

Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia: Background

The Coastal Coalition formed out of concern for the natural state of Nova Scotia's coastal areas. Louis Head beach – an area supporting breeding habitat for the endangered Piping Plover, and Kingsburg beach – despite being designated 'protected', are both threatened with development, prompting the questions: "Why isn't endangered species habitat being protected?" and "Who is responsible for protecting beaches?"

After members of the Nova Scotia Bird Society posed these questions to Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources staff, it became clear that provincial legislation and municipal bylaws are lacking when it comes to protecting sensitive coastal areas from harmful developments. Word of this concern reached other groups such as the Kingsburg Coastal Conservancy and the Ecology Action Centre who were currently dealing with similar concerns regarding the Beaches Act.

Sensing the urgency to protect our coastline from inappropriate development, the first coalition meeting was held in May 2004 between Ecology Action Centre, the Kingsburg Coastal Conservancy, members of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists, the Nova Scotia Bird Society, the Nova Scotia Coastal Guardian Program, the Southwest Environmental Protection Association, and the Tusket River Environmental Protection Association.

As word about the coalition travels, more groups sign on. In June, Dan Earle of the Tusket River Environmental Protection Association drafted a mission statement and goals for the coalition. Over 30 groups have agreed to the need for a coastal planning strategy by signing on to the Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia's Mission Statement and Goals (see back page). Our coastline is for sale. Whether beachfront cottage developments, aquaculture or quarries, there needs to be a plan in place to conduct these activities in a manner that will not cause irreparable damage to the coastline for future Nova Scotians.

Since May, the coalition has met once a month, taking the meetings around the province to provide a forum in which groups may express the issues concerning their coastal community. An October meeting was not held due to preparations for the November 5-7 'Changing Tides' workshop at the Annapolis Basin Conference Centre, and for a meeting on November 10th between PC Caucus members and coalition representatives. The latter resulted from a meeting the coalition had with the Minister of Natural Resources on September 1st. Recognizing that the DNR is not the only portfolio concerned with coastal issues, Minister Hurlburt requested a meeting with the PC Caucus to provide the coalition with an opportunity to propose to government that Nova Scotians need to develop a coastal management plan strategy, now.

Given the expertise within the coalition, the overwhelming interest among the members, and the general public concern, as evident in recent media articles, the time is ripe to create a coastal planning strategy suitable for all stakeholders. Thank you for joining us! **Anna McCarron**



The Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia

Mission Statement and Goals

WHO WE ARE

The Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia (CCNS) is composed of a group of individual organizations, each with its own mission, sharing common concern for the future of Nova Scotia's coastal lands. Organizations share information and keep others informed through internet connections. The coalition meets regularly to share status reports, and discuss and identify actions upon which member organizations may wish to cooperate. The individual organizations determine how and when to respond to issues identified by their coalition connection.

MISSION

The Coastal Coalition is dedicated to preservation, restoration and sustainable use of the physical, biological and cultural heritage of Nova Scotia's coastal ecosystems.

MEASURABLE GOALS

Within this context we intend to:

- 1) Promote the development of ecosystem based integrated coastal zone planning and management
- 2) Monitor the activities of government departments, the private sector, organizations and individuals, that may have impact (positive or negative) on coastal ecosystems
- 3) Challenge activities that may threaten sensitive natural areas, coastal wildlife and plant habitat, breeding grounds, or significant cultural artefacts
- 4) Seek commitment from governing bodies to follow a transparent process in decision making, including ease of access to information and full public consultation
- 5) Protect traditional non-destructive public rights to access and coastal use
- 6) Distribute information, position papers, and educational materials developed by members or by the coalition itself
- 7) Support other individuals and groups that engage in activities that reinforce our mission

I/organization named here: _____
signify that I/we agree, in principle, with the mission statement and goals of the CCNS (above).

Please note: In the event that the coalition makes statements regarding specific policies and positions, the signed-on member will be consulted to determine their position. Only groups indicating their agreement with such statements will be named. Signing on here indicates only that you or your group, as a member of the Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia, agree(s) with the mission statement and goals above. Welcome!

Date: _____ Signed: _____
Group representative/signing officer

Address:

Phone:

Email: