



## **The Nova Scotia Nature Trust Does It Again! *Three More Coastal Gems Protected, Forever***

**Halifax, NS (March 25, 2013)** – Three spectacular properties on Cape Breton Island are now part of the growing coastal legacy protected in Nova Scotia, thanks to the generosity of three American families and the work of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust. In an impressive finale to another banner year for the Nature Trust, nearly 600 acres of coastal wilderness have been protected in North Harbour, the Mabou Highlands, and the Bras d’Or Lakes.

The new coastal protected areas are welcome news to Nova Scotians concerned about the future of Nova Scotia’s unique wild spaces, especially the coastline. With increasing pressures on coastal areas, many beautiful beaches, headlands and islands have been significantly impacted in recent years, and traditional access to enjoy coastal areas has decreased. According to Nature Trust Executive Director, Bonnie Sutherland, “The Nature Trust’s new protected areas preserve important ecological values, habitats and species, but also treasured scenic views and traditional access for Nova Scotians and visitors alike to experience and enjoy our unique coastal heritage.”

The lands were all protected through a new cross-border program of the American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts (American Friends). This U.S. charity was created to make possible the permanent protection of Canadian land owned by Americans. Until recently, Americans wishing to donate their Canadian land or protect their land through conservation easement faced complex tax and legal barriers. The preservation of many high priority conservation lands across Canada was stymied. Founded by a group of conservation leaders from both sides of the border, led by the Nature Trust, American Friends has removed these long-time impediments to conservation and made it possible for Americans to take an active role in protecting Canada’s unique natural legacy. The three Cape Breton properties announced today are among the first wave of achievements resulting from this innovative cross-border conservation partnership between American Friends and Canadian land trusts like the Nature Trust.

In Aspy Bay, the North Harbour Conservation Lands feature 100 acres of picturesque shoreline, unusual gypsum cliffs and sinkholes, beaches, wetlands, and coastal forests. It is the second generous conservation gift by Merloyd Lawrence, a Boston area publisher and long-time summer resident of Nova Scotia. Ms. Lawrence’s Little Annapolis Lake property was the very first “cross-border” easement in Canada, opening the door to many other gifts of land by Americans.



Merloyd Lawrence and North Harbour Conservation Lands



Mabou Highlands Conservation Lands

In the Mabou Highlands, the Nature Trust has been working with several families to protect what it hopes will someday be a 1500 acre coastal wilderness. Thanks to the generosity and environmental stewardship of Bob and Lee Ann Kinzer, an extensive area of mature hardwood forest has been added to the growing assemblage of lands encompassing 600 acres of sea cliffs and beaches, ravines, striking headlands, Acadian hardwood forests, and diverse wildlife habitats.

Along the shores of Bras d'Or Lake sits an idyllic 250 acres of rare coastal island Acadian hardwood forest, old growth hemlock forest, wetlands, beaches, sheltered bays,

and over seven kilometers of undeveloped shoreline. Through a generous land donation by Dan Livingstone and in partnership with American Friends, this site will now remain wild, in perpetuity.



Dan Livingstone and Dennis Garratt

In a landmark year for conservation, the Nature Trust has protected *nine* new conservation lands, encompassing over 1000 acres of outstanding natural areas. “Protecting these Cape Breton coastal gems was the pinnacle of an absolutely incredible year the Nature Trust—the most successful and exciting year in our 18-year history,” Sutherland said.

Asked how the Nature Trust has been able to achieve so much, Sutherland pointed to growing public enthusiasm and support for conservation. “Our continued momentum is fueled by more and more people who are getting behind the cause and stepping up to protect Nova Scotia’s special places.” Sutherland added, “People recognize what a special place we have here in Nova Scotia, and what we risk losing if we don’t act now. Whether they are donating their own land, volunteering, running in the Blue Nose or trekking in Patagonia to raise funds for conservation, or people donating for the first time to save turtles, piping plovers, or treasured coastal islands—it’s our friends and supporters who make this important conservation work possible.”

The Nature Trust’s recent achievements include the high profile campaigns to save Troop Island in St. Margaret’s Bay and the Blanding’s turtle sanctuary on McGowan Lake, both of which drew tremendous public enthusiasm and support. The year also saw the Nature Trust complete Canada’s first conservation easement on university-owned land, through a pioneering conservation partnership with Acadia University that protects the 300 acre Bon Portage Island. Three nationally-significant endangered species sanctuaries in southwest Nova Scotia round out an incredible run of conservation successes for the Nature Trust.

In all, the Nature Trust has protected over 7,000 acres of outstanding natural areas, encompassing 55 conservation sites all across the province. These lands will remain forever wild, for future generations (of people and wildlife too!) to enjoy.



Mackenzie Cove Conservation Lands