



NOVA SCOTIA NATURE TRUST

ENDANGERED PLOVERS SINGING PRAISE FOR NEW NATURE TRUST LANDS

NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed until August 6th at 10:30 am.

Baccaro, N.S. (August 6) – The Nova Scotia Nature Trust made yet another exciting leap forward in saving Nova Scotia’s endangered species and threatened coastal habitats. Two new south shore conservation lands protect over 150 acres of diverse coastal habitats from bogs and fresh water ponds, to forest, beach and sand dunes. Most notably, they preserve critical, internationally-significant habitat for Canada’s endangered Piping Plover.

At a community celebration in Baccaro, Shelburne County today, the Nature Trust announced its acquisition of a new 33 acre property, through a combined donation and purchase. The property is part of Crow Neck Beach, a site well-known and cherished by nature enthusiasts across the province. An essential migratory stopover site for thousands of migrating birds, and year-round home to many others, the site’s significance is reflected in its designation by BirdLife International as an *Important Bird Area*.

The protection of Crow Neck is big news for Piping Plover conservation. Crow Neck is one of the most important breeding sites for Piping Plover in Nova Scotia. According to Bird Studies Canada biologist, Sue Abbott, “Crow Neck is currently home to more plover pairs than any other beach in Nova Scotia and supports about 14% of the province’s estimated 50 breeding pairs.” Abbott noted, “Permanently protecting their remaining habitats is key to the survival of Piping Plovers, and an important complement to our own Piping Plover conservation and community outreach work.”

Another key partnership is helping to advance protection of the beach. The Nature Trust and the Province are working together to ensure conservation of the entire Crow Neck beach, including a large area owned by the Province and targeted for protection under the government’s commitment to protect 12% of Nova Scotia by 2015.

Today’s celebration also commemorated the Nature Trust’s recent protection of the Purgatory Point Conservation Lands. This 120 acre coastal property on the Blanche Peninsula, is also an important refuge for migratory birds and other wildlife. It will be protected, forever, through a conservation easement.

Together with Bird Studies Canada, the Nature Trust marked these landmark conservation successes today at Crow Neck beach, with a property announcement and recognition of the two Nova Scotian families who made the successes possible.

According to Dennis Garratt, the Nature Trust’s conservation manager, with so much of our coastline in private ownership, the future of our unique coastal legacy, and that of the rich diversity of coastal wildlife, lies in the hands of Nova Scotian landowners. Garratt noted, “Albert

and Winnifred Campbell, Bruce Blakemore and Hugh Jones are all visionary landowners who have taken action to protect, forever, the natural wonders on their land. On behalf of all Nova Scotians, and all the species that call these lands home, we honour and thank them for their generous and irreplaceable conservation gifts.”

Ms. Blakemore, co-owner of the Purgatory Point property, highlighted the other side of the story—the landowner perspective. More and more Nova Scotians are concerned about what they see happening to the land, and want to take action to protect nature, before it’s too late. She noted, “We are so pleased that the Nature Trust is here to help landowners like us to protect and preserve Nova Scotia’s natural legacy.”

The Nature Trust also acknowledged three Government of Canada programs that played an invaluable part in these conservation successes. According to Mr. Garratt, Environment Canada’s Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk and EcoAction Community Funding Program provided critical grant funding for the land conservation projects. Additional funding assistance was provided by Ascenta Health Limited, Aveda and the Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation. The Ecological Gifts Program provides Federal income tax incentives for landowners who protect nature on their lands and thereby help in preserving Canada’s unique natural heritage. Both the Campbell and Jones/Blakemore family benefitted from the Ecogifts program incentives.

The announcement was followed by a guided nature walk, an opportunity for enthusiastic participants to see first-hand the diversity of birds and other wildlife benefiting from the new protected area at Crow Neck. Nature Trust and Bird Studies Canada staff and volunteers, and local residents then pitched in to clean up the woods adjacent to the beach as a first step in stewarding the newest protected area for Shelburne County.

A passionate bird enthusiast himself, the Nature Trust’s Dennis Garratt concluded, “The Piping Plovers are no doubt singing praise today for these new Nature Trust lands!”

FOR BROADCAST USE:

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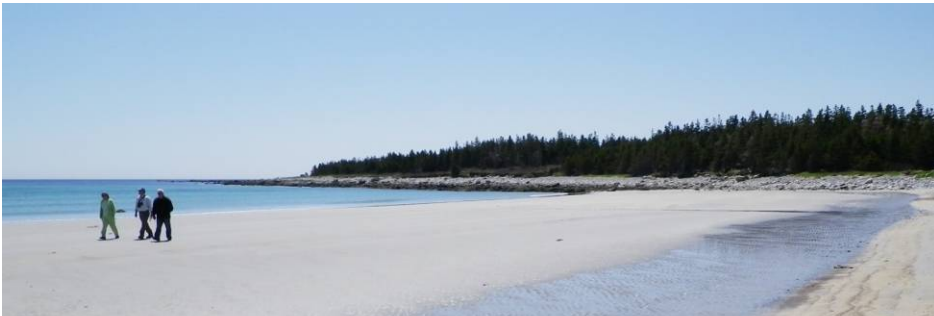
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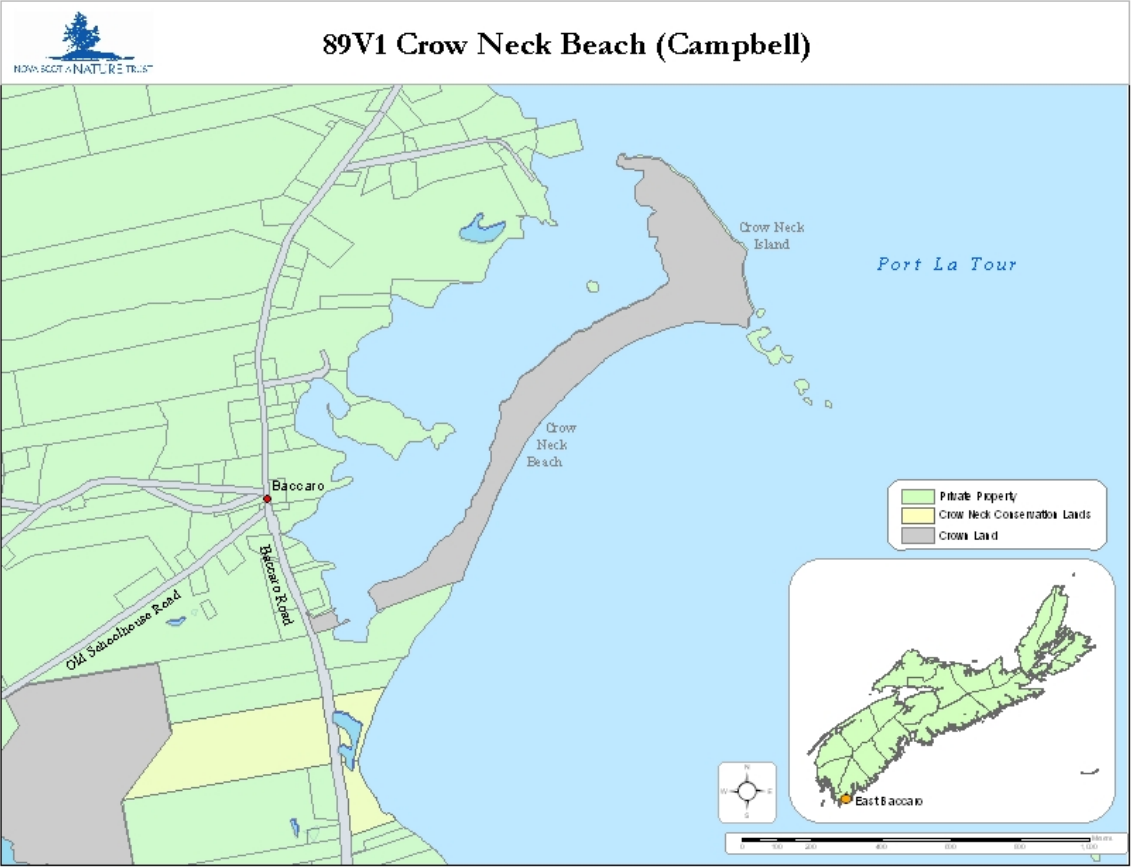
Photographs Available—please contact us for photos

The Nature Trust's Crow Neck Beach Conservation Lands





Albert and Winnifred Campbell, previous owners of the Crow Neck property, with the Nature Trust's Dennis Garratt at the Crow Neck Beach Conservation Lands



The Nature Trust's Purgatory Point Conservation Lands



Landowners Hugh Jones and Bruce Blakemore at their Purgatory Point property

87V5 Purgatory Point (Blakemore Jones)



BACKGROUND

Crow Neck Beach Conservation Lands

Land and Owners

- Situated in Baccaro, (District Municipality of Barrington, Shelburne County), south western Nova Scotia
- In the spring of 2010, conservation minded owners Winnifred and Albert Campbell approached the Nature Trust about their property
- Lands were acquired by a partial donation/partial sale.
- The landowners received a tax incentive for their donation of land through the Government of Canada's Ecological Gifts program.
- The majority of the beach is owned by the Crown. This Crown land is designated under the Beaches Act and proposed for protection under the Province's commitment to protect 12% of Nova Scotia by 2015

Key Conservation Features & Ecological Importance

- There are several different ecosystem types (bog, ponds, sand dunes, forest) within this property each of which supports different groups of flora
- Site is part of Roseway-Baccaro Important Bird Area as designated by BirdLife International.
- Property encompasses 33 acres including 9 acres of unspoiled beach and shore frontage
- Includes nesting habitat for provincially and nationally endangered Piping Plover and used by the adults and juveniles for foraging/feeding
- Four pairs of Piping Plover nested on the beach as a whole in 2010 and were successful in fledging all 16 young birds hatched (Bird Studies Canada, unpublished data)
- In addition to Piping Plovers, this area is highly significant for migrating waterfowl
- Thousands of birds, including scoter species, eider and black duck pass through during spring and fall migration and many of these birds winter in the area as well

- At least eight different species of birds breed on Crow Neck beach (Bird Studies Canada, unpublished data)

Purgatory Point Conservation Lands

Land & Owners

- The 120 acre property is located on the Blanche Peninsula in the District Municipality of Barrington in Shelburne County, south western Nova Scotia
- Bruce Blakemore and Hugh Jones approached the Nature Trust in 2009 keen to protect the property in partnership with the Nature Trust
- Long-time supporters of the Nature Trust, the retired couple have lived on the property for over 30 years
- Purgatory Point is protected by a permanent conservation easement
 - A conservation easement permanently protects the land under the Nova Scotia Conservation Easements Act, but allows for continued use and enjoyment of the land by the landowners.
 - The land may be sold or passed along to heirs, but the restrictions of the easement are binding in perpetuity, thereby protecting the site's natural values.
 - The Easement Act gives the Nature Trust, as holder of the easement, authority to enforce the restrictions of the easement and to ensure the site's natural values are protected, in perpetuity.

Key Conservation Features & Ecological Importance

- It has five main features of significance:
 - Coastline with cobble beach shoreline with intertidal sand flats, exposed bedrock and shallow brackish lagoon
 - Low-lying sphagnum bogs
 - Notable composition of hardwoods, especially red maple, which support several species of uncommon lichens
 - Breeding grounds for ospreys and otters and wintering habitat for waterfowl and other birds
 - The property is an essential refuge for migratory birds during the spring and fall seasons, when birds are navigating the Atlantic Flyway.
- The property is located within the south shore, Roseway-Baccaro Important Bird Area as delineated by BirdLife International

Coastal Conservation in Nova Scotia

- Over 85% of all coastal property in Nova Scotia is privately owned, and much of it faces unprecedented development pressure
- Less than 5% of the more than 12,000 kilometers of Nova Scotia's coastline is legally protected for habitat and wildlife values, and for public access
- The coast supports a tremendous diversity of habitats such as coastal wetlands, tidal flats, coastal islands, and estuaries that are important to wildlife
- A long history of settlement in Nova Scotia means that parcels of coastal property greater than 300 acres in size are very limited in the province
- Conservation of private land along the coast is one of the best solutions to the need for biodiversity conservation along the coast of Nova Scotia. Government designated protection is drastically limited by the small amount of public land
- The Nature Trust offers desirable and flexible conservation solutions for ecologically significant or sensitive parcels of land

Piping Plovers

- Every spring, Piping Plovers arrive at beaches across Atlantic Canada to nest and raise young.
- There are less than 50 breeding pairs of Piping Plovers in Nova Scotia – about one fifth of the entire population in eastern Canada.
- Major threats to Plovers: Loss and degradation of beach nesting habitat due in large part to coastal development and off-highway vehicles; disturbance caused by recreational activities; predator pressures; flooding and extreme weather events.
- The Nature Trust is working to recover Piping Plovers in Nova Scotia in collaboration with Bird Studies Canada's NS Piping Plover Conservation Program.

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust

- Nova Scotia's leading private land conservation organization
- A registered conservation charity dedicated to protecting outstanding natural areas on private land in Nova Scotia and advancing private land conservation
- Works with private landowners to protect, in perpetuity, Nova Scotia's natural legacy, from rare and endangered wildlife habitats to outstanding coastal lands and old growth forests
- Has permanently protected over 5,800 acres of outstanding natural areas in Nova Scotia through land acquisition, conservation agreements with landowners, and conservation education

Bird Studies Canada

- A not-for-profit organization whose mission is to advance the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of birds and their habitats in Canada
- Bird Studies Canada's volunteer surveys and targeted research projects are used to identify significant population changes and help direct conservation planning.
- Bird Studies Canada's Nova Scotia Piping Plover Conservation Program uses population monitoring, beach habitat protection, and dedicated volunteers and project partners to reverse the decline of Piping Plovers in Nova Scotia.

Funding Support

- The protection of Crow Neck Beach was made possible thanks to funding from Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, Aveda, the Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation and Ascenta Health Ltd.
- The protection of Purgatory Point was made possible thanks to funding from Environment Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program, Aveda, Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation and Ascenta Health Ltd.
- Both projects benefited from the landowner tax incentives provided by the Government of Canada's Ecological Gifts Program.