

# Ship Harbour Long Lake Candidate Wilderness Area

Newsletter #1 - April, 2008



Ship Harbour Long Lake

In the November 22, 2007 Speech from the Throne, the Province announced its intention to establish a large new wilderness area on Crown lands near Ship Harbour Long Lake in Halifax County.

This was followed on December 7, 2007 with a public announcement by Premier MacDonald that revealed the 14,000 hectare Ship Harbour Long Lake Candidate Wilderness Area, and set the stage for a full and effective public consultation.

## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Government's goal is to complete consultation, establish final boundaries, and designate the area under the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act* by November, 2008.

During this period, there will be several ways for the public and stakeholders to be involved.

This first newsletter is designed to:

- a) provide background information on the decision to establish Ship Harbour Long Lake Candidate Wilderness Area;
- b) seek advice on developing a fair and open process to move this candidate area towards designation;
- c) outline key questions to be addressed during the consultation;
- d) encourage interested individuals and groups to gather information and ideas on their areas of interest or concern; and
- d) invite people to take part in upcoming stakeholder meetings and public information forums.

"Ship Harbour Long Lake is an exceptional wilderness landscape of lakes, rivers, old growth forests and diverse wildlife.

It is also an area of established recreational use. Woodland trails, hunting camps and trout holes have been enjoyed by our families for generations.

Government's announcement offers Eastern Shore residents an exceptional opportunity to protect our wilderness heritage and to do this in a way that satisfies the community.

Your input is key to the success of this important initiative. Your opinion counts. I look forward to working with all of you to protect this unique aspect of our natural heritage."

Bill Dooks, MLA

"Establishing this wilderness area will move us one step closer to meeting our goal to protect 12% of the province by 2015.

Many people have worked hard to bring us this far towards protecting these lands.

As we work to identify final boundaries, I look forward to hearing the views of all Nova Scotians with an interest in this special natural place."

Mark Parent,  
Minister of Environment

# THE CANDIDATE WILDERNESS AREA



## BACKGROUND

The use of the lands surrounding Ship Harbour Long Lake has been a long-standing issue of public concern. As a result, Neenah Paper postponed forest management activities on their licensed lands in this area since 2000.

Through the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*, the Province is committed to protecting 12% of Nova Scotia's land mass by 2015 - up from the current 8.2%.

In the past two years, Nova Scotia Environment and Labour and partners have been conducting scientific work to help identify additional natural areas in Nova Scotia that should be considered for protection. This work shows that the candidate area at Ship Harbour Long Lake is of high conservation value, and one of the top priorities for protection in the province.

The HRM Regional Plan includes a policy statement encouraging the province to evaluate the potential for designating the area as a wilderness area.

## ALL-PARTY LETTER OF AGREEMENT

On November 6, 2007, a Letter of Agreement providing for the establishment of a 14,000 hectare (34,600 acre) candidate wilderness area on Crown lands of the Ship Harbour Long Lake area was signed by:

- NS Department of Natural Resources
- NS Environment and Labour
- Neenah Paper Ltd.
- Ecology Action Centre
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, and
- Eastern Shore Forest Watch.

The agreement confirmed approval by all parties to move forward with the designation of a wilderness area, based on the following elements:

- government approval of a 2007/08 forest harvesting plan on specific parcels within the candidate wilderness area to

provide wood supply critical to Neenah Paper (accounts for less than 2% of the candidate area);

- moratorium on all new resource extraction, exploration, and development activities;

- compensation for Neenah Paper's lost wood supply from the candidate wilderness area, replacing the operable and productive areas with other Crown lands of comparable value;

- establishment of the 14,000 hectare candidate Ship Harbour Long Lake Wilderness Area;

- review of the preliminary boundaries, with the intention to designate as much of the preliminary area as possible;

- commitment to an open and inclusive public and stakeholder consultation process;

- designation of a wilderness area, with finalized boundaries, within one year of the announcement.

## CURRENT STATUS

The Candidate Wilderness Area is now treated as a special area of Crown land - it is not yet legally protected under the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*.

The Minister of Natural Resources has established a moratorium on the candidate lands. No new land use commitments can occur there during the designation process.

## FINAL AREA BOUNDARY

Government is committed to protecting a large natural area, as demonstrated by the candidate wilderness area boundary. The exact location and extent of the final wilderness area boundaries may change to accommodate other land use interests, public access, and the desire to include important natural, cultural, and recreational features.

# CANDIDATE WILDERNESS AREA MAP



## Ship Harbour Long Lake Candidate Wilderness Area



- Ship Harbour Long Lake Candidate Wilderness Area
- Wilderness Areas
- Crown Lands
- Other Lands



Map produced by NSEL, October 2007.  
[www.gov.ns.ca/en/la/pareas](http://www.gov.ns.ca/en/la/pareas)

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# CONSULTATION PROCESS

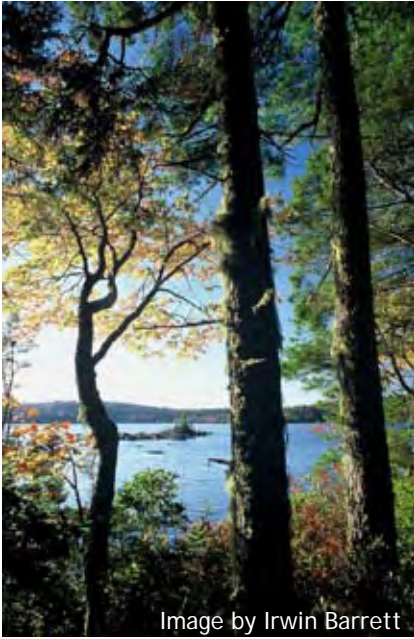


Image by Irwin Barrett

The goal of consultation is to give everyone a voice, and provide the best possible advice for government.

This means making sure that government staff and interested groups and individuals can share information and work together to find solutions.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Wilderness Areas Protection Act requires:

- a socio-economic analysis of the impact of designation
- a formal announcement of the intent to designate the area, followed by at least 60-days of public consultation.

## PROPOSED CONSULTATION PROCESS

*Will this work for you?*

### STEP 1 - Information Sharing/Issue Identification

goal: collect information, finalize the consultation process, and identify outstanding issues  
plan: *newsletter #1*, stakeholder meetings; public information forums, socio-economic analysis

#### *\*Public Reporting\**

goal: summarize input from Step 1  
plan: *newsletter #2*

### STEP 2 - Issue Resolution

goal: solve issues with affected individuals and stakeholders  
plan: joint meetings and workshops

### STEP 3 - Designation Proposal

goal: public input on final proposed wilderness area boundary & socio-economic analysis  
plan: *newsletter # 3*, 60 day consultation with regional displays, write-in opportunities, and public open houses

#### *\*Public Reporting\**

goal: summarize input from step 3  
plan: *newsletter #4*

### STEP 4 - Final Government Decision

goal: announce final designation  
plan: news release & direct participant notification  
complete legal surveys and documents

? What do you think of this proposed consultation process?

Is the public newsletter approach (along with an active web site) a good way to share information and keep everyone informed?

Where should the regional displays and open houses be held?

# DISCUSSION TOPICS

This section provides background information. It also outlines some of the key topics that need to be discussed before designating the candidate Ship Harbour Long Lake Wilderness Area.

Please take a moment to review these topics. It will help you prepare for upcoming discussions and the public information forums.

## Hints for Sharing Your Views

- talk to friends - share ideas
- write down your thoughts
- document your use with maps and photos

## OTHER LAND USES

Some land uses are not permitted in wilderness areas. These include acquiring mineral or petroleum rights, forestry, agriculture, energy resource development, aquaculture, or any kind of infrastructure development.

? Are you aware of any existing, planned, or anticipated land use activities within the candidate area that would conflict with the area's designation as a wilderness area?

## SPECIAL VALUES AND FEATURES

It is important to get the best possible understanding of the activities, places, and things that make the candidate wilderness area a special natural space.

This information is often tied to personal experiences. It can vary from rare plant sites to favorite walking trails or fishing holes.

? What special features or values do you attach to the candidate wilderness area?

How do you use the area now?

What is most important to you about the area?

## LEGAL INTERESTS

The *Wilderness Areas Protection Act* allows pre-existing legal interests - such as campsite leases and mineral rights - to continue until their expiry or termination.

Interest holders can be licenced to do necessary activities that would otherwise be prohibited under the Act as long as they do not degrade the wilderness area.

Existing campsite lease holders will be given the opportunity to renew their lease to a wilderness area campsite licence.

? Are you aware of any existing legal interests within the candidate wilderness area?

Do you have an existing legal

interest that you would like to have considered?

As a campsite lease holder, do you wish to renew your lease to a wilderness area campsite licence?

## ADJACENT PRIVATE LAND

The candidate wilderness area does not include any private land. Interested landowners may voluntarily seek inclusion of their lands in the wilderness area.

? As a private land owner, do you have any concerns about the candidate wilderness area?

As the owner of land next to the candidate wilderness area, do you wish to have your land considered for inclusion in the wilderness area?





Image by Irwin Barrett

## VEHICLE ACCESS

Some people enjoy protected wilderness areas as a place to camp or travel in a natural setting without the distraction of vehicle trails and sounds. Other people value vehicle access on old roads and routes through the woods as a way of reaching their favorite lake or enjoying an afternoon outdoors with family and friends.

Vehicle access in wilderness areas is generally prohibited. But, some vehicle use can be authorized under the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act* in certain situations.

There are several options for addressing existing roads and off-vehicle routes in the candidate wilderness area.

- Roads and major vehicle routes can be left outside the boundary, where they are not affected by the candidate wilderness area. For example, Murchyville Road, and Lays Lake Road - including the branch to Logging Lake - are not included in the candidate wilderness area.

- Certain routes or trails can be designated for continued

vehicle use through an agreement with group or organization.

- Vehicle access licences can be issued for specific uses such as reaching private land or existing legal interests.

Motorboats are treated as vehicles in wilderness areas. However, impacts to motorboat users are minimal.

- Current policy permits the use of motorboats for sport fishing on lakes in wilderness areas.

- Many lakes near the candidate wilderness area are outside of the boundary, where they are not affected by the candidate wilderness area. For example, Scraggy Lake; Ship Harbour Long Lake; Moose Cove Lake; and Salmon River Lake are not included in the candidate wilderness area.

To identify and solve vehicle use issues, riders and others need to share their interests and concerns. This means knowing where and why people ride. It also means finding ways to minimize impacts on the environment and other users.

? Are there major vehicle routes in the region that should be left outside of the wilderness area boundary?

Are there vehicle trails or routes in the candidate wilderness area that serve as essential connectors to a more extensive trail network?

Would your group or organization be willing to enter into an agreement for the designation and management of essential connector routes?

Do you need vehicle access through the candidate area to reach your private land, campsite lease, or other legal interest?

Do you use a vehicle to access opportunities for wilderness recreation, sport fishing, hunting, or trapping? Where?

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The *Wilderness Areas Protection Act* requires a socio-economic analysis of the impact of a wilderness area designation before the designation comes into effect.

This analysis will be completed by an independent consultant, and will consider a range of factors, such as: impacts to resource industries; local economic, and recreational effects; and broader social and environmental issues such as climate change, air, and water quality.

? What factors should the consultants consider in preparing the socio-economic analysis?

? How might future opportunities for social or economic development be affected by designation as a wilderness area?

# YOUR THOUGHTS

To share your thoughts you can:

- request a stakeholder meeting for your group or organization;
- attend a public information forum;
- call or write to Protected Areas Branch.

*Ensure your thoughts are considered in this step of the process by providing them to Nova Scotia Environment by May 31, 2008.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Protected Areas Branch, Nova Scotia Environment  
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email; [protectedareas@gov.ns.ca](mailto:protectedareas@gov.ns.ca)  
web; [www.gov.ns.ca/nse/protectedareas](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/protectedareas)

## PUBLIC INFORMATION FORUMS

Information forums will start with a presentation by staff followed by a brief question & answer session. Staff and stakeholders will then work with individuals or groups to gather and record information on specific topics or concerns. If you attend an information forum all your thoughts can be recorded at that time.

Please come prepared to share your views and information about how you use and value the lands within the candidate wilderness area.

**Saturday, May 3; 10am - 12pm**

**Eastern Shore Recreation Centre (arena)**  
67 Park Road, Musquodoboit Harbour

**Wednesday, May 7; 6:30 - 8:30pm**

**Fairbanks Centre, 54 Locks Road, Dartmouth**  
(The Fairbanks Centre is located in Shubie Park, not far from the Mic Mac Mall. Take the Waverley Road north, just past Tim Horton's, then turn left onto Locks Road.)

## COMMENTS

Please feel free to use this area to record your thoughts, questions, and comments.



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