



NOTICE

MEETING: St Mary's Municipal Council
Committee of the Whole

DATE: Wednesday, April 2nd, 2025

TIME: 6:00 pm

PLACE: St. Mary's Municipality
Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, NS

Please advise if unable to attend



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, April 2nd, 2025 at 6:00pm

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kmaqi the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Additions to the Agenda
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes: COTW held March 19th, 2025
6. Business Arising from Minutes
7. Correspondence: Wind Energy Areas for the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore
8. Other Matters of Business
 - a. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee
 - b. Stonewall Park – Panel Project Update
9. In-Camera: Contract Negotiations

Adjournment



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of The Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday, March 19th, 2025,

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kma'ki the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

1. Meeting, Date & Time:

Warden Fuller called the COTW Meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council to order on Wednesday, March 19th, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

Warden James Fuller
Deputy Warden Beulah Malloy
Councillor Dana O'Connell
Councillor Scott Beaver
Councillor Emma Tibbo

Also Attending:

Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Marian Fraser, Director of Finance (DOF)
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk
Keren Ruller, Director of Economic Development

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- Addition of #10. In-Camera: Contract Negotiations

4. Approval of the Agenda:

On the motion of Councillor Beaver and seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council approved the agenda as presented.

Motion approved.

On the motion of Councillor O'Connell and seconded by Councillor Tibbo, Council approved the agenda with the addition.

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

Warden Fuller called for errors and omissions to the previous minutes, hearing none, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held March 5th, 2025.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- There was no business arising from the minutes.

7. Correspondence:

- a. Letter from Honorable John A. Lohr Regarding Wind Turbine Setback
 - Please see the Agenda/Package for the correspondence.
 - Correspondence was received about the new regulations will require that the maximum distance between a commercial wind turbine and a dwelling cannot be more than either four times the

height of the turbine, or the distance needed to keep noise levels below 40 decibels outside the home and limit shadow flicker to no more than 30 minutes a day or 30 hours a year.

8. Presentation:

- a. Kara Allen, Visitor Services Manager - Coastal Nova Scotia
 - Please see the Agenda/Package for the presentation.

9. Other Matters of Business:

- a. Tourism & Social Media Campaign
 - Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
 - Keren Ruller, Director of Economic Development informed Council of the tourism website and social media campaign research that the municipality has been doing to promote events, attractions, facilities, and parks in St. Mary's.
 - The objective is to be competitive in attracting visitors and enhancing online user experience of the tourism website and social media platforms. It is essential to create a website that focuses on usability, aesthetics, and functionality with search engine optimization (SEO). Council has identified tourism as a key focus for the Economic Development Department for the 2025-2026 year.

On motion of Councillor Beaver, seconded by Councillor O'Connell, Council approve \$8,625.00 Plus HST for Digital Nova Scotia Grant on the advertising campaign. This grant will provide \$17,250.00 worth of digital tourism advertising for a cost of \$8,625.00 to the municipality with the remaining 50% matched by Digital Nova Scotia. Further, Council approves the award for digital marketing and tourism support to Sociable Media Inc. in the sum of \$11,500. Plus HST.

Motion approved.

- b. General Government Grants Policy Amendments
 - Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
 - Based on the recent call for applications from nonprofit organizations under the General Government Grants Policy council has determine a need for amendments to the policy. Staff have taken direction provided by Municipal Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting on March 5th, 2025, and incorporated recommend changes into the policy.
 - Council also requested that due to the proposed amendments a one-time extension on the application due date occur for the fiscal year 2025-2026.
 - The municipality will put out a second call for applications to the General Government Grants policy with a deadline of May 14th, 2025.

On recommendation of Councillor O'Connell seconded by Councillor Beaver, Council approve to amend section 6 of the General Government Grant Policy and state a minimum total project of \$1,000 along with removing the stipulation that organizations are only eligible if they have not received the grant within the last two fiscal years along with all other recommend non substantive

changes. Furthermore, Recommend that Municipal Council re-issue the call for General Government Grant applications for the 2025-2026 fiscal year with a deadline for applications of May 14th, 2025.

Recommendation adopted.

c. 2025-2026 Municipal Operating Budget Draft 2

- Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
- Marian Fraser, Director of Finance informed Council of the updates recommended by Council to the 2025-2026 Operating Budget Draft 2.

d. 2025-2026 Internal & External Committee of Council Appointments

- Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
- The Internal/External Committees of Council was brought up to decided if Council members wanted to change the committees they are on. Council decided that all members were happy with the committee they sit on and that no changes needed to be made.
- Municipal Clerk stated that there is no alternate for the Accessibility Advisory Committee, Councillor Tibbo was appointed, formal appointment will be made at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 2nd, 2025.

10. In-Camera: Contract Negotiations

On motion of Councillor O'Connell, seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council agreed to move In-Camera for contract negotiations at 7:20pm.

Motion approved.

On motion of Deputy Warden Malloy, seconded by Councillor O'Connell, Council agreed to reconvene to regular session at 7:44pm.

Motion approved.

Adjournment

On motion of Warden Fuller, there being no further matters of business, Council adjourned at 7:44pm.

Motion approved.

Recorded By
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk

Approved By
Warden Fuller

Proposed Wind Energy Areas for the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore

Discussion Paper

Natural Resources Canada
Nova Scotia Department of Energy

March 2025



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1. Introduction

Canada, with the world's longest coastline, a stable regulatory environment, and decades of experience in offshore energy development, is well-positioned to enter the \$1-trillion global offshore wind market.

Nova Scotia's offshore is particularly promising, with strong winds and favourable underwater conditions – including water depth and geology – to support offshore wind energy projects.

Safely developing offshore wind energy in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area can create jobs, attract investment, provide long-term energy security, and help reduce carbon emissions.

To support the development of this emerging industry, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia are seeking feedback from communities, Indigenous groups, businesses, and individuals on five proposed **Wind Energy Areas**. Information on how to provide feedback can be found in section 6.

What are Wind Energy Areas?

Wind Energy Areas are large sections of ocean identified as being suitable for potential offshore wind development. Wind Energy Areas help guide ocean users, communities, and developers by clarifying where future offshore wind projects could be built. Identifying Wind Energy Areas is an important step in ensuring Nova Scotia meets its target of issuing licences for up to **5 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030**.

The five proposed Wind Energy Areas are based on the **Potential Development Areas** identified by the independent **Committee for the Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia** in its **Final Report** and were informed by technical studies, geological surveys, environmental data, fishing activity, and community feedback.

Who manages offshore wind development?

Canada and Nova Scotia jointly manage safe offshore energy development through the Canada-Nova Scotia **Accord Acts**. In 2025, these laws were updated to include offshore renewable energy.

The **Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator** (the Regulator) is responsible for regulating offshore energy development, in accordance with the Accord Acts.

2. How Locations for Offshore Wind Projects Are Approved: The Land Tenure Process

Before any company can build an offshore wind project, they must obtain a **submerged land licence**. A submerged land licence provides the licence holder with the right to use the seabed for offshore wind development. The [land tenure process](#) describes the steps involved in obtaining a submerged land licence; each step must be completed before advancing to the next.

Public engagement – and formal consultation where there is a duty to consult Indigenous groups – is built into the process to provide multiple opportunities for input and feedback.

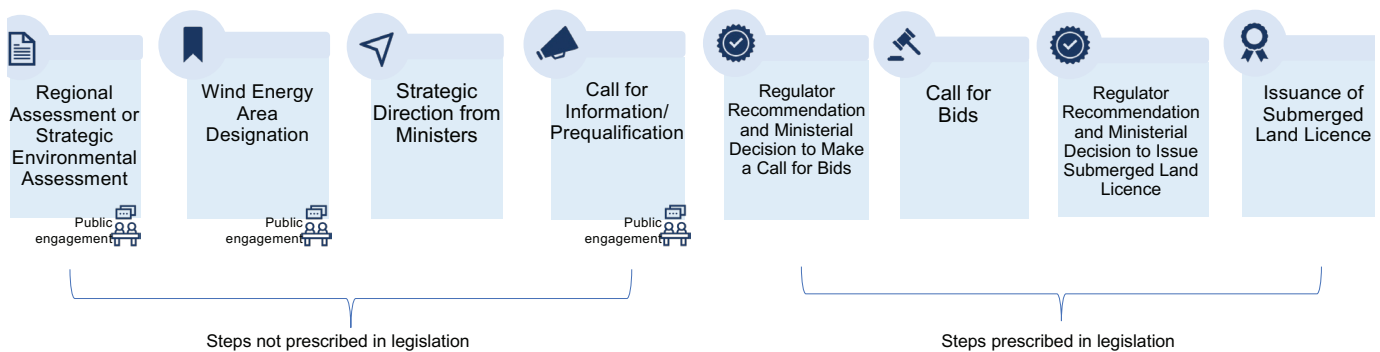


Figure 1: The land tenure process to issue a submerged land licence for offshore wind development.

As shown in the figure above, the designation of Wind Energy Areas is the **second step** in the land tenure process and is informed by public engagement. The designation of Wind Energy Areas by federal and provincial governments is meant to clarify where offshore wind development can take place in the future; it does not mean that development will take place in the area. The location and size of future Call for Bids areas within Wind Energy Areas will be determined during the subsequent steps in the land tenure process.

After the final step, if a company is awarded a submerged land licence through the land tenure process, it will need to seek further environmental and regulatory approvals for each phase of the project before moving forward.

What is a submerged land licence?

A submerged land licence gives a company exclusive rights to develop an offshore wind project in a specific area of the ocean. It does not allow immediate construction – projects must first go through environmental and regulatory approvals.

3. Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind

In 2023, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, in collaboration with Natural Resources Canada and the Government of Nova Scotia, appointed a five-member independent committee to conduct a [Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia](#).

The committee reviewed scientific data, engaged with communities and industries, and recommended areas with strong potential for the development of offshore wind. The committee delivered three key reports:

1. [Interim report \(March 23, 2024\)](#):

- Summarized existing information and public engagement so far
- Included maps of potential development areas
- Outlined the process for selecting these areas
- Provided preliminary non-spatial recommendations

2. [Draft final report \(October 31, 2024\)](#):

- Analyzed various studies, research, and public feedback
- Incorporated expert opinions
- Identified eight potential development areas, categorized into **Tier 1** and **Tier 2**
- Included recommendations for governments to consider

3. [Final report \(January 23, 2025\)](#):

- Confirmed the eight potential development areas for offshore wind development
- Maintained the Tier 1 and Tier 2 classifications (figure 2)

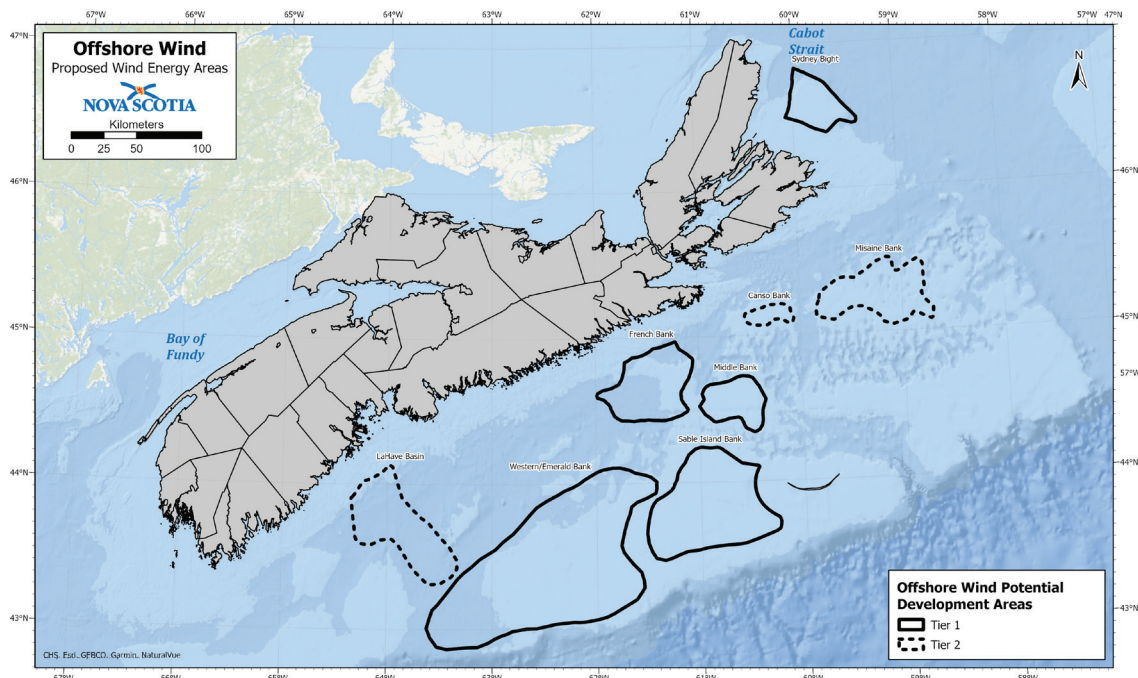


Figure 2: Potential development areas identified by the committee.

As part of its work, the committee identified the eight potential development areas using a **spatial planning process** which included:

1. **Eliminating restricted zones** where wind development may be prohibited
2. **Assessing constraints** such as biological, physical, technical, ecological, and socio-economic factors
3. **Engaging extensively** with Indigenous groups, fishers, the public, government, and industry
4. **Recommending a 25-km buffer** from the coastline and around Sable Island, while acknowledging that exceptions may be considered when necessary

The committee grouped potential development areas into two categories:

- **Tier 1** areas (recommended for **immediate consideration** as Wind Energy Areas), including: French Bank, Middle Bank, Sable Island Bank, Sydney Bight, and Western/Emerald Bank
- **Tier 2** areas (requiring **further review** before consideration as Wind Energy Areas), including: Canso Bank, Misaine Bank, and LaHave Basin

4. Proposed Wind Energy Areas

It is proposed that all five **Tier 1** areas from the committee's final report be designated as Wind Energy Areas, with some changes. As noted by the Regional Assessment committee, there may be circumstances where an incursion into the 25-km coastal buffer may be necessary or sought. As outlined below, the boundaries of two proposed Wind Energy Areas are closer than 25 km from shore.

Tier 2 areas will not be considered right now. This decision may be revisited after 2030, as Nova Scotia reviews its progress towards a goal of licencing up to 5 gigawatts of offshore wind by that date.

A **key consideration** in selecting the Wind Energy Areas below is choosing areas where offshore wind projects are safe and technically feasible. Other critical features include:

- Large enough to meet Nova Scotia's offshore wind energy goals
- Informed by input from federal and provincial authorities, Indigenous groups, fishers, developers, stakeholders, and the committee
- Contiguous areas to allow shared infrastructure (e.g., transmission cables) and other project efficiencies
- Located where there will be less impact on other ocean users, and where conflicts can be avoided or mitigated

Additional reports used to inform the selection process can be found in **Annex A**.

The proposed Wind Energy Areas are as follows:

Proposed Wind Energy Areas				
Tier	Area	Technology	Size	Change*
1	French Bank	floating	3421 km ²	566 km ² added
1	Middle Bank	fixed + floating	2289 km ²	844 km ² added
1	Sable Island Bank	fixed + floating	5850 km ²	no change
1	Sydney Bight	fixed + floating	1691 km ²	256 km ² added
1	Western/Emerald Bank	floating	6334 km ²	6836 km ² removed
Removed from consideration				
2	Canso Bank	none	430 km ²	removed
2	Misaine Bank	none	2830 km ²	removed
2	LaHave Basin	none	3450 km ²	removed

*Increase or decrease in area (km²) from the Tier 1 and 2 potential development areas listed in the committee's final report.

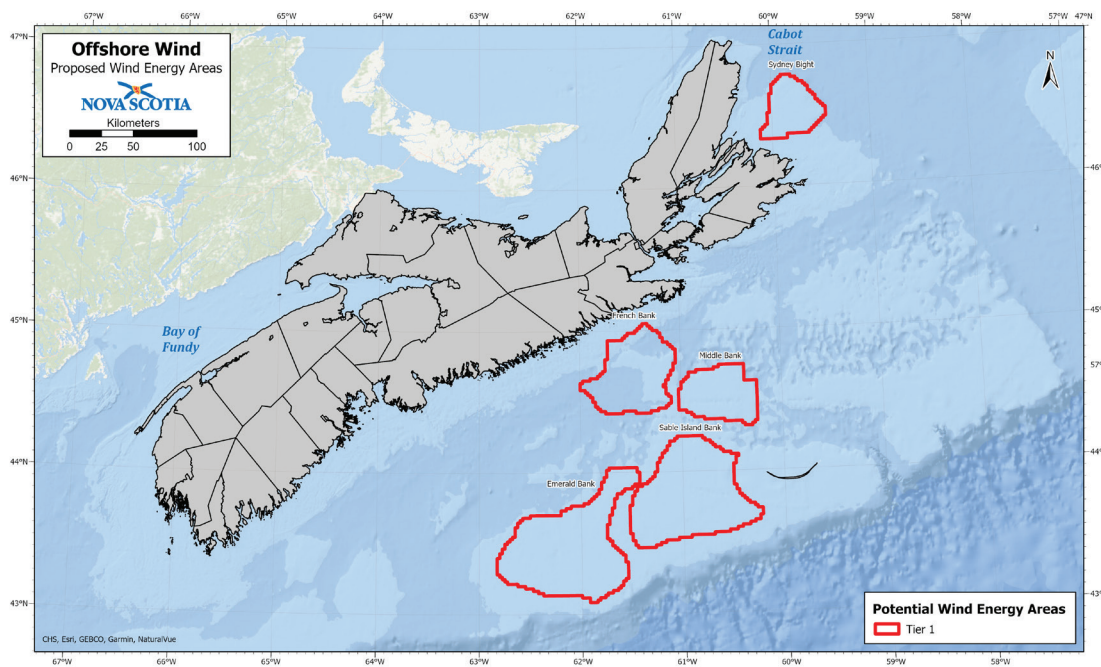


Figure 3: Proposed Wind Energy Areas

Fixed vs. Floating Offshore Wind

- **Fixed-bottom turbines** are anchored to the seabed and are ideal for shallow waters.
- **Floating turbines** rest on floating platforms, allowing wind projects to be built in deeper waters.

4.1 French Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

The proposed French Bank Wind Energy Area is roughly 33 km from the community of Goldboro and 65 km from the port of Sheet Harbour – both communities could help service local offshore wind development. A detailed description of the area is available in the committee's [Final Report](#) on page 266.

It is proposed that the potential development area be expanded to include the entire French Bank and additional areas suitable for floating offshore wind development; the proposed expansion also allows for the inclusion of a landward area within the 25-km coastal buffer.

Currently, the entire French Bank potential development area has water depths greater than 70m, making it only suitable for floating wind turbines.

Expanding the area:

- Adds a section within the 25-km buffer that has low vessel traffic, minimizing conflict (figures 4 and 5)

- Maintains a distance of approximately 15 km from shore at its nearest point
- Includes all areas with suitable conditions for offshore wind development
- Provides more flexibility for future project planning, ensuring that bidding and licencing areas can adapt to social, environmental, and economic factors

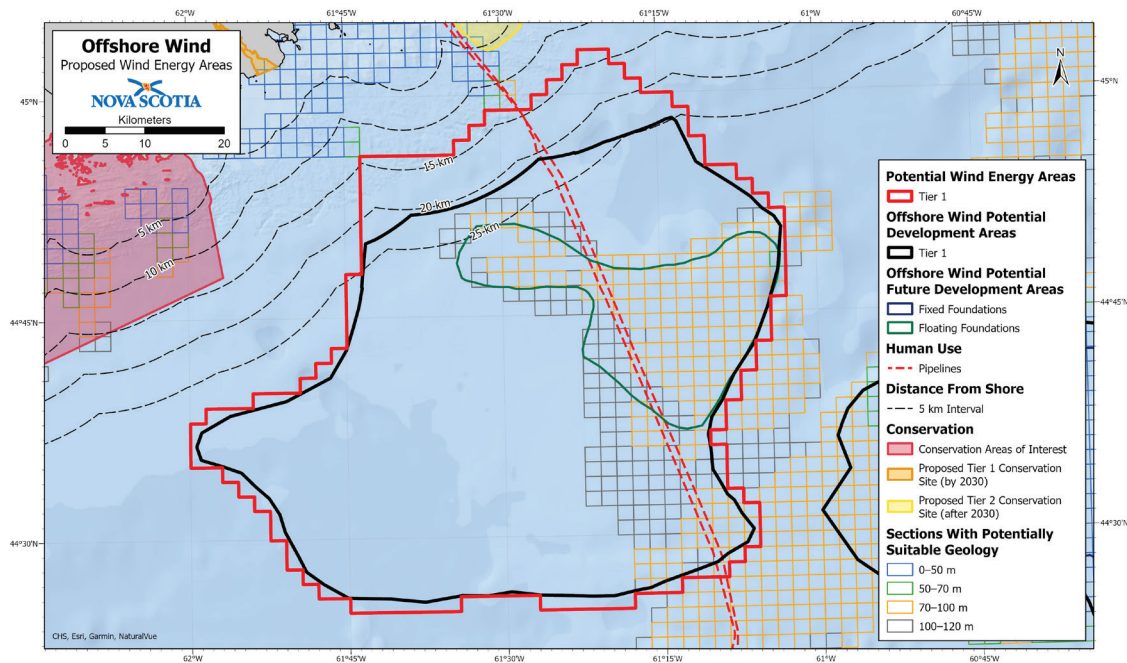


Figure 4: French Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

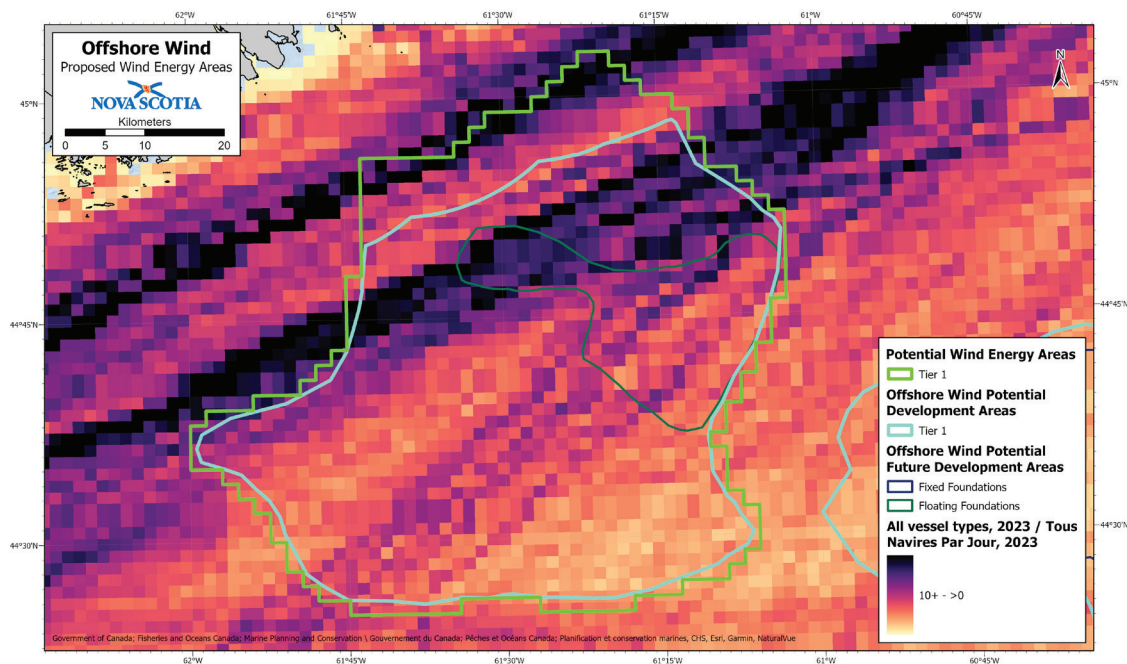


Figure 5: Frequency of vessel traffic near the proposed French Bank Wind Energy Area

4.2 Middle Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

The proposed Middle Bank Wind Energy Area is located roughly 60 km from shore at its closest point and roughly 120 km from the port of Port Hawkesbury. A detailed description of the area is available in the committee's [Final Report](#) on page 257.

It is proposed that the Middle Bank potential development area be expanded to include a southeastern portion of the bank. Based on available data, this area has suitable water depths and surface geology for offshore wind development.

Expanding the proposed area:

- Increases the chances of successful project development, supporting the sustainable growth of Nova Scotia's offshore wind sector and helping the province meet its wind energy targets
- Allows for greater flexibility in addressing social, physical, environmental, and economic factors when planning projects
- Provides more options for future bidding processes, licence areas, and project designs, given the increase in area with shallower water depths

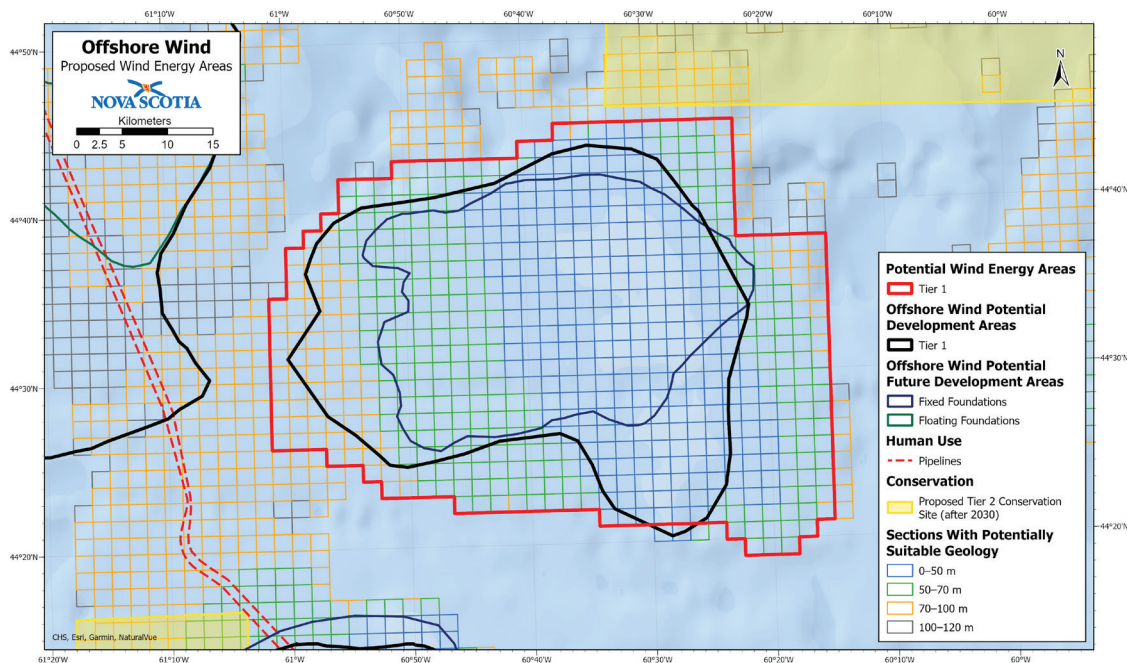


Figure 6: Middle Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

4.3 Sable Island Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

The proposed Sable Island Bank Wind Energy Area is a large area far from shore – roughly 110 km at its closest point. A detailed description of the area is available in the committee's [Final Report](#) on page 273.

It is proposed that the boundaries of the potential development area be maintained, including the 25-km buffer around Sable Island, a national park reserve.

The Sable Island Bank is a large area with suitable water depths and geology for both fixed-bottom and floating wind technologies. Its size and conditions provide:

- Flexibility for future project planning, allowing for adaptable bidding and licencing options
- The ability to host multiple projects sharing services and infrastructure – the area includes access to a decommissioned pipeline corridor that could be used to connect power cables to shore
- Enough space to support Nova Scotia's offshore wind targets, including potential expansion beyond 2030

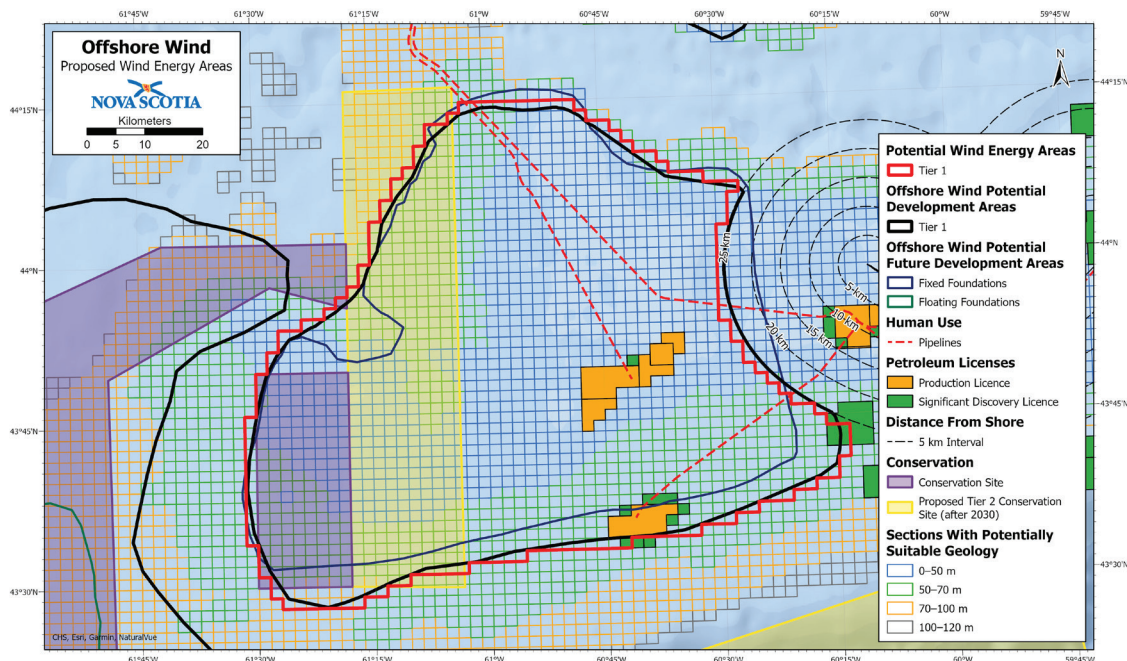


Figure 7: Sable Island Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

Note: the slightly larger map area is a result of using the Regulator's land division system, which is grid-based.

4.4 Sydney Bight Proposed Wind Energy Area

The proposed Sydney Bight Wind Energy Area is relatively close to shore, existing grid infrastructure, and port facilities along the northeastern coast of Cape Breton. A detailed description of the area is available in the committee's [Final Report](#) on page 248.

It is proposed that the Sydney Bight potential development area be expanded to include a landward area within the 25-km coastal buffer. The expansion would include an area with water depths of less than 50m.

Currently, the Sydney Bight potential development area only includes areas deeper than 50m, which are less suitable for fixed-bottom wind turbines—the most widely used and proven offshore wind technology. Expanding into shallower waters (less than 50m) would allow fixed-bottom offshore wind development to be considered as an option. In addition, bringing the Wind Energy Area closer to shore offers several advantages, including:

- Lower costs for subsea cables, grid connections, construction, and maintenance
- Easier early-stage development and more flexible interconnection options
- Reduced transmission losses by being near existing onshore grid infrastructure

While the expansion would extend into the recommended buffer zone, potential conflicts could be avoided or mitigated through further assessments and project-specific measures.

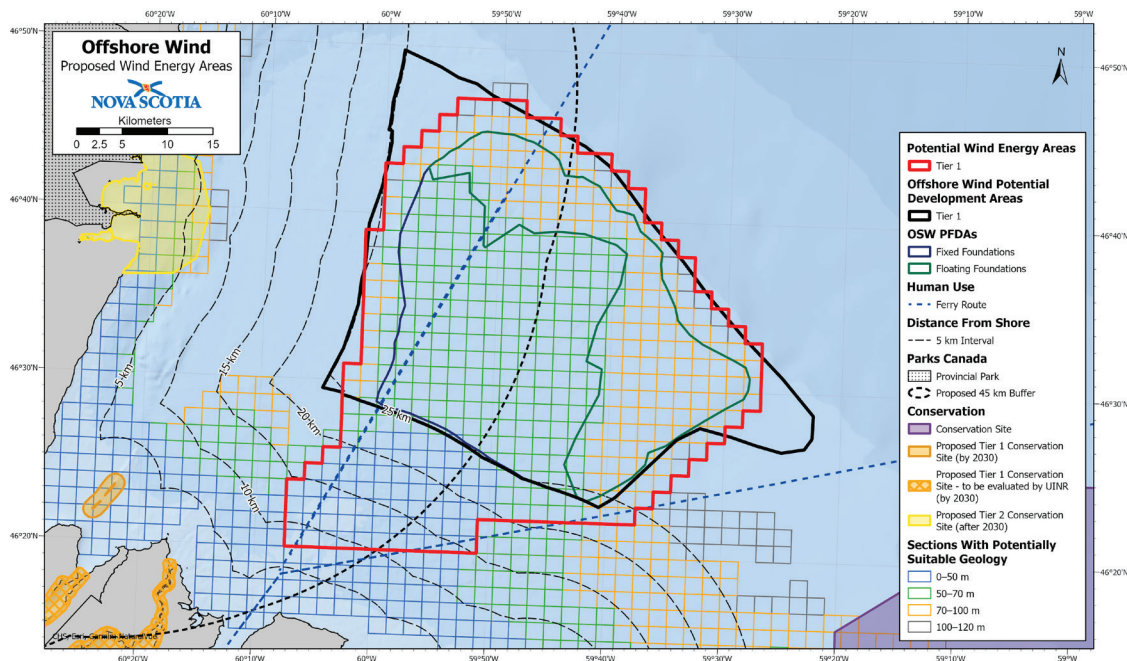


Figure 8: Sydney Bight Proposed Wind Energy Area

4.5 Western/Emerald Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

The proposed Western/Emerald Bank Wind Energy Area is another large area far from shore – roughly 95 km at its closest point. A detailed description of the area is available in the committee's [Final Report](#) on page 283.

It is proposed that approximately 7000 km² be removed from the potential development area. The proposed Western/Emerald Bank Wind Energy Area would include:

- A contiguous zone with water depths between 50m and 100m
- Geological conditions suitable for floating wind turbines

There are areas of overlap with a Marine Refuge, the Western/Emerald Bank Conservation Area, and a Department of National Defence exercise area, and any future offshore wind development would need to consider and address these overlapping uses.

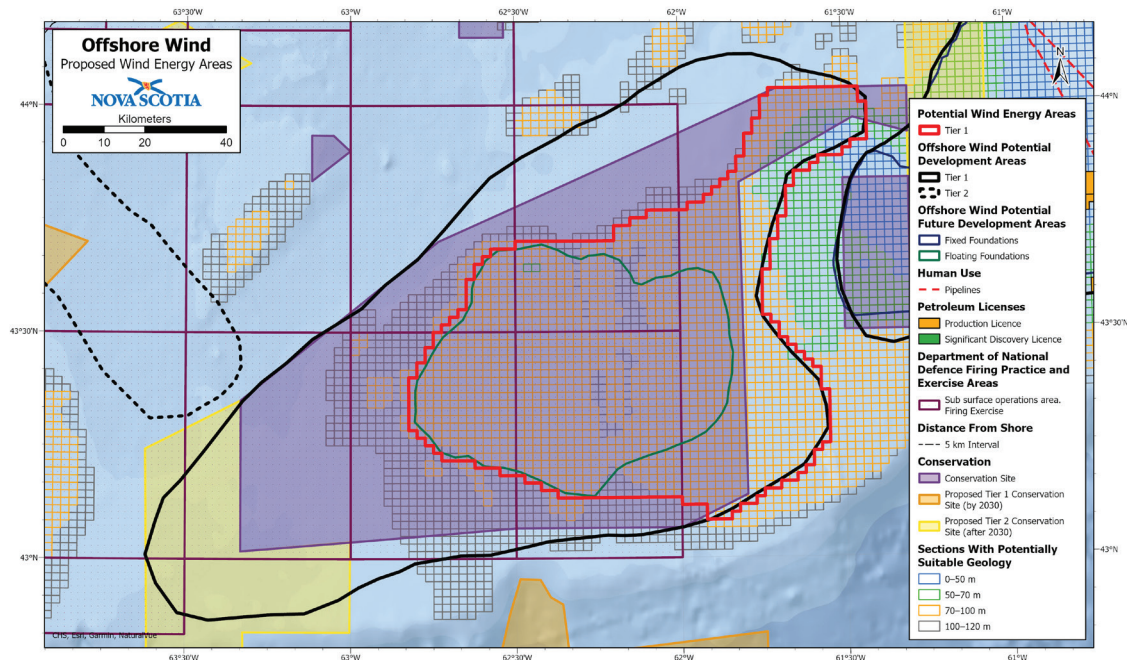


Figure 9: Western/ Emerald Bank Proposed Wind Energy Area

5. Future Wind Energy Areas

The five Wind Energy Areas proposed in this document support Nova Scotia's target to issue submerged land licences for up to five gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030.

The Tier 2 areas identified in the committee's final report will not be considered for development at this time. After 2030, more Wind Energy Areas may be considered based on evolving energy needs, environmental research, safety and public input.

Wind Energy Areas will be reviewed as new data becomes available to ensure they continue to support Canada and Nova Scotia's priorities for clean, safe energy and economic growth and respect the marine ecosystem and its users.

6. How to Submit Feedback

Public feedback is welcome and accepted until April 14, 2025.

- **Email:**
marinerenewables@novascotia.ca
- **Mail:**
Nova Scotia Department of Energy
PO Box 2664
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
B3J 3P7

For questions or assistance, please reach out to marinerenewables@novascotia.ca.

Next steps

It is anticipated that Wind Energy Areas will be officially designated in Summer 2025. Additional resources and supporting documents will be available online.

Annex A: Additional Reports and Resources Used to Propose Wind Energy Areas

Aegir

- Study: <https://netzeroatlantic.ca/sites/default/files/2023-04/Value%20Mapping%20Nova%20Scotia%20Offshore%20Wind%20Resources.pdf>

CanmetENERGY-Ottawa

- Jurisdictional Scan: https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2022/rncan-nrcan/M154-136-2020-eng.pdf
- Technology Scan: https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2022/rncan-nrcan/M154-147-2021-eng.pdf
- Preliminary Suitability Analysis: <https://ostrnrcan-dostrncan.canada.ca/bitstreams/ab7abe90-a14d-4cf8-88ea-47d9ba30219a/download>

Department of Fisheries and Oceans

- Marxan with Zones: [Application of Marxan with Zones as a marine spatial planning decision-support tool: a case study for offshore wind planning in Nova Scotia \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/application-of-marxan-with-zones-as-a-marine-spatial-planning-decision-support-tool-a-case-study-for-offshore-wind-planning-in-nova-scotia)

Geological Survey of Canada:

- Eamer, J. B. R., Broom, L. M., Campbell, D. C., Desiège, P. -A., Greaves, C., Normandeau, A., Philibert, G., Watson, V & Skinner, C. (2024). Recent research in support of a low-carbon economy at the Geological Survey of Canada - Atlantic. Geological Survey of Canada, Open File, 9204. <https://doi.org/10.4095/p4vptgc1s2>
- Eamer, J. B. R., Greaves, C., Maselli, V., King, E. L., Shaw, J., Manning, D., Higgins, J., Hayward, S. E. & Meslin, P. (2024). R/V William Kennedy expedition 2023004: seabed sampling and geophysical surveys – Eastern Shore, Nova Scotia. Geological Survey of Canada, Open File, 9164, 22. <https://doi.org/10.4095/pmt3322>
- Eamer, J. B. R., Greaves, C. & King, E. L. (2023). The science questions underpinning the potential for offshore wind turbines on Atlantic Canada's continental shelves. Geological Survey of Canada, Scientific Presentation, 158. <https://doi.org/10.4095/331697>
- Eamer, J. B. R., Levisky, Z. & MacKillop, K. (2022). Geotechnical parameters important for offshore wind energy in Atlantic Canada. Geological Survey of Canada, Open File, 8873, 41. <https://doi.org/10.4095/329688>
- Eamer, J. B. R., Shaw, J. M., King, E. L. & MacKillop, K. (2020). The inner shelf geology of Atlantic Canada compared with the North Sea and Atlantic United States: insights for Atlantic Canadian offshore wind energy. Continental Shelf Research, 213, 104297, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.csr.2020.104297>
- Eamer, J. B. R., Shaw, J. M., King, E. L. & MacKillop, K. (2020). Seabed conditions on the inner shelves of Atlantic Canada. Geological Survey of Canada, Open File, 8731, 161. <https://doi.org/10.4095/326514>
- Campbell, D. C., Normandeau, A., Desiège, P. -A., Ballinger, T., Campbell, L. M., Evans, J., Greaves, C., King, H., Garner, J., Leger, M., Manning, D., Maltby, M., Moore, A., Meslin, P., Patton, E. R., Pledge, P. E. & Robertson, A. (2024). RRS Discovery Expedition 2023-003 (DY169 Leg 01): seabed investigations of the eastern Scotian Shelf and canyons, offshore Nova Scotia. Geological Survey of Canada, Open File, 9179, 126. <https://doi.org/10.4095/p0h1q1jn7y>

Department of Community Development & Recreation

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee

SUMMARY

The IDEAA Advisory Committee Policy will establish and govern the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee. The IDEAA Advisory Committee will provide meaningful and impactful advice to the Municipal Council related to the equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility of policies, programs, and services provided by the Municipality and to address broad issues of equity, diversity, inclusion anti-hate and accessibility and to develop a Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate and Accessibility Advisory Committee Plan.

BACKGROUND

The *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act*, passed in 2022, required municipalities to develop equity and anti-racism plans. This exercise requires municipalities to undergo a planning process to identify actions that will promote equity and anti-racism by considering the needs of underrepresented and underserved communities. The Office of Equity and Anti-Racism and the Accessibility Directorate are working collaboratively to support municipalities and villages to meet requirements under both the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* and *Accessibility Act* into one interconnected planning approach. The Municipal Accessibility Plan is due to be reviewed and updated. This provides the opportunity for the Municipality to use a collaborate planning approach.

At the Committee of the Whole Meeting on October 16th, 2024, Council directed staff to draft an Equity, Anti-Racism, Inclusion and Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy that enables the Municipality to address systemic hate, inequity and racism and identify, remove and prevent barriers of accessibility including the development of an Equity, Anti-Racism, Inclusion & Accessibility Plan.

This Policy was presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee on March 13th, 2025, to gather feedback and no substantive concerns were brought forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend Council adopt the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee Policy and repeal the Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy.

Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy



1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish and govern an *Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee* that will provide meaningful and impactful advice to the Municipal Council related to the equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility of policies, programs, and services provided by the Municipality and to address broad issues of equity, diversity, inclusion anti-hate and accessibility and to develop a Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate and Accessibility Advisory Committee Plan.

2. Scope

The scope of the IDEAA Advisory Committee shall be to review, assess and make recommendations on the operations of the Municipality to become more inclusive, diverse, equitable, welcoming and accessible.

3. Authority

This policy derives its authority from section 44 of the *Accessibility Act* of the Province of Nova Scotia. The responsibility of providing meaningful and impactful advice to the Municipality related to the equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility of policies, programs, and services provided by the Municipality by virtue of being delegated this responsibility from Council.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. *Accessibility* - ensuring the ability for everyone, regardless of disability, to have access, use, and benefit from their environment. It means making sure that people with disabilities have access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications and to other facilities and services that are open or provided to the public, on an equal basis with others. Accessibility means having the necessary conditions to reduce or eliminate the barriers that hinder the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.
- 4.2. *Anti-Racism* – the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes to political, economic, and social life. This is achieved through the identification and elimination of racism by changing oppressive systems, structures, policies, practices, and attitudes so that historic, current, and future harm can be eliminated and so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

- 4.3. *Barrier* – anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice.
- 4.4. *Disability* – a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society.
- 4.5. *Diversity* - means having a variety of people from a range of different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, life experiences, competencies and faiths represented on teams, in workplaces in general and particularly in processes like engagement.
- 4.6. *Equity* – equity recognizes that everyone doesn't begin in the same place in society. Some people face adverse conditions and circumstances making it more challenging with the same effort to achieve the same goals. Equity advocates for those who may have been historically disadvantaged, making it difficult for them to be successful. What is "fair" as it relates to equity isn't a question of what is the same but rather the point from which a person begins. Equity considers historical and other factors in determining that is fair.
- 4.7. *Hate* - provocation, hostility or intolerance by means of threats, harassment, abuse, incitement or intimidation motivated by the actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability or sexual orientation of any person.
- 4.8. *Inclusion* - Inclusion encompasses norms, practices, and intentional actions to promote participation, engagement, empowerment, and a sense of belonging for members of historically underrepresented and underserved groups in all aspects of life. It is about celebrating, valuing, and amplifying perspectives, voices, styles, and identities that have been marginalized by promoting an institutional culture and practices to ensure all can experience a welcoming space of fairness, dignity, and human flourishing.
- 4.9. *Racism* - the discrimination or antagonism by, or the prejudice of, an individual, community or institution against a person or people based on the person's or people's membership or perceived membership in a racial or ethnic group, and having the power to carry out that discrimination, antagonism or prejudice through institutional *policies and practices that shape cultural beliefs and values of a society*.

4.10. *The Committee* – the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee.

4.11. *The Municipality* – the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.

5. Membership

5.1. The Committee will have no more than five members.

5.2. The Committee shall be comprised of the following members:

5.2.1. One (1) Municipal Councillor (voting member); and

5.2.2. Up to four (4) members of the public (voting members); and

5.2.3. The Director of Community Development & Recreation (ex-officio).

5.3. At least one half of the members of the *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee* must be persons with disabilities or representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities as per the *Accessibility Act*.

5.4. At least two members of the *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee* shall be persons with lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members. Individuals shall have strong community knowledge, a solid understanding of equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility policies, and practices, as well as the knowledge to understand and respond to discriminatory and racist actions and be comfortable having difficult conversations about such.

5.5. If at any point in time the requirements under section 5.3 or 5.4 are not met, the Committee can continue to operate providing the vacancy is actively being advertised.

5.6. Applications for appointment to the Committee shall be invited by public advertisement and a submission of the completed *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee Application Form* (Appendix A). Members will be appointed at the Annual General Meeting of Council.

5.7. The Committee will be chaired by the appointed member of Council.

5.8. Public members will be appointed to the Committee annually following the Annual General Meeting of Council.

- 5.9. Any member of the committee who meets the membership requirements may re-apply for appointment; there shall be no limit on the number of consecutive terms any members may serve on the Committee.
- 5.10. Municipal staff will act as nonvoting members and will provide administrative support to the Committee including recording minutes and ensuring proper records management.
- 5.11. The committee will consist of voting members who serve without pay.
- 5.12. All committee members are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses for meetings from their place of residence at the set municipal rate and recording requirements as per the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's *Mileage Expense Policy*.

6. Qualifications

- 6.1. Preference will be given to applicants with training or experience in matters relating to equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility.
- 6.2. Committee members must be a resident of the Municipality or represent an organization that serves the Municipality.

7. Committee Responsibilities

- 7.1. The committee shall advise Council on what impact the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's policies, programs and services may have on equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility.
- 7.2. Review of the current policies, bylaws, and practices of the Municipality with an IDEAA lens; and
- 7.3. Review of the current properties and facilities of each local government with an IDEAA lens; and
- 7.4. Review all materials provided to Advisory Committee members along with their own independent research, to prepare for each Committee meeting; and
- 7.5. Be open and objective to all ideas, suggestions, and opportunities, while understanding the importance of community awareness and education throughout the Municipality, focusing on long-term community appreciation of the value and contribution of each citizen and their background, culture, knowledge, and skills; and
- 7.6. Receive presentations, letters, emails, phone calls, and materials from community members and community experts, or community resources where applicable, related to

- IDEAA, and seek to incorporate the relevant information and ideas into current and future workplans; and
- 7.7. Carry out a review of provincial and federal legislation to ensure all Committee members are aware of its legal opportunities and constraints and make recommendations for changes to the four local governments where the Advisory Committee feels changes to legislation are needed to support IDEAA within the Municipality and Nova Scotia; and
- 7.8. Where financial resources allow, create, promote, and recommend small grants to community organizations that create, develop, plan, host, or offer programs, services, events, or functions that directly support the goals of IDEAA throughout the Municipality with public awareness and education; and
- 7.9. The committee shall advise council in the preparation, implementation, and effectiveness of its Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate and Accessibility Plan. The plan must include:
- 7.9.1. A report on measures the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's has taken and intends to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers for services and facilities.
- 7.9.2. Information on procedures the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's has in place to assess the following for their effect on individuals:
- a) Any of its proposed policies, programs, practices and services, and
 - b) Any proposed enactments or bylaws it will be administering; and
 - c) Any other prescribed information.
- 7.10. The Committee shall review, identify, advise, and monitor existing and proposed Municipal documents, facilities, and services to promote full participation of all residents and visitors of the Municipality.
- 7.11. The Committee shall advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Plan*.
- 7.12. The Committee shall receive, and review information as directed by Council and its committees, and to make recommendations as requested.
- 7.13. The Committee shall monitor federal and provincial government directives and regulations.

- 7.14. The committee shall host, as needed, community consultations related to *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility* in the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.

8. Rules of Engagement

- 8.1. The committee shall meet no less than four times per year, or otherwise as required to fulfill the duties as outlined. Meetings of the AAC shall be open to the public as per subject to Section 22 of the *Municipal Government Act*.
- 8.2. A majority of the voting members of the committee constitutes a quorum.
- 8.3. The committee may receive presentations from the public upon approval of the chair as per the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's *Presentation to Council Policy*.



SCHEDULE A- POLICY AMMENDMENTS

Version #	Amendment Description	Approved By	Approval Date
1	Policy Adoption		

Municipal Clerk

Date



APPENDIX A

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Committee **Application Form**

Applicant Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work/Cell Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Occupation: _____

Describe how your experience, community involvement, education, or work that might be helpful to this committee.

Why are you interested in serving on this committee?

What contribution do you believe you can make to this committee?

What past contributions have you made on a similar committee or organization?

What experience do you have in exchanging your views with others and in respecting the skills, abilities, and knowledge of others?



Are you a person with a disability, or do you represent an organization representing people with disabilities?

☐ Yes or ☐ No

Note: *At least one half of the members of the advisory committee must have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities.*

If you are a person with a disability or represent an organization representing people with disabilities, and you're comfortable, please share what disability/disabilities do you or your organization represent?

Do you have lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members.

☐ Yes or ☐ No

Note: *At least two members of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee must be persons with lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members.*

If you are a person with a *with lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members* and you're comfortable, please share what disability/disabilities do you or your organization represent?

Applicant Signature

Date

For more information, please contact the Municipal Office at 902-522-2049

Interactive Panel Project Update

Educational Signage for Stonewall Park

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to propose the creation and installation of an interactive educational panel within the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Stone wall Park to raise awareness of local wildlife conservation efforts and encourage community involvement in preserving the region's biodiversity. This project will also provide local animal and environmental education to all that use the trails within Stonewall Park.

BACKGROUND

The Municipality of the District of St. Mary's is home to a diverse range of wildlife and ecosystems, many of which face threats from development, habitat loss, and human-wildlife conflicts. To further educate residents and visitors about the importance of conservation and the species that inhabit our region. This panel will highlight local endangered species, those at risk, and thriving populations in our area. The panel would be strategically placed in a highly trafficked areas such as the entrance (Large billboards) and throughout the park (Small panels), providing an engaging, informative and educational experience for the public.

Benefits –

- **Educational Impact:** The panel will provide residents, students, and tourists with valuable information about the region's wildlife and the importance of conservation. It will raise awareness about local species that are endangered or at risk, encouraging more sustainable behavior in the community.
- **Community Engagement:** The interactive elements of the panel will make learning fun and engaging, attracting a broad audience. It will also give community members a chance to get involved in local conservation efforts through feedback and education.
- **Tourism and Economic Development:** This initiative aligns with St. Mary's' commitment to eco-tourism. By creating an interactive learning experience, the panel will encourage tourists to explore the region's natural beauty and enhancing the area's reputation as a destination for nature lovers.
- **Long-term Conservation Goals:** The panel will serve as a tool to educate and inspire future generations to protect our natural resources, fostering a culture of environmental stewardship and contributing to ongoing conservation efforts.

CONSIDERATIONS

Large Entrance Sign (\$900.00 a piece) – The signs outside the entrance of the park can consist of 2-3 large billboards to include the Municipality's conservation efforts, along with small educational messages about each type of species (i.e. Aquatic, Bird, Mammals, etc.)

Small Signs throughout Stonewall Park (\$150.00 a piece) – 2"X2" signs each will have one animal and a paragraph explaining the physical characteristics, habitat, conservation status, and information on how you can help conserve the population.

Total Price: 20X Small = \$3,000, 3X Large = \$2,700 = **\$5,700**
Allocated \$19,300 for installation

Accessibility – QR codes will be implemented on the billboards for "Text to Speech" readers for those affected with visual impairments.

Mi'kmaq (Diversity) – The Municipality wishes to reach out to local Mi'kmaq groups to include Mi'kmaq words and implement their suggestions or recommendations on how the Municipality can incorporate wildlife into educational panels.

Budget – Ocean's North has provided the Municipality with \$25,000 for this project. (Includes design, signage construction and installation).

Public Launch – The Municipality will collaborate with local organizations to launch this project and raise awareness about the signs and conservation efforts. (School, DNRR, Mi'kmaq, Accessibility Advisory Committee, etc.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

That municipal Council approve the proposed Interactive Panel Project, and approve to use the funding applied for of \$25,000.00, from Ocean's North and authorize staff to move forward with the design, production, and installation process.

Staff Report



Large Billboard:
Includes 3-4 animals with a small educational and informational paragraph.



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Interactive Panel Project - Stonewall Park



Wood Turtle

The Wood Turtle
The wood turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) is a species of turtle native to eastern North America, including Nova Scotia. In the St. Mary's area of Nova Scotia, these turtles are considered a species at risk, with their populations facing several threats.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:
Wood turtles are medium-sized, with adults typically measuring between 14 to 20 centimeters in length. They are distinguished by their "scutes" (shells), featuring raised, prominent keels on the sides, and the distinctive orange coloration on their legs and neck. In Nova Scotia, wood turtles inhabit slow-moving streams with sandy bottoms and heavily vegetated banks, which are ideal for nesting and overwintering. They also use adjacent forests, fields, and wetlands during warmer months.

Conservation Status:
The wood turtle is listed as a species of concern constitutionally in Canada and provincially in Nova Scotia. In Nova Scotia, the species is designated as vulnerable under the Endangered Species Act.

Threats:
Habitat Destruction and Fragmentation: Alterations to river and stream habitats, such as road and bridge construction, can disrupt their natural environments. Human Disturbance: Activities like mowing and farming can destroy nests and harm turtle eggs.

Vehicle Strikes:
Turtles crossing roads are at risk of being hit by vehicles, especially during nesting seasons.

By supporting conservation efforts and being mindful of these turtles' needs, we can help ensure the survival of wood turtles in the St. Mary's area.



Eastern Coyote

Eastern Coyote
Physical Characteristics:
Eastern coyotes have a lean, muscular build with long legs and a bushy tail. Their fur is a mix of gray, brown, and black, with a cream-colored underside. Adult coyotes typically weigh between 26 and 46 pounds.

Habitat:
Coyotes are highly adaptable and can live in forests, grasslands, and even urban environments. They are commonly found in rural areas of St. Mary's and have been expanding their range into more populated areas.

Conservation Status:
Thriving

Threats:
Coyotes face threats from human persecution, habitat fragmentation, and competition with other predators for wolves and domestic dogs. They also sometimes suffer from road accidents.



Wood Pecker

Wood Pecker
Physical Characteristics and Habitat:
Woodpeckers are medium to large-sized birds known for their strong beaks, which they use to drum on tree trunks in search of insects or to establish territory. They have a stout, chisel-like bill that helps them burrow into bark, and their vibrant plumage can range from red, black, and white, to blue and yellow depending on the species. They are also known for their distinctive drumming sounds.

Woodpeckers are typically found in forests, woodlands, and even urban areas with mature trees. They prefer areas with large trees where they can excavate cavities for nesting and foraging. Woodpeckers are often seen clinging to the trunks or branches as they search for insects like ants and beetles or sap from trees.

Conservation Status:
Many species of woodpeckers, such as the Downy Woodpecker and Northern Flicker, are classified as Least Concern by the IUCN and have stable populations. However, some species, like the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, have faced significant declines and are considered critically endangered, mainly due to habitat loss.

Threats:
Woodpeckers face threats from habitat destruction, especially the loss of old-growth forests and large, dead trees that are crucial for nesting. Climate change can also impact the availability of their food sources, and some species are at risk from deforestation and urban development.



Atlantic Salmon

Atlantic Salmon
The Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) is a species of anadromous fish native to the North Atlantic Ocean. In Nova Scotia, the St. Mary's River is renowned for its high-quality salmon, which is a key part of the local economy and culture.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:
Atlantic salmon are known for their streamlined bodies, which aid in their migratory lifestyle. They can be a silvery coloration in the ocean and develop a more brownish hue with distinct spots on their scales and skin when they return to freshwater to spawn. The St. Mary's River, stretching approximately 20 kilometers, is one of Nova Scotia's longest rivers and provides essential habitat for these salmon.

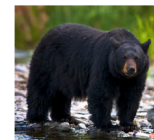
Conservation Status:
The Atlantic salmon is classified as endangered in Nova Scotia, with populations having declined significantly over the past decades. The St. Mary's River, however, has been identified as home to one of the healthiest populations of Atlantic salmon in mainland Nova Scotia.

Threats:
Habitat Degradation: Pollution, sedimentation, and alterations to river habitats can negatively impact salmon spawning and juvenile development.

Climate Change:
Changes in water temperature and flow patterns can affect salmon migration and survival rates.

Overfishing:
While recreational fishing is regulated, illegal poaching and poaching in commercial fisheries continue to pose threats.

By actively caring for the St. Mary's River and supporting conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of Atlantic salmon in the St. Mary's River.



Black Bear

Black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are the primary species found in the area. These bears typically weigh between 100 and 600 pounds and have thick black fur, although some may have a brown or blonde tint. Black bears are omnivores with sharp claws for climbing, digging, and foraging. They have an excellent sense of smell to locate food, which includes berries, nuts, and insects.

Physical Characteristics:

- Black bears are large mammals with thick fur that can vary in color from black to brown. Adults typically weigh between 100-600 pounds, with males being larger than females. They have powerful limbs, sharp claws, and excellent swimming abilities.

Habitat:

- Black bears live in forests, wetlands, and mixed woodlands, often near sources of water. They are found throughout St. Mary's and are commonly seen in remote areas.

Conservation Status:

Thriving

Threats:

- While black bears are not endangered, they face threats from habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, and vehicle collisions. As human populations grow, bears may venture closer to urban areas in search of food, which can lead to dangerous encounters.

How You Can Help:

- Avoid leaving food or garbage outdoors, as this can attract bears to populated areas.
- Be bear-aware while hiking or camping in bear habitats. Make noise to avoid surprising them.
- Support policies that preserve forested areas and reduce human-wildlife conflict.



Small Panels:
Includes 1 animal and the physical characteristics and habitat, conservation status, threats, and how you can help the conservation of each animal.



Canada Warbler



Mainland Moose



Fresh Water Mussels



Porcupine

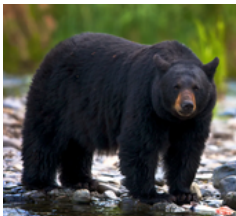
Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Interactive Panel Project - Stonewall Park



Eastern Coyote



Bicknell's Thrush



Black Bear



Boreal Owl



Eastern Gray
Squirrel



Wood Turtle



Atlantic Salmon



Canada Warbler



Porcupine



Fresh Water
Mussels

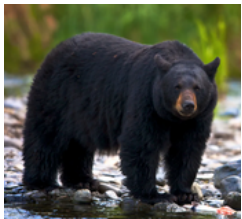


Mainland Moose

Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Interactive Panel Project - Stonewall Park



Eastern Coyote



Black Bear

Conservation in the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kma'ki
the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq
people.

The Municipality of the District of St. Mary's is
dedicated to preserving the natural beauty and
biodiversity of the region. Home to lush forests,
diverse wildlife, and scenic waterways, the area faces
the challenge of balancing development with
environmental conservation. Local initiatives focus on
protecting sensitive habitats, enhancing wildlife
corridors, and promoting sustainable land use
practices. Efforts such as community-led cleanups,
habitat restoration projects, and educational
programs are helping raise awareness about the
importance of protecting the local environment. By
fostering a strong conservation ethic, St. Mary's is
ensuring that future generations can continue to
enjoy and benefit from its rich natural resources and
enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds us.



Bicknell's Thrush



Eastern Gray
Squirrel



Boreal Owl



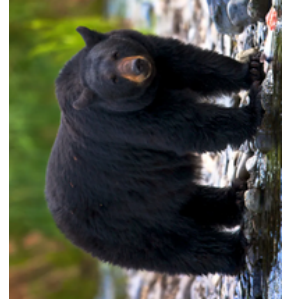
Wood Turtle



Atlantic Salmon



Wood
Turtle



Black Bear



Eastern Gray
Squirrel



Canada Warbler



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Interactive Panel Project - Stonewall Park

St. Mary's is a rich, diverse habitat for many species, but these animals face challenges from human development, climate change, and habitat loss. It's important that we protect their environment by:

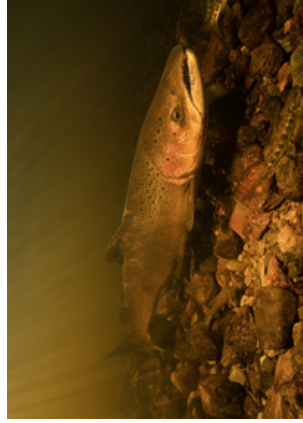
- Preserving forests and green spaces
 - Reducing roadkill through wildlife corridors
 - Supporting sustainable development practices
- Help protect wildlife by respecting nature and practicing safe outdoor activities!



Boreal Owl



Porcupine



Atlantic Salmon



Bicknell's Thrush



Eastern Coyote



Mainland Moose



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Interactive Panel Project - Stonewall Park



The Wood Turtle

The wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) is a species of turtle native to eastern North America, including Nova Scotia. In the St. Mary's area of Nova Scotia, these turtles are considered a species at risk, with their populations facing several threats.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Wood turtles are medium-sized, with adults typically measuring between 14 to 20 centimeters in length. They are distinguished by their "sculpted" shells, featuring raised, pyramid-like shields, and the distinctive orange coloration on their legs and neck. In Nova Scotia, wood turtles inhabit slow-moving streams with sandy bottoms and heavily vegetated banks, which are ideal for nesting and overwintering. They also utilize adjacent forests, fields, and wetlands during warmer months.

Conservation Status:

The wood turtle is listed as a species of concern both nationally in Canada and provincially in Nova Scotia. In Nova Scotia, the species is designated as vulnerable under the Endangered Species Act.

Threats:

Habitat Destruction and Fragmentation: Alterations to river and stream habitats, such as road and bridge construction, can disrupt their natural environments.

Human Disturbance: Activities like mowing and farming can destroy nests and harm hatchlings.

Vehicle Strikes: Turtles crossing roads are at risk of being hit by vehicles, especially during nesting seasons.

By supporting conservation efforts and being mindful of these turtles' needs, we can help ensure the survival of wood turtles in the St. Mary's area.

Wood Turtle



Eastern Coyote

Physical Characteristics:

Eastern coyotes have a lean, muscular build, with long legs and a bushy tail. Their fur is a mix of gray, brown, and black, with a cream-colored underside. Adult coyotes typically weigh between 24 and 46 pounds.

Habitat:

Coyotes are highly adaptable and can live in forests, grasslands, and even urban environments. They are commonly found in rural areas of St. Mary's and have been expanding their range into more populated areas.

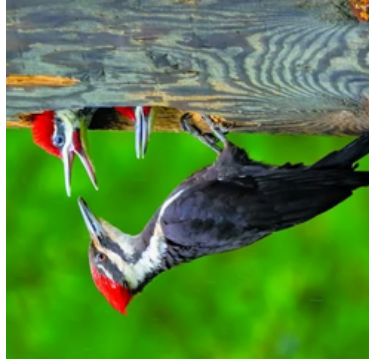
Conservation Status:

Thriving

Threats:

Coyotes face threats from human persecution, habitat fragmentation, and competition with other predators like wolves and domestic dogs. They also sometimes suffer from road accidents.

Eastern Coyote



Wood Pecker

Wood Pecker

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Woodpeckers are medium to large-sized birds known for their strong beaks, which they use to drum on tree trunks in search of insects or to establish territory. They have stiff tail feathers that help them balance while climbing, and their vibrant plumage can range from red, black, white, and yellow depending on the species. They are also known for their distinctive drumming sounds.

Woodpeckers are typically found in forests, woodlands, and even urban areas with mature trees. They prefer areas with large trees where they can excavate cavities for nesting and foraging. Woodpeckers are often seen clinging to tree trunks or branches as they search for insects like ants and beetles or sap from trees.

Conservation Status:

Many species of woodpeckers, such as the Downy Woodpecker and Northern Flicker, are classified as Least Concern by the IUCN and have stable populations. However, some species, like the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, have faced significant declines and are considered critically endangered, mainly due to habitat loss.

Threats:

Woodpeckers face threats from habitat destruction, especially the loss of old-growth forests and large, dead trees that are crucial for nesting. Pesticides and climate change can also impact the availability of their food sources, and some species are at risk from deforestation and urban development.

Atlantic Salmon

The Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) is a species of anadromous fish native to the North Atlantic Ocean. In Nova Scotia, the St. Mary's River is renowned for its significant role in the life cycle of these salmon, serving as a critical spawning and nursery habitat.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Atlantic salmon are known for their streamlined bodies, which aid in their migratory lifestyle. They exhibit a silvery coloration in the ocean and develop darker hues with distinctive spots on their backs and tails when they return to freshwater to spawn. The St. Mary's River, stretching approximately 250 kilometers, is one of Nova Scotia's longest rivers and provides essential habitats for these salmon.

Conservation Status:

The Atlantic salmon is classified as endangered in Nova Scotia, with populations having declined significantly over the past decades. The St. Mary's River, however, has been identified as home to one of the healthiest populations of Atlantic salmon in mainland Nova Scotia.

Threats:

Habitat Degradation: Pollution, sedimentation, and alterations to river habitats can negatively impact salmon spawning and juvenile development.

Climate Change: Changes in water temperature and flow patterns can affect salmon migration and survival rates.

Overfishing: While recreational fishing is regulated, illegal poaching and bycatch in commercial fisheries continue to pose threats.

By actively participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of Atlantic salmon in the St. Mary's River.

Atlantic Salmon





Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Interactive Panel Project - Stonewall Park



Black Bear

Black Bear

black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are the primary species found in the area. These bears typically weigh between 100 and 600 pounds and have thick black fur, although some may have a brown or blonde tint. Black bears are omnivores with sharp claws for climbing, digging, and foraging. They have an excellent sense of smell to locate food, which includes berries, nuts, and insects.

Physical Characteristics:

Black bears are large mammals with thick fur that can vary in color from black to brown. Adults typically weigh between 100–600 pounds, with males being larger than females. They have powerful limbs, sharp claws, and excellent swimming abilities.

Habitat:

Black bears live in forests, wetlands, and mixed woodlands, often near sources of water. They are found throughout St. Mary's and are commonly seen in remote areas.

Conservation Status:

Thriving

Threats:

While black bears are not endangered, they face threats from habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, and vehicle collisions. As human populations grow, bears may venture closer to urban areas in search of food, which can lead to dangerous encounters.



Blue Jay

Blue Jay

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Blue Jays are striking songbirds known for their bright blue plumage, white underparts, and black markings around their neck and head. They have a crest on top of their head and a loud, varied call. Their blue feathers are actually a result of the way light interacts with their structure, not pigment.

Blue jays are found in forests, woodlands, and suburban areas throughout North America. They prefer environments with a mix of trees, as well as areas with plenty of food sources like acorns, nuts, and seeds. Blue jays are known for their adaptability and can thrive in a variety of habitats, including urban parks and gardens.

Conservation Status:

The Blue Jay is classified as Least Concern by the IUCN. Their populations are stable, and they are widespread across much of North America, benefiting from their adaptability and ability to live in urban areas.

Threats:

While Blue Jays are not at risk, they do face some threats, including habitat loss, climate change, and predation by larger birds of prey. Pesticides and loss of food sources due to habitat destruction can also impact their populations.

Fresh Water Mussels

Freshwater mussels are vital components of aquatic ecosystems, playing significant roles in water filtration, nutrient cycling, and providing habitat for various species. In the St. Mary's River area of Nova Scotia, these mussels are not only ecologically important but also face conservation challenges.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Freshwater mussels are bivalve mollusks with elongated, asymmetrical shells that vary in color from yellow to brown. They inhabit rivers, streams, and lakes, burrowing into the substrate to filter feed on plankton and organic particles. The St. Mary's River, with its diverse habitats, supports several mussel species, including the brook floater (*Alasmidonta varicosa*), which is native to northeastern North America.

Conservation Status:

The brook floater is listed as a species of special concern in Canada. In Nova Scotia, its distribution is scattered across the southern and central parts of the province, with sub-populations reported from several disjunct watersheds, including the St. Mary's River.

Threats:

Habitat Degradation: Pollution, sedimentation, and alterations to river habitats can negatively impact mussel populations.

Climate Change: Changes in water temperature and flow patterns can affect mussel survival and reproduction.

Invasive Species: The introduction of non-native species can disrupt local ecosystems and compete with native mussels.

By actively participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of freshwater mussels in the St. Mary's River.



Fresh Water Mussel



Porcupine

Porcupine

Physical Characteristics:

Porcupines are large rodents covered in sharp quills, which serve as a defense mechanism. They have a stocky body, short legs, and long claws for climbing trees. Their fur is generally dark brown or black.

Habitat:

Porcupines are found in forests, woodlands, and sometimes along coastlines. They often live in tree dens or hollow logs, where they spend much of their time during the day.

Conservation Status:

At Risk (in some parts of Canada)

Threats:

Porcupines face threats from road mortality, as they are often struck by vehicles while foraging or crossing roads. Habitat disturbance and predation by larger mammals also contribute to their declining numbers in certain areas.



The Wood Turtle

The wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) is a species of turtle native to eastern North America, including Nova Scotia. In the St. Mary's area of Nova Scotia, these turtles are considered a species at risk, with their populations facing several threats.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Wood turtles are medium-sized, with adults typically measuring between 14 to 20 centimeters in length. They are distinguished by their "sculpted" shells, featuring raised, pyramid-like shields, and the distinctive orange coloration on their legs and neck. In Nova Scotia, wood turtles inhabit slow-moving streams with sandy bottoms and heavily vegetated banks, which are ideal for nesting and overwintering. They also utilize adjacent forests, fields, and wetlands during warmer months.

Conservation Status:

The wood turtle is listed as a species of concern both nationally in Canada and provincially in Nova Scotia. In Nova Scotia, the species is designated as vulnerable under the Endangered Species Act

Threats:

Habitat Destruction and Fragmentation: Alterations to river and stream habitats, such as road and bridge construction, can disrupt their natural environments.

Human Disturbance: Activities like mowing and farming can destroy nests and harm hatchlings

Vehicle Strikes: Turtles crossing roads are at risk of being hit by vehicles, especially during nesting seasons.

By supporting conservation efforts and being mindful of these turtles' needs, we can help ensure the survival of wood turtles in the St. Mary's area.

How You Can Help

If you encounter a wood turtle in the St. Mary's area:

Do Not Disturb: Avoid handling or moving the turtle unless it is in immediate danger.

Report Sightings: Inform local conservation groups or the Nova Scotia Species at Risk Recovery Team to aid in monitoring efforts.

stmarysriverassociation.com

Drive Carefully: Be vigilant for turtles crossing roads, especially during nesting seasons.





Atlantic Salmon

The Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) is a species of anadromous fish native to the North Atlantic Ocean. In Nova Scotia, the St. Mary's River is renowned for its significant role in the life cycle of these salmon, serving as a critical spawning and nursery habitat.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Atlantic salmon are known for their streamlined bodies, which aid in their migratory lifestyle. They exhibit a silvery coloration in the ocean and develop darker hues with distinctive spots on their backs and tails when they return to freshwater to spawn. The St. Mary's River, stretching approximately 250 kilometers, is one of Nova Scotia's longest rivers and provides essential habitats for these salmon.

Conservation Status:

The Atlantic salmon is classified as endangered in Nova Scotia, with populations having declined significantly over the past decades. The St. Mary's River, however, has been identified as home to one of the healthiest populations of Atlantic salmon in mainland Nova Scotia.

Threats:

Habitat Degradation: Pollution, sedimentation, and alterations to river habitats can negatively impact salmon spawning and juvenile development.

Climate Change: Changes in water temperature and flow patterns can affect salmon migration and survival rates.

Overfishing: While recreational fishing is regulated, illegal poaching and bycatch in commercial fisheries continue to pose threats.

By actively participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of Atlantic salmon in the St. Mary's River

How You Can Help

To support the conservation of Atlantic salmon in the St. Mary's River:

Participate in Local Conservation Programs: Engage with organizations like the SMRA to contribute to habitat restoration and monitoring efforts.

Practice Responsible Fishing: If you fish, adhere to all regulations, practice catch and release, and report any illegal activities.

Support Sustainable Practices: Advocate for policies that protect water quality and river habitats.





Black Bear

black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are the primary species found in the area. These bears typically weigh between 100 and 600 pounds and have thick black fur, although some may have a brown or blonde tint. Black bears are omnivores with sharp claws for climbing, digging, and foraging. They have an excellent sense of smell to locate food, which includes berries, nuts, and insects.

Physical Characteristics:

- Black bears are large mammals with thick fur that can vary in color from black to brown. Adults typically weigh between 100–600 pounds, with males being larger than females. They have powerful limbs, sharp claws, and excellent swimming abilities.

Habitat:

- Black bears live in forests, wetlands, and mixed woodlands, often near sources of water. They are found throughout St. Mary's and are commonly seen in remote areas.

Conservation Status:

- Thriving

Threats:

- While black bears are not endangered, they face threats from habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, and vehicle collisions. As human populations grow, bears may venture closer to urban areas in search of food, which can lead to dangerous encounters.

How You Can Help:

- Avoid leaving food or garbage outdoors, as this can attract bears to populated areas.
- Be bear-aware while hiking or camping in bear habitats. Make noise to avoid surprising them.
- Support policies that preserve forested areas and reduce human-wildlife conflict





Fresh Water Mussels

Freshwater mussels are vital components of aquatic ecosystems, playing significant roles in water filtration, nutrient cycling, and providing habitat for various species. In the St. Mary's River area of Nova Scotia, these mussels are not only ecologically important but also face conservation challenges.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Freshwater mussels are bivalve mollusks with elongated, asymmetrical shells that vary in color from yellow to brown. They inhabit rivers, streams, and lakes, burrowing into the substrate to filter feed on plankton and organic particles. The St. Mary's River, with its diverse habitats, supports several mussel species, including the brook floater (*Alasmodonta varicosa*), which is native to northeastern North America.

Conservation Status:

The brook floater is listed as a species of special concern in Canada. In Nova Scotia, its distribution is scattered across the southern and central parts of the province, with sub-populations reported from several disjunct watersheds, including the St. Mary's River.

Threats:

Habitat Degradation: Pollution, sedimentation, and alterations to river habitats can negatively impact mussel populations.

Climate Change: Changes in water temperature and flow patterns can affect mussel survival and reproduction.

Invasive Species: The introduction of non-native species can disrupt local ecosystems and compete with native mussels.

By actively participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of freshwater mussels in the St. Mary's River.

How You Can Help

To support the conservation of freshwater mussels in the St. Mary's River:

Participate in Local Conservation Programs: Engage with organizations like the SMRA to contribute to habitat restoration and monitoring efforts.

Practice Responsible Recreation: Avoid disturbing riverbeds and banks, and dispose of waste properly to prevent pollution.

Support Sustainable Practices: Advocate for policies that protect water quality and river habitats.





Boreal Owl

The Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*) is a small, elusive nocturnal bird native to the boreal forests of North America. In Nova Scotia, including the St. Mary's area, this species is considered rare and has been the focus of various conservation efforts.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Boreal Owls are compact, with a large, flat-topped head and a distinctive gray face framed by black markings. Their plumage is mottled brown and white, providing excellent camouflage in their forested habitats. They primarily inhabit boreal, highland, and mixed woodlands, favoring areas with dense coniferous trees and a well-developed understory. These owls are cavity nesters, utilizing tree cavities for breeding.

Conservation Status:

In Nova Scotia, the Boreal Owl is considered a rare species. The first confirmed nesting record in the province was documented in 2004 within the southwestern corner of Cape Breton Highlands National Park. This discovery highlighted the importance of preserving suitable habitats for their survival.

Threats:

- **Logging and Development:** Boreal Owls depend on mature forests, especially coniferous and mixed woodlands. Logging and land development can lead to habitat destruction and fragmentation, making it harder for the owls to find suitable nesting sites and prey.
- **Climate Change:** As temperatures rise and weather patterns shift, Boreal Owls may experience changes in their habitat. The warming climate could cause shifts in vegetation and prey availability, potentially affecting their survival.

By actively participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of Boreal Owls in the St. Mary's area.





Mainland Moose

The Mainland Moose (*Alces alces americana*) is a distinctive subspecies native to mainland Nova Scotia, including the St. Mary's area. Once abundant, their numbers have significantly declined, leading to their classification as an endangered species.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat

Mainland Moose are the largest members of the deer family, with males (bulls) weighing between 400 to 600 kilograms and females (cows) around 300 to 400 kilograms. They possess long legs, a humped back, and a distinctive dewlap (skin flap) under the throat. Their dense fur and long legs are adapted for navigating the forested and wetland habitats they prefer.

Conservation Status

In 2003, the Mainland Moose was listed as endangered in Nova Scotia, with an estimated population of approximately 1,000 individuals. Conservation efforts are ongoing to protect and restore their habitats.

Threats:

Habitat Loss and Fragmentation: Logging, land development, and other human activities have led to the destruction and fragmentation of the moose's natural habitats, making it challenging for them to find food and shelter.

Vehicle Collisions: Moose are often involved in vehicle collisions, especially during dawn and dusk, leading to injuries and fatalities.

Climate Change: Alterations in climate can affect the availability of food sources and the quality of habitats, further stressing moose populations.

By participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of the Mainland Moose in Nova Scotia.

How You Can Help

To support the conservation of the Mainland Moose:

Report Sightings: If you encounter a moose, report your sighting to local wildlife authorities to assist in monitoring and research efforts.

novascotia.ca

Drive Safely: Be vigilant, especially during dawn and dusk, to reduce the risk of vehicle collisions with moose.

Support Conservation Organizations: Engage with and support groups dedicated to wildlife conservation in Nova Scotia.





Canada Warbler

The Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*) is a small, vibrant songbird known for its distinctive appearance and migratory patterns. In Nova Scotia, including the St. Mary's area, this species is considered endangered, with significant declines observed in recent decades.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat

Canada Warblers are small, well-proportioned birds with a straight, sharp bill. Compared to other warblers, they have a slightly longer tail with a fuller chest. They are typically found in low vegetation, especially wet woods and thickets. They nest on the ground and feed on insects. One of the longest-distance migrant warblers, they winter in South America.

Conservation Status

In Nova Scotia, the Canada Warbler is listed as endangered. The Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas found significant declines between 1986-1990 and 2006-2010, indicating a greater decrease in Nova Scotia compared to other regions

Threats:

Habitat Loss and Fragmentation: Logging, land development, and other human activities have led to the destruction and fragmentation of the warbler's natural habitats, making it challenging for them to find food and shelter.

Climate Change: Alterations in climate can affect the availability of food sources and the quality of habitats, further stressing warbler populations.

By actively participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of the Canada Warbler in the St. Mary's area.

How You Can Help

To support the conservation of the Canada Warbler:

Report Sightings: If you encounter a Canada Warbler, report your observation to local conservation groups or the Nova Scotia Species at Risk Recovery Team.

Support Habitat Preservation: Engage with organizations dedicated to preserving natural habitats in Nova Scotia.

Practice Responsible Recreation: When exploring forested areas, minimize disturbances to natural habitats and avoid disturbing nesting sites.





Eastern Gray Squirrel

Physical Characteristics:

- Eastern Gray Squirrels are medium-sized rodents with gray fur on their backs and white or light gray on their undersides. They have bushy tails that help with balance when jumping between trees.

Habitat:

- These squirrels are found in forests, woodlands, and suburban areas where there are plenty of trees for nesting and food sources. They are also seen in parks and residential areas within St. Mary's.

Conservation Status:

- Thriving

Threats:

- Eastern gray squirrels face threats from habitat loss due to urban expansion and deforestation. They can also be vulnerable to predation by larger animals and may suffer from diseases like squirrel pox.

How You Can Help:

- Plant native trees and shrubs to provide habitat and food sources for squirrels.
- Keep your yard free of chemicals that can harm squirrels and other wildlife.
- Support urban green space initiatives that maintain squirrel habitats in cities and suburban areas





Porcupine

Physical Characteristics:

- Porcupines are large rodents covered in sharp quills, which serve as a defense mechanism. They have a stocky body, short legs, and long claws for climbing trees. Their fur is generally dark brown or black.

Habitat:

- Porcupines are found in forests, woodlands, and sometimes along coastlines. They often live in tree dens or hollow logs, where they spend much of their time during the day.

Conservation Status:

- At Risk (in some parts of Canada)

Threats:

- Porcupines face threats from road mortality, as they are often struck by vehicles while foraging or crossing roads. Habitat disturbance and predation by larger mammals also contribute to their declining numbers in certain areas.

How You Can Help:

- Drive cautiously in areas known to have porcupines, especially at night when they are most active.
- Support reforestation and land preservation efforts to protect porcupine habitats.
- Report porcupine sightings to wildlife monitoring programs to help track population health





Eastern Coyote

Physical Characteristics:

- Eastern coyotes have a lean, muscular build, with long legs and a bushy tail. Their fur is a mix of gray, brown, and black, with a cream-colored underside. Adult coyotes typically weigh between 24 and 46 pounds.

Habitat:

- Coyotes are highly adaptable and can live in forests, grasslands, and even urban environments. They are commonly found in rural areas of St. Mary's and have been expanding their range into more populated areas.

Conservation Status:

- Thriving

Threats:

- Coyotes face threats from human persecution, habitat fragmentation, and competition with other predators like wolves and domestic dogs. They also sometimes suffer from road accidents.

How You Can Help:

- Avoid feeding coyotes, as this can habituate them to human presence and lead to conflicts.
- Support initiatives that promote coexistence between wildlife and humans, such as wildlife corridors and proper waste management.
- Educate others about coyote behavior to reduce unnecessary fear and protect them from harm.





Bicknell's Thrush

The Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*) is a small, elusive songbird native to northeastern North America, including parts of Nova Scotia. In the St. Mary's area, this species is considered endangered, with its population facing significant threats.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat

Bicknell's Thrushes are medium-sized birds with brown upperparts and a spotted breast. They are often found in dense, stunted spruce forests at high elevations, typically above 1,150 meters. In Nova Scotia, they breed in the Cape Breton Highlands, including areas near St. Mary's.

Conservation Status

The Bicknell's Thrush is listed as endangered in Nova Scotia. Conservation efforts are ongoing to protect and restore their habitats, which are crucial for their breeding and survival.

Threats

The primary threats to the Bicknell's Thrush include:

Habitat Loss and Fragmentation: Logging and land development have led to the destruction and fragmentation of the bird's natural habitats, making it challenging for them to find food and shelter.

Climate Change: Alterations in climate can affect the availability of food sources and the quality of habitats, further stressing bird populations.

By actively participating in these conservation efforts, we can help ensure the survival and prosperity of the Bicknell's Thrush in the St. Mary's area.

How You Can Help

To support the conservation of the Bicknell's Thrush:

Report Sightings: If you encounter a Bicknell's Thrush, report your observation to local conservation groups or the Nova Scotia Species at Risk Recovery Team.

Support Habitat Preservation: Engage with organizations dedicated to preserving natural habitats in Nova Scotia.

Practice Responsible Recreation: When exploring forested areas, minimize disturbances to natural habitats and avoid disturbing nesting sites.





Skunk

In Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia, the striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) is a common mammal known for its distinctive black and white fur and potent spray, which it uses for defense. Adult skunks typically weigh between 4 and 14 pounds and have a long bushy tail. Their most recognizable feature is the characteristic black fur with white stripes running down their back and tail. Skunks are nocturnal and solitary animals, often seen foraging at night for insects, small rodents, fruits, and plants.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Skunks are small to medium-sized mammals, typically weighing between 2 and 14 pounds, depending on the species. They have stocky bodies, short legs, and long, bushy tails. Their fur is most commonly black, with white stripes or patches that run along their back and tail, though variations exist. Skunks have sharp claws for digging and a keen sense of smell, which they rely on to find food.

One of the most notable features of skunks is their ability to spray a potent liquid from scent glands located near the base of their tail. This spray, which can reach distances of up to 10 feet, is made up of sulfur compounds and is highly effective in deterring predators.

Conservation Status:

While most skunk species are not considered endangered, some populations face threats due to habitat loss, pollution, and human-related activities. For example, the Spotted Skunk (*Spilogale putorius*), a species native to the United States, has seen a decline in numbers and is classified as "Near Threatened" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). However, most skunk species are currently listed as Least Concern, thanks to their widespread presence and adaptability.

Threats:

Skunks face several threats in the wild, particularly from human activities. These include:

- **Habitat Destruction:** As urbanization spreads, skunks lose their natural habitats and denning sites. Deforestation and agricultural expansion also pose significant risks.
- **Road Mortality:** Skunks are often victims of vehicle collisions, especially since they are nocturnal and active at night.
- **Pollution:** The pollution of water sources and soil contamination can affect the availability of food for skunks and harm their health.
- **Predators and Diseases:** Skunks are preyed upon by larger animals, such as coyotes and owls. Additionally, diseases like rabies can impact skunk populations.

How You Can Help:

There are several ways you can contribute to the conservation and protection of skunks and their habitats:

1. **Create Wildlife-Friendly Spaces:** If you live in an area with skunks, consider creating wildlife-friendly spaces by planting native vegetation, installing animal corridors, and reducing the use of pesticides.
2. **Drive Carefully:** Be mindful when driving at night, especially in areas where skunks are known to live. Slowing down and being alert can help prevent roadkill.
3. **Support Conservation Efforts:** Contribute to wildlife organizations that focus on habitat protection, wildlife rehabilitation, and education programs. Donating to conservation groups helps fund the preservation of critical ecosystems.
4. **Respect Wildlife:** If you encounter a skunk in the wild, give it space. Avoid disturbing them and never attempt to capture or handle skunks, as they may spray when feeling threatened.
5. **Educate Others:** Raising awareness about the importance of skunks in the ecosystem can lead to better understanding and conservation efforts. Educate your community about the vital role they play in controlling insect populations and maintaining biodiversity.





Raccoon

In Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia, the raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) is a common and highly adaptable mammal. Known for its distinctive black "mask" of fur around its eyes and its bushy ringed tail, the raccoon is typically around 10 to 30 pounds and has a keen sense of touch, aided by its dexterous front paws. These nocturnal creatures are omnivorous and will eat a wide variety of foods, including fruits, nuts, insects, and human food scraps.

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Raccoons are medium-sized mammals known for their distinctive black "mask" around their eyes and bushy, ringed tails. They have nimble, human-like front paws, which they use to manipulate objects and search for food, often dipping them in water—though not actually washing food. Raccoons are highly adaptable and can live in forests, wetlands, and urban areas. They are excellent climbers and make dens in trees, hollow logs, or even abandoned buildings. Being nocturnal, they are most active at night.

Conservation Status:

Raccoons are classified as Least Concern by the IUCN. Their population remains stable due to their ability to thrive in both natural and urban environments.

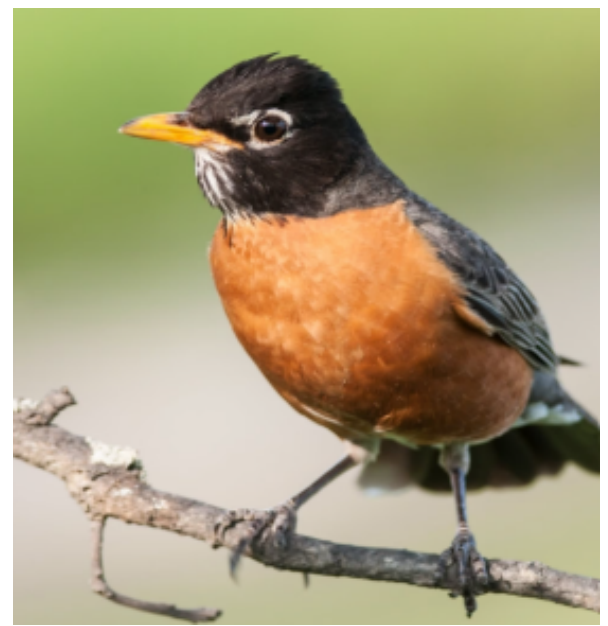
Threats:

Raccoons face threats from habitat loss, vehicle collisions, disease (like rabies), and pollution. Urbanization has led many raccoons into cities, where they encounter more dangers.

How You Can Help:

- Protect Habitats by supporting conservation efforts.
- Drive Safely at night to prevent roadkill.
- Reduce Pollution by properly disposing of trash and securing garbage.
- Support Wildlife Rehabilitation centers that help injured raccoons.
- Educate Others about the role raccoons play in ecosystems.





Robin

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Robins are medium-sized songbirds with a distinctive red or orange breast, grayish-brown back, and white underparts. They have a slender body and long legs, often seen hopping around on the ground searching for food. Their melodious songs make them a familiar sign of spring.

Robins are found across North America and are highly adaptable to different habitats. They live in forests, gardens, parks, and suburban areas, often nesting in trees or shrubs. They prefer areas near open ground where they can easily forage for food.

Conservation Status:

The American Robin is classified as Least Concern by the IUCN. Their populations are stable, and they are widespread across North America, thanks to their adaptability and ability to thrive in urban and rural environments.

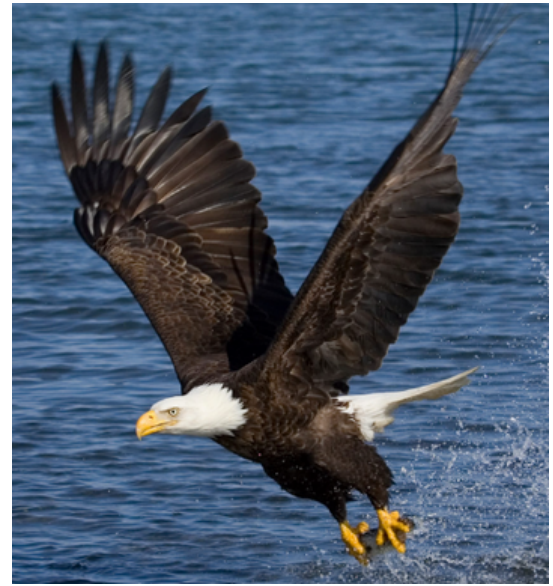
Threats:

Though not endangered, robins face threats from habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change. Extreme weather conditions and the destruction of nesting sites can also affect their populations.

How You Can Help:

- Protect Natural Habitats by supporting efforts to preserve forests and green spaces.
- Reduce Pesticide Use in your garden to protect the insects and worms that robins rely on for food.
- Provide Nesting Sites by planting trees or shrubs and installing birdhouses.
- Support Conservation Organizations that work to protect bird habitats and monitor populations.





Eagle

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Eagles are large, powerful birds of prey known for their sharp talons, hooked beaks, and keen eyesight. They have strong, broad wings that allow for impressive flight, and many species, like the Bald Eagle, are easily recognized by their white heads and tails. Eagles are known for their strength, often preying on fish, small mammals, and birds.

Eagles are found in a variety of habitats, including forests, wetlands, and coastal areas. They prefer locations near bodies of water, where they can easily find food like fish. Eagles build large nests, called eyries, high in tall trees or cliffs, providing a safe environment for their young.

Conservation Status:

The conservation status of eagles varies by species. The Bald Eagle, once endangered, has made a significant recovery and is now listed as Least Concern. However, some species, like the Golden Eagle, face localized threats and are classified as Near Threatened in some areas.

Threats:

Eagles face threats from habitat destruction, pollution, and hunting. Chemicals like pesticides can accumulate in their food sources, harming their health and reproductive success. Human activity, including habitat destruction and illegal poaching, also poses risks to eagle populations.

How You Can Help:

- Support Habitat Protection by contributing to efforts to preserve forests, wetlands, and coastlines.
- Reduce Pollution by advocating for clean waterways and reducing the use of harmful pesticides.
- Report Illegal Activities such as poaching or illegal hunting of eagles.
- Support Conservation Programs that monitor eagle populations and protect nesting sites.





Bluejay

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Blue Jays are striking songbirds known for their bright blue plumage, white underparts, and black markings around their neck and head. They have a crest on top of their head and a loud, varied call. Their blue feathers are actually a result of the way light interacts with their structure, not pigment.

Blue Jays are found in forests, woodlands, and suburban areas throughout North America. They prefer environments with a mix of trees, as well as areas with plenty of food sources like acorns, nuts, and seeds. Blue Jays are known for their adaptability and can thrive in a variety of habitats, including urban parks and gardens.

Conservation Status:

The Blue Jay is classified as Least Concern by the IUCN. Their populations are stable, and they are widespread across much of North America, benefiting from their adaptability and ability to live in urban areas.

Threats:

While Blue Jays are not at risk, they do face some threats, including habitat loss, climate change, and predation by larger birds of prey. Pesticides and loss of food sources due to habitat destruction can also impact their populations.

How You Can Help:

- Plant Native Trees and Shrubs to provide Blue Jays with food and shelter.
- Avoid Using Pesticides in your garden to protect the insects and seeds that Blue Jays rely on for food.
- Support Conservation Efforts that protect forests and natural habitats.
- Create Bird-Friendly Spaces by adding bird feeders, baths, and nesting boxes to your yard.





Wood Pecker

Physical Characteristics and Habitat:

Woodpeckers are medium to large-sized birds known for their strong beaks, which they use to drum on tree trunks in search of insects or to establish territory. They have stiff tail feathers that help them balance while climbing, and their vibrant plumage can range from red, black, white, and yellow depending on the species. They are also known for their distinctive drumming sounds.

Woodpeckers are typically found in forests, woodlands, and even urban areas with mature trees. They prefer areas with large trees where they can excavate cavities for nesting and foraging. Woodpeckers are often seen clinging to tree trunks or branches as they search for insects like ants and beetles or sap from trees.

Conservation Status:

Many species of woodpeckers, such as the Downy Woodpecker and Northern Flicker, are classified as Least Concern by the IUCN and have stable populations. However, some species, like the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, have faced significant declines and are considered critically endangered, mainly due to habitat loss.

Threats:

Woodpeckers face threats from habitat destruction, especially the loss of old-growth forests and large, dead trees that are crucial for nesting. Pesticides and climate change can also impact the availability of their food sources, and some species are at risk from deforestation and urban development.

How You Can Help:

- Preserve Forests and Trees by supporting conservation efforts to protect woodlands and old-growth forests.
- Plant Native Trees to provide food and nesting sites for woodpeckers.
- Create Wildlife Habitats by leaving dead trees or logs standing, as they are important for woodpecker nesting.
- Support Conservation Programs that focus on protecting endangered woodpecker species and their habitats.





Other Endangered Species:

Conservation efforts are ongoing to protect these species and their habitats.

- **Blanding's Turtle** - Recognized as endangered in Nova Scotia, this turtle faces threats from habitat fragmentation and destruction, as well as predation by introduced species.
- **Atlantic Whitefish** - Endemic to Nova Scotia, this fish species is critically endangered, with its population confined to a few freshwater lakes within the province.
- **Piping Plover** - This bird species is endangered in Nova Scotia, facing threats from habitat loss and human disturbance.
- **Canada Lynx** - Considered endangered in Nova Scotia, the Canada lynx is threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation.
- **American Marten** - This mammal is endangered in Nova Scotia, facing threats from habitat loss and fragmentation.
- **Eastern Ribbon Snake** - Listed as endangered in Nova Scotia, the eastern ribbonsnake is threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation.
- **Peregrine Falcon** - This bird species is considered endangered in Nova Scotia, facing threats from habitat loss and human disturbance.
- **Roseate Tern** - This bird species is endangered in Nova Scotia, facing threats from habitat loss and human disturbance.