

Focus on the Tobeatic



Tobeatic Wilderness Area Management Planning Exercise

Tobeatic Wilderness Area Questions & Answers



Environment and Labour
Environmental and Natural Areas Management Division
Protected Areas Branch

What is Tobeatic Wilderness Area?

Tobeatic Wilderness Area is a provincial protected area located in the interior of southwestern Nova Scotia. The Tobeatic was designated in 1998 as one of 31 Wilderness Areas in Nova Scotia. It is managed by Nova Scotia Environment and Labour (NSEL) in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

The Tobeatic Wilderness Area covers 104 000 hectares in Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne and Queens counties. It includes portions of five natural landscapes, and protects the headwaters of nine river systems that flow to both the Atlantic and Fundy coasts. It contains naturally functioning ecosystems including barrens, semi-barrens, wetlands, pioneer and old forest; and remote lakes, streams and stillwaters.

What are the objectives of a Wilderness Area?

The primary objectives of a Wilderness Area are to protect natural processes, biological diversity, and outstanding natural features. Activities such as wilderness recreation, environmental education and scientific research are encouraged. Sport fishing and traditional patterns of hunting and trapping are also generally permitted.

What is a management plan?

A management plan is a strategic document that guides the management direction of a protected area. It sets out issues, objectives, strategies, and priorities for all aspects of management including conservation, development, communication, and operation.

The basic management structure for all designated Wilderness Areas is laid out in the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*. Our goal is to develop a comprehensive and integrated management plan for the Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Management planning is an opportunity for the Department to work cooperatively with the public to effectively achieve the Wilderness Area objectives.

What is included in a management plan?

Generally, a management plan will include background information on natural, cultural and recreational values. It will rely on the best available information for topics such as natural ecosystems and functions, biodiversity, human history and wilderness recreation.

Working within the context of the *Act*, the management plan will address specific issues, and provide the strategic direction to the managing authority for site management and long-term planning. It will guide the delivery of shared benefits of Wilderness Area designation, through the development of partnerships for implementation.

What is the role for interested citizens?

The Protected Areas Program is built on a foundation of public participation. Management plans are prepared with a high degree of public involvement, with several opportunities for the public to provide comment and review materials.

How will public consultation for Tobeatic Wilderness Area work?

We value public participation and look forward to continuing to work together with all interested persons or organizations.

A variety of tools will be used including an Advisory Group, a newsletter, and a series of public Open Houses. We will be seeking public comment regarding (i) Issues & Objectives, and (ii) Strategies & Priorities. This input will be compiled, reviewed and incorporated in the development of the management plan.

To date, one round of public consultation has been completed and the Advisory Group for Tobeatic Wilderness Area has provided valuable advice on content for NSEL to develop a Draft Management Plan. Local Open Houses will be held this spring for people to learn more about Tobeatic, and to provide their comments.

What is the Tobeatic Advisory Group?

The Tobeatic Advisory Group (TAG) was established in December 2001 by the Minister of Environment and Labour to advise on matters pertaining to the management plan for Tobeatic Wilderness Area. This volunteer group has assisted the Department throughout the Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise.

The Tobeatic Advisory Group held its initial meeting in March 2002, and has been very active throughout 2002 and 2003 to provide advice to NSEL on content for the Draft Management Plan.

Careful consideration went into the establishment of the Tobeatic Advisory Group. Every effort was made to create an effective working group that fairly represents the range of interests in Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

What organizations make up the TAG?

The following organizations (listed in alphabetical order) have accepted the Minister's invitation to participate on the Tobeatic Advisory Group:

Acadia First Nation
Annapolis Field Naturalists Society
Bear River First Nation
Bowater Mersey Paper Company Limited
Digby East Fish & Game Association
East Shelburne County Rivers Association
JD Irving Limited
Kejimikujik National Park & Historic Site of Canada
Municipality of the County of Annapolis
Municipality of Digby
Municipality of the District of Argyle
Municipality of the District of Shelburne
Municipality of the District of Yarmouth
Municipality of the Region of Queens
Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour
Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture
Nova Scotia Power Incorporated
Queens County Fish & Game Association
Shelburne County Fish & Game Association
Shelburne Wilderness Access & Recreation Association
South Shore Tourism Association
Southwest Paddling Association
Tobeatic Wilderness Committee
Tusket River Environmental Protection Association
Western Valley Development Authority

How can I participate in the Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise?

You can play an important role by working to understand the various issues, and thinking about balanced solutions which meet the objectives of the Wilderness Area and the legislation.

Your best opportunity to participate is by attending one of the Open House workshops, and providing comment on the draft management plan. You may also wish to contact a participating organization of the Tobeatic Advisory Group representing your particular interest.

The Open House information and Draft Management Plan will be available on the Protected Areas Branch website.

Where can I get other information?

For other information on Wilderness Areas, contact your nearest DNR or DEL office to obtain, or view copies of the following publications:

- *Protecting Wilderness - A Summary of the Wilderness Areas Protection Act*
- *Keep It Wild - A Guide for Low Impact Recreation in Nova Scotia's Wilderness Areas;*
- *Boundary Maps for Wilderness Areas* (please note that the *2001 NS Map Atlas* includes all 31 provincial Wilderness Areas)

Contact

For further information on Tobeatic Wilderness Area please contact Leif Helmer, Regional Protected Areas Coordinator for Nova Scotia Environment and Labour – Protected Areas Branch, at 60 Logan Road Bridgewater, by telephone 543-4685 or email helmerpl@gov.ns.ca

Please visit our website www.gov.ns.ca/enla/pareas



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