delivery of a highly complex and specialized mandate in the face of increasing labour market shortages for skilled and knowledgeable workers.

(8) Regulatory Excellence: Continually improving how we design, implement and review our regulatory programs will result in greater compliance and effectiveness.

3. Core Business Areas

The creation of the new Nova Scotia Environment (NSE), which was formed on April 1, 2008, provided an ideal opportunity for us to re-evaluate our business and strategically identify our goals and priorities. Following that, a secondary step was to align the organizational design with those goals and priorities. As a result, the structure of our divisions has been slightly modified as outlined below (also see Appendix A) and will continue to be refined throughout the year.

3.1 Climate Change Directorate is responsible for developing mitigation and adaptation policies and leads the implementation of the *Climate Change Action Plan*. This includes assessing greenhouse gas reduction opportunities, setting priorities, developing and/or supporting the development of strategies, programs and other actions to reduce emission and help Nova Scotia prepare for climate change. The division also sets emission targets, reduction timelines, and regulations for large point source emitters. It is also active in providing funding and increasing public awareness of climate change and enhancing understanding of the impacts and the science of climate change.

3.2 Environment and Sustainable Prosperity Partnerships is responsible for forming and maintaining positive relationships with government, business, and non-government organizations and interest groups to maximize environmental and economic benefits consistent with the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*.

The division is comprised of the following sections:

- Environmental Trade and Innovation Branch
- Environmental Education
- Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps

Responsibilities of this division include:

- fostering a partnering culture within the department, with inter and non-governmental organizations, and national and international industry associations and stakeholders;
- providing support for the environmental sector in trade and technology development and promotion;
- providing support for government's involvement in sustainable development and prosperity initiatives and activities that are contemplated at the provincial, national and international level, such as negotiation and formulation of trade agreements (e.g., 'Trinidad and Tobago and NS Environmental Trade and Innovation Agreement');
- ensuring effective delivery of major environment service contracts to deliver NS environmental expertise to meet the terms of private sector and government-to-government contracts;
- enabling and supporting public outreach, education, and engagement initiatives; and
- providing youth with opportunities for environmental work experience.

3.3 Environmental Monitoring and Compliance is responsible for field operations relating to environmental promotion and protection from regional offices throughout Nova Scotia.

Responsibilities of this division include:

- education and outreach focused on achieving compliance;
- processing of applications for approvals;
- inspection and monitoring; and
- enforcement activities.

3.4 Environmental Science and Program Management develops and delivers environmental management programs directed at sustainable development. Programs are designed to protect, manage and enhance the environment by providing a strong environmental management framework for environmental issues in the province. The division develops and maintains a comprehensive approach to the protection and sustainable use of Nova Scotia air, water and land resources.

The division is comprised of the following sections:

- Air Quality
- Pollution Prevention
- Protected Areas
- Waste-Resource Management
- Water and Wastewater

Responsibilities of this division include:

- monitoring ambient air resources and developing air quality management plans;
- delivering programs for pollution prevention;
- providing information on pests and use of pesticides;
- serving as a resource for the handling and storage of petroleum and other hazardous substances;
- coordinating a contaminated sites program;
- protecting our natural heritage;
- overseeing the management of water resources; and
- enabling solid waste resource management strategies and programs.

3.5 Policy and Corporate Services is responsible for the coordination of policy and planning, providing consistency in the department's business practices and overseeing the provincial environmental impact assessment process.

This division is comprised of the following sections:

- Policy/Competitiveness and Compliance Initiative
- Information and Business Services
- Environmental Assessment Branch

Responsibilities of this division include:

- coordinating policy and planning for the department, including legislative review and policy development;
- conducting policy research, evaluation and advice;
- overseeing the environmental impact assessment process;
- acting as departmental liaison for national or international issues establishing linkages and partnerships with other levels of government, academia, industry related groups and other stakeholders to establish comprehensive and responsive consultative and information-gathering networks on key research or policy issues;
- continuously advancing and supporting good regulatory practice throughout the department and improving our protection of the public interest, including the competitiveness of Nova Scotia businesses;
- providing a focus within the department for the development, use, and access to our information holdings, including operational records, published material and web site content;
- developing and implementing the department's Occupational Health and Safety program;
- developing an expanded web-based business system to enhance government's capacity to share information and knowledge about the state of the environment and emerging issues with Nova Scotians; and
- providing programs, processes and services to support employee and organizational growth and development.

These core business areas are supported administratively by Communications and Legal Services. They are supported corporately by Financial Services, Human Resources, Information Technology, Legal Services, and the Legislative branches.

4. Strategic Goals, Priorities, and Performance Measures

The department's key, high-level, multi-year strategic goals and priorities were aligned with the challenges facing the department today. Measures are provided for each goal and are presented at the end of the section that lists the priorities for a particular goal. The measures provided are intended to measure outcomes achieved and they directly support the achievement of specific departmental goals.

The priorities presented in the following sections are in addition to the department's many ongoing activities that are carried out on an annual basis. These ongoing activities utilize a substantial portion of the department's effort and resources each year.

4.1 Strategic Goal: Achieve desired environmental outcomes

Nova Scotia Environment focuses on tackling climate change, protecting our environment, and advancing our ambitious environmental goals. Those goals are embodied in a number of pieces of legislation including the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*, *Environment Act*, *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*, *Special Places Protection Act*, and *Water Resources Protection Act*.

The priorities that support this goal are to:

- achieve the commitments of the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*;
- ensure that the Acts that provide the mandate for the department are current, appropriate and enforced; and
- lead Nova Scotia's response to climate change and adaptation.

Planned activities in 2009-2010 include:

- Developing a comprehensive *Water Resource Management Strategy* to effectively manage all water resources in the province. The strategy will be drafted based on policy review and analysis of public feedback that was gathered in 2008. Consultation will be conducted with the public and stakeholders in the fall of 2009 with the draft strategy ready for finalization in 2010.
- Ensuring that all *municipal drinking water supplies* are actively moving toward meeting the provinces treatment standards. Currently about 60% of the province's 85 municipal drinking water supplies meet the provincial treatment standard, and it is anticipated that 90% will meet the treatment standard by December 2010, with the remaining 10% shortly thereafter. We will continue to work with municipalities to achieve full compliance and provide support for municipalities seeking rate increases through the Utility and Review Board.
- Supporting municipalities in meeting the Canadian Council of the Ministers of Environment's Canada-wide strategy for managing *municipal wastewater effluent*. This strategy requires municipal treatment facilities in Nova Scotia to

meet national performance standards for wastewater treatment. NSE will continue to work with municipalities so they can not only achieve at least primary treatment by 2017, but also align themselves with any additional targets following roll-out of the national strategy.

- Implementing changes to the *Water and Wastewater Facilities Regulations and Public Drinking Water Supplies Regulations* that have expanded the definition of a public drinking water supply to include licensed eating establishments, licensed day cares, commercial campgrounds and tourist accommodations with more than 4 rental units.
- Implementing the *Climate Change Action Plan*, which was released in January 2009. This plan includes over sixty cross-department actions that will be implemented over the next five years. The Climate Change Directorate will be responsible for coordinating, monitoring, and tracking these commitments to ensure the province is on target to meeting its short, medium, and long-term targets. This will include:
 - developing a method of inventory and accounting for government green house gas (GHG) emissions;
 - developing a discussion paper looking at the next phase of GHG emissions reduction policies and regulations;
 - establishing a climate change adaptation fund to encourage the submission of competitive proposals to address pressing research needs;
 - coordinating provincial, municipal and institutional collaboration to complete vulnerability assessments (flood, erosion and infrastructure assessments/maps based on future climate scenarios) for select NS pilot communities;
 - expanding web-based educational information and public awareness programs; and
 - commissioning an economic assessment of Nova Scotia's GHG reduction
 - implementing greenhouse gas emissions regulations and air quality regulations that work together to meet the goals of the Climate Change Action plan, by setting 2010, 2015 and 2020 caps on GHG emissions and lower limits on Nova Scotia Power Incorporated's sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions for 2015 and 2020.
- Ensuring that *nitrogen oxide emissions* are reduced by 20% from 2000 levels, *mercury emissions* are reduced by 70% from 2001 levels, and *sulphur dioxide emissions* are reduced by 50% from 1995 levels by 2010. While advances have been made, further cap reductions, as described in the Climate Change Action Plan, are planned. In addition, the department will continue to work with NSPI to develop air emission reduction plans for mercury, and work will begin to develop a clear definition of "low-NO_x" to be adopted by utility and industrial boilers.
- Achieving the Canada-wide standard (CWS) for *ground-level ozone and airborne fine particulate matter*. The CWS establishes ambient objectives in Census

Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) – areas with a population greater than 100,000. In Nova Scotia this includes Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and Cape Breton Regional Municipality. In taking steps to implement the required monitoring and analysis to determine achievement of the CWS, required by 2010, enough measurements have been taken thus far to show that the metric for ozone is currently being met in both CMAs. In HRM, where sufficient data has been collected, the CWS metric for airborne fine particulate matter is being met. In 2009, the department will complete the development of its CWS implementation plan that will describe actions to be taken to ensure CWS achievement, and continue to work to improve our monitoring capacity for ongoing achievement validation.

- Assisting government in achieving its target of having 25% renewable electricity energy by 2015 instead of 2020.
- Establishing a policy to prevent net loss of *wetlands*. In our effort to lead the development of a government-wide policy to prevent net loss of wetlands, NSE has prepared a work plan for creating a Wetland Conservation Policy. To assist us in reaching this target, an Interdepartmental Wetland Committee has been formed to provide government-wide input on policy development. The policy will strive to align with other jurisdictions.
- Developing regulatory tools to stimulate redevelopment of *contaminated land*. The tools will clarify liability, improve site management consistency and provide clarity regarding process. The department, with targeted consultation, will continue to work on developing the supporting framework for contaminated site regulations that would maintain or improve environmental protection while expanding investment and redevelopment opportunities.
- Continuing work on Nova Scotia's renewed *Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy* in order to meet our new disposal rate target of 300 kilograms per person per year by 2015. We will accomplish this through work on new product stewardship initiatives and the development of a construction and demolition waste action plan. Additionally, programs to reduce the use of disposable products, discourage litter and reduce waste will be promoted and strengthened, as will our efforts to improve compliance.
- Continuing work toward *protecting 12% of the province's total land mass* by 2015. At the end of 2008, a total of 8.23 per cent of the province is legally protected in nature reserves, wilderness areas, land trusts, conservation easements and national and provincial parks. In 2009-10, we will:
 - continue work to designate and consult on 3 new wilderness areas, 15 nature reserves and to add 10 parcels to existing wilderness areas as committed to by the government;
 - support the work of the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Nova Scotia Nature Trust in

acquiring important conservation lands and in promoting private land conservation;

- amend the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act* to address Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use and management in consultation with the OHV Advisory Committee;
 - initiate a review of the *Special Places Act* to improve compliance and to clarify roles of both NS Environment and Tourism, Culture and Heritage;
 - review the work of the Colin Stewart Forest Forum and initiate an interdepartmental government review of a province wide system of potential protected areas and mitigating measures for the forest industry with Department of Natural Resources; and
 - respond to land acquisition opportunities which can contribute to the 12% target.
- As part of our ongoing work on *biosolids management*, the department will be revising its guidelines for the Land Application and Storage of Biosolids in Nova Scotia. The department is also represented on a national Biosolids Task Group under the Canadian Council of the Ministers of the Environment which is conducting investigations into biosolids chemistry, the greenhouse gas implications of biosolids management and policy instruments to encourage a nationally consistent biosolids policy and management approach.
 - Developing a regulatory framework and best management practice for *pits* that will reduce administrative burden and ensure consistent environmental standards. Quarries will be addressed in future years.
 - Seeking opportunities to harmonize our approach to *domestic pesticide use* with the Atlantic Provinces. To compliment these efforts, outreach and education will be conducted to ensure sufficient information is available on domestic pesticide products and their use.

| GOAL 1: ACHIEVE DESIRED ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|
| OUTCOME | MEASURE | DATA | ANNUAL TARGET | ULTIMATE TARGET | STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE TARGET |
| Clean drinking water | Percentage of population served by municipal water supplies that meet the health-based criteria for bacteriological quality, as stated in the <i>Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality</i> , at all times during the calendar year | 96.5 (2001) 96.5 (2002) 95.7 (2003) 98.4 (2004) 98.0 (2005) 98.7 (2006) 98.2 (2007) | Maximize the percentage of population served by municipal water supplies that meet the health-based criteria for bacteriological quality | All municipal drinking water supplies will meet the Province's treatment standards | -Enforce the Water and Wastewater Facilities and Public Drinking Water Supplies Regulations including the Guidelines for Monitoring Public Water Supplies -Implement drinking water strategy -Continue to work with municipalities to achieve full compliance with the new drinking water treatment standards |
| Clean air | Annual total sulphur dioxide (SO ₂) air emissions (tonnes) in the province | 170,000 (2000) 164,000 (2001) 154,000 (2002) 161,000 (2003) 161,000 (2004) 126,500 (2005) 126,281 (2006) | SO ₂ emission cap of 141,750 tonnes | Achieve a 50% reduction in SO ₂ emissions (from 1995 cap of 189,000 tonnes) for 2001 emitters by 2010 | -Work with major industrial sources to reduce emissions through the use of lower sulphur fuels and process upgrades |
| | Annual total mercury (Hg) air emissions (kg) from electrical power generation in the province | 267 (2000) 185 (2001) 163 (2002) 158 (2003) 170 (2004) 105 (2005) 162 (2006) 156 (2007) | Maintain a Hg emission cap of 168 kg for electrical power generators | Maintain a Hg emission cap of 65 kg for electrical power generators, by 2010 | -Work with NSPI to encourage the use of lower mercury fuels |
| | Annual total nitrogen oxide (NO _x) air emissions (tonnes) in the province | 90,000 (2000) 88,500 (2001) 80,500 (2002) 76,000 (2003) 74,500 (2004) 89,000 (2005) 82,000 (2006) | Nova Scotia Power's annual NO _x emissions cap is 21,365 tonnes NO _x emissions at 20% or lower than base year (72,000 tonnes, based on revised value for base year measure) by 2009 | | -Work with major industrial sources to reduce emissions -Require the use of low NO _x burners for new facilities and during major upgrades and refits -Federal initiatives on cleaner vehicles, engines and fuels will also contribute to NO _x emission reductions. |

| GOAL 1: ACHIEVE DESIRED ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| OUTCOME | MEASURE | DATA | ANNUAL TARGET | ULTIMATE TARGET | STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE TARGET |
| Protected natural areas | Total hectares of land protected through NS Environment program options | 287,028 (2001-02) 287,320 (2002-03) 287,704 (2003-04) 290,137 (2004-05) 300,314 (2005-06) 301,154 (2006-07) 301,474 (2007-08) | Increase the hectares of land under various protection options | Protect 12% (663,125 hectares) of Nova Scotia's total land mass by 2015 | -Conduct resource inventories and area assessments -Conduct public consultations - encourage private land stewardship -Participate in Crown land planning -Support partnership agreements |
| Responsible waste management | Annual municipal solid waste disposal rate per capita (Kg/person), compared with the regional and national disposal rates | NS – 416 Atlantic - 569 Canada - 753 (2000) NS - 416 Atlantic - 564 Canada - 760 (2002) NS - 427 Atlantic - 596 Canada - 772 (2004) NS – 430 Atlantic - 610 Canada – 835 (2006) | Maintain the NS disposal rate lower than the national and Atlantic average | Achieve a disposal rate of 300 kg/person or lower by 2015 | -Continue to implement the Solid Waste-Resource Management Strategy -Enforce the <i>Solid Waste-Resource Management Regulations</i> -Educate and inform industry, businesses and citizens -Continue to develop product and industry stewardship agreements -Promote research and development of markets for construction and demolition materials and plastics |

4.2 Strategic Goal: Cultivate partnerships and environmental stewards

The department encourages and supports environmental stewardship by working on a wide variety of partnerships to enable environmental entrepreneurship and innovation.

The priorities that support this goal are to:

- expand our outreach and education capacity to build knowledge and foster stewardship principles;
- maximize strategic partnerships through which participants work together to achieve a common purpose;
- enhance communication and information availability so that Nova Scotians are informed environmental stewards; and
- provide stewardship incentives that promote environmentally sound practices.

Planned activities in 2009-2010 include:

- Develop and implement an *Outreach framework and policy*. NSE has elevated the priority of outreach and education as a mechanism by which the department can actively engage audiences to build knowledge and foster stewardship principles. An Outreach and Engagement Policy and Outreach Framework have been prepared for the department, and a work plan has been drafted and will be finalized in Spring 2009.
- Both the Department of Economic and Rural Development (ERD) and NSE understand the important role public procurement plays in contributing to the sustainable prosperity of the province. In 2008, NSE provided technical expertise and leadership in the area environmental impacts and considerations relating to the goods and services purchased by government. NSE worked with ERD to draft and consult on the *Sustainable Procurement Policy*, to develop initial purchasing specifications and guidelines, and to develop practical tools (e.g., website, training, listserv etc.) to assist with the adoption and implementation of sustainable procurement. NSE will continue in this role to provide expertise and support the adoption of sustainable procurement within all government departments, agencies, boards and commissions (Appendix B). Further, where opportunities exist, NSE and ERD will collaborate to extend the principles of sustainable procurement, eco-efficiency and pollution prevention to the MASH (Municipal, Academic, School and Hospital) sector and government suppliers.
- Evaluate the *Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps (NSYCC)* to ensure maximum success. The NSYCC, established in 1989, is designed to preserve and enhance the environment, while providing local youth with work and skill development opportunities in the environmental field. The department is conducting an evaluation of this program to monitor its success, expand current partnerships and develop new ones.
- Develop and implement an *Aboriginal Consultation Policy* that will assist staff in understanding departmental aboriginal consultation obligations and help them to select the appropriate consultation methodologies. Draft guidelines are anticipated in early 2009 with rollout to follow.

- Rejuvenate the *Environmental Trust Fund* to provide a source of funding for projects that involve environmental research, management or conservation. The fund will provide an opportunity for Nova Scotians to engage in projects that will contribute to a healthy environment.
- In recognition of the growing importance of environmental health protection, NSE will continue to provide a supporting role in the implementation of an *intragovernmental Health Protection Plan* to review and manage orphaned health programs within the province. We will continue our role as program delivery staff for Health Promotion & Protection throughout 2009.
- Deliver year four of the *Environmental Home Assessment Program* to assess well water, septic systems and oil tanks of 1000 homes and provide financial assistance to qualified Nova Scotians to repair or replace failed septic systems. An additional 1000 home assessments and 200 septic repair grants are available for this upcoming year. In 2009-2010 we will be evaluating opportunities to expand this program.
- The department will continue to support several government initiatives throughout 2009-2010 including the *Coastal Management Framework*, the *Heritage Strategy* and the *Natural Resources Strategy*. Support to these initiatives is lent through staff participation in inter-governmental working groups that serve to eliminate jurisdictional overlap and ensure all interests are represented to result in the best possible product with maximum impact.

| GOAL 2: CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| OUTCOME | MEASURE | DATA | ANNUAL TARGET | ULTIMATE TARGET | STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE TARGET |
| Proactive environmental management | Total number of business sectors and municipalities participating in management and/or pollution prevention programs and initiatives | 5 (2001-02) 6 (2002-03) 9 (2003-04) 12 (2004-05) 14 (2005-06) 18 (2006-07) 22 (2007-08) | Increase number of participating sectors, municipalities compared to the previous year | Increase number of participating sectors, municipalities | -Provide technical assistance -Facilitate/participate in demonstration projects -Partner with funding agencies/other levels of government - Partner with business associations to initiate new plans |
| | Number of environmental home assessments completed through Environmental | 400; 70 (2006-07) 1000; 200 (2007-08) | Complete 1000-2500 environmental home assessments per year in each year of the program. | | -Delivery of the Environmental Home Assessment Program by non-governmental organizations -Program management and |

| GOAL 2: CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS | | | | | |
|---|---|------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| OUTCOME | MEASURE | DATA | ANNUAL TARGET | ULTIMATE TARGET | STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE TARGET |
| | Home Assessment Program (EHAP); number of septic repairs completed with funding from EHAP | | | | evaluation completed by Pollution Prevention Branch, NS Environment. |

4.3 Strategic Goal: Enhance service delivery

Nova Scotia Environment recognizes that there is always room for improving the manner in which our customer's needs are met. While we have made significant improvements in recent years, we will continuously evaluate new and emerging methods to discover opportunities for improvement.

The priorities that support this goal are to:

- streamline programs to make them more understandable and less cumbersome while continuing to protect the environment;
- provide quality training for our own staff, persons certified by this department, and the public; and
- coordinate our services with other levels of government to maximize our impact.

Planned activities in 2009-2010 include:

- Reviewing current activities and programs that could utilize standards, best management practices and/or codes of practice in order to *streamline processes* and reduce *turnaround times*. In 2009, the target programs for review will be abattoirs, asphalt plants, salvage yards, and pesticides application, as they pertain to the *Activities Designation Regulations*.
- Working towards reducing departmental *administrative burden* by 20%. The department is in the process of reviewing reporting and submission requirements for various programs. In 2009, efforts will be made to streamline some of these requirements.
- Conducting a review of various *approval turnaround times* to identify areas for improvement or alternate methods of program administration in order to meet the requirements of the Better Regulation Initiative to establish new Service Standards.

| GOAL 3: ENHANCE SERVICE DELIVERY | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| OUTCOME | MEASURE | DATA | ANNUAL TARGET | ULTIMATE TARGET | STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE TARGET |
| Easier for business to comply with our laws and reduce costs to improve competitiveness and compliance | Reduced time (percentage) spent by business on administrative requirements. | Baseline year (2006-07) 7.1 (2007-08) 17.5% (2008-09) | 20% less time spent by business on administrative requirements | 20% less time spent by business on administrative requirements by 2010 | Department-wide workplan to reduce administrative burden. |
| Efficient and effective program delivery | Average administrative time (days) to process applications for the approval of the installation of on-site sewage disposal systems | 40 (2000-01) 28 (2001-02) 28 (2002-03) 20 (2003-04) 25 (2004-05) 20 (2005-06) 20 (2006-07) 16 (2007-08) | Applications designated for full review will be processed in 5-7 business days. | Overall program improvement. Approval turnaround times will be reduced by two thirds of the previous average turn-around time | -Ongoing process re-design (Note - legislation specifies 60 day maximum turnaround time) -Streamlining of On-Site application / approval delivered province wide |

4.4 Strategic Goal: Develop dynamic instruments to deliver programs

Nova Scotia Environment is actively working to review and update Nova Scotia's environmental regulatory and non-regulatory systems and is looking for new approaches to achieve desired environmental outcomes. The department and its partners must enhance capacity to ensure that policies and programs are developed, evaluated, and updated as required.

The priorities that support this goal are to:

- develop data and information management tools to make it available in a useful way, both internally and externally;
- strive for continuous improvement to ensure that we are attaining our desired environmental outcomes; and
- ensure good public policy tools are available to support science-based decision making.

Planned activities in 2009-2010 include:

- The Environmental Assessment (EA) Branch developing a *Geographical Information System application* that will assist in both the early planning and subsequent regulatory review of large scale development projects that are required

to undergo a provincial EA. The application will access geospatial data currently managed by a number of provincial government departments to help identify interactions of proposed developments with natural resources, protected areas, and areas of ecological, archaeological and social significance. The application will also be used to geographically record the location and footprint of all past, current and future projects that proceed through EA, to help track regional development trends and identify potential cumulative environmental effects.

- Implementing the final actions identified in the department’s response to the *Auditor General Recommendations* of October of 2007. This will include:
 - An *Activity Tracking System* will be put in place to improve NSE’s ability to track, manage and report on inspection and compliance activities. The system is currently undergoing testing by the Nova Scotia Business Registry, and implementation of the system is scheduled for April 2009; and
 - A *Quality Assurance /Quality Control Program* will be implemented on a sector of industrial activities and continue with two sectors per year to evaluate performance in various program areas. Based on these reviews, corrective measures will be put in place where necessary;
- Implementing a *Well Auditing Program* to ensure drinking water safety. As of January 1, 2009, two Well Auditor positions have been filled and over the next year they will work with the industry to begin the auditing function, gather data, and further shape the development of a long-term auditing plan.

| GOAL 4: DEVELOP DYNAMIC INSTRUMENTS TO DELIVER PROGRAMS | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| OUTCOME | MEASURE | DATA | ANNUAL TARGET | ULTIMATE TARGET | STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE TARGET |
| Quality tools, including regulatory | Compliance with a standardized, systematic development process | Baseline year (2006-07) 72% (2007-08) | 85% compliance by 2008-09 | 95% compliance by 2010. | Deliver 2 training sessions for NS Environment staff on a standardized regulatory development process. |
| Continual improvement of regulatory programs | Number of regulatory programs with performance measures | Baseline year (2006-07) 33% (2007-08) | 50% of regulatory programs identify measures | 90% of regulatory programs have performance measures by 2010 | Inventory and evaluate regulatory performance measures across divisions and |

| GOAL 4: DEVELOP DYNAMIC INSTRUMENTS TO DELIVER PROGRAMS | | | | | |
|---|---------|------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| OUTCOME | MEASURE | DATA | ANNUAL TARGET | ULTIMATE TARGET | STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE TARGET |
| | | | | | create best practices |

4.5 Strategic Goal: Foster a winning workplace

By ensuring recruitment and retention of skilled individuals who choose to work with Nova Scotia Environment as a way to make a difference, we will remain an informed, empowered, and valued workforce recognized for our contributions to ensuring that Nova Scotia's environment is healthy, well-managed, and supports prosperous communities. To achieve this goal, Nova Scotia Environment has developed a *Winning Workplace Strategy*.

The activities that support the strategy fall into three priority areas and are as follows:

- A. Maintaining and enhancing current regulatory, compliance and enforcement (technical and knowledge-based skill) training support and program delivery, including:
 - *Regulatory Management Training* (coordinated in partnership with Policy and Priorities Committees) and Inspections Investigations Prosecutions Foundations Training (IIPFT) for inspectors;
 - A structured *graduated training program* for inspectors will be completed in the Fall of 2009 to provide incremental training that combines the IIPFT training with other mandatory training (e.g. WHMIS, First Aid); and
 - Implementation of *Activities Tracking System*, an electronic system that will give inspectors access to client records, an ability to share data between divisions, increase reporting capabilities, and help improve the quality and timeliness of client interactions.

- B. Building foundational learning and development support systems, such as:
 - An updated *training directory*, which will include all courses/programs relevant to NSE employees (e.g. general mandatory courses, mandatory courses for Inspectors, etc.);
 - The *training inventory*, LearnNet, will be promoted as a learning portal for registration and tracking training that employees have received. In addition, work has already begun on the development of e-learning courses with the aim of piloting an e-learning course on LearnNet in 2009;

- In the Spring of 2009, data will be collected from across the department to determine staff strengths and development needs. This, in turn, will help with further development of programs, courses or development opportunities to meet the needs of staff. A *training needs assessment* will also provide us with a snapshot of the talent currently within the department which will assist us as we continue with workforce planning to build our talent management capabilities.

C. Building the Talent Management framework, systems and processes through:

- Performance Management, Coaching and Rewarding for Performance;
- Career Planning, Mentoring and Knowledge Transfer;
- Talent Review, Critical Role Identification and HR Planning;
- Leadership and Management Development;
- Employee Development Assignments; and
- Employee-Driven Organizational and Cultural Initiatives.

Over the past three years, the department has supported the notion that in order for organizational and cultural change to occur and have a lasting impact, it must be embraced and driven by its employees. Three specific areas of focus and corresponding initiatives had been created to operationalize this idea: Healthy Workplaces, Diversity and Recognition. These initiatives will continue to move forward with the support of the NSE Winning Workplace Committee.

5. Budget Context

| Nova Scotia Environment | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Program and Service Area | Budget 2008/09 Estimate | Budget 2008/09 Actual | Budget 2009/10 Estimate |
| Ordinary Revenues, Fees and Recoveries | \$4,900 | \$5,668 | \$6,058 |
| TCA Purchase Requirements | \$1,355 | \$1,556 | \$1,546 |
| Administration | \$959 | \$795 | \$1,032 |
| Policy and Corporate Services | \$3,437 | \$3,706 | \$4,497 |
| Environmental Monitoring and Compliance | \$11,877 | \$11,437 | \$12,021 |
| Environmental Science and Programs | \$26,769 | \$10,613 | \$24,965 |
| Environment and Sustainable Prosperity | \$510 | \$578 | \$524 |
| Climate Change Directorate | \$1,055 | \$778 | \$1,295 |
| Total Gross Program Expenses | \$44,607 | \$27,907* | \$44,334 |
| Funded Staff (FTE's) | 272.8 | 245 | 277.8 |

*The Department of Environment was \$16.7 million under budget primarily due to reduced spending of \$16.0 million from Eco Nova Scotia with a similar reduction in revenues.

Appendix A – Nova Scotia Environment Organizational Chart



Appendix B – Environment Agencies, Boards and Commissions

- Advisory Committee on the Protection of Special Places
- Environmental Assessment Board
- Environmental Trust Fund Board
- On-Site Services Advisory Board
- Resource Recovery Fund Board
- Roundtable on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity
- Tar Ponds and Coke Ovens Remediation Monitoring Oversight Board