

**Nature Trust Celebrates the Permanent Protection of a 27 hectare  
Endangered Blanding's Turtle Habitat**



**Kempt, N.S. (July 27, 2013)** – This Saturday the Nova Scotia Nature Trust supporters and staff and conservation partners Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute and Parks Canada will gather to celebrate the permanent protection of a 27 hectare property on McGowan Lake, in Kempt, NS.

Thanks to a successful public appeal launched in late November, the Nature Trust has succeeded in saving one of the best remaining refuges for Blanding's turtles in the province. The property, encompassing 15 islands and a forested peninsula on McGowan Lake, in southwest Nova Scotia, includes five and a half kilometers of undeveloped shoreline and the ideal nesting habitat for Blanding's Turtles.

"It was amazing to be part of the protection of the property. It's truly heartwarming to know that so many people care so much about the future of this endangered species. Now, an important nesting area will remain wild for future generations of Blanding's turtles and their hatchlings" said Conservation Manager Dennis Garrett.

The McGowan Lake turtle campaign set a fundraising record at the Nature Trust for having the largest number of individual people donate to one campaign. Over 300 individuals, young and old, from across Nova Scotia and beyond, donated to help ensure the turtle's habitat was protected. Many chose to symbolically "adopt" a turtle for friends and loved ones, with over 150 people supporting the McGowan Lake turtles this way.

"It is great to know that the campaign has reached so many people all over Nova Scotia and we are so happy to be able to celebrate the protection of the property with them this Saturday" said Garrett

The Blanding's turtle is one of the longest-lived and slowest maturing freshwater turtles in Canada. It is also a turtle in trouble. With a hatchling survival rate of less than 1%, and expanding cottage development and roads in the areas where these turtles live, the endangered turtles are struggling to



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survive. Blanding's turtles are listed on both the Canadian and Nova Scotian endangered species lists, and within Nova Scotia they are found only within one small area – with only approximately 350 adult turtles remaining.



The Sanctuary is part of a growing network of 58 Nature Trust conservation lands, protecting over 7300 acres of habitat for species at risk, critical freshwater habitats, coastal wilderness, and old-growth forests, as well as lands providing unique wilderness recreation, nature appreciation, education and research opportunities.

For more information call **(902) 425-LAND**, or visit [www.nsnt.ca/savingturtles](http://www.nsnt.ca/savingturtles)



## Nova Scotia Nature Trust

### BACKGROUND

#### **The Nova Scotia Nature Trust**

##### Mission

- To protect Nova Scotia's outstanding natural legacy through land conservation.

##### Vision

- We envision a future in which Nova Scotia's native species, and unique habitats and natural landscapes are protected in perpetuity, and in which this natural legacy is appreciated and actively stewarded.

##### Beliefs that Guide Our Work

- Conservation Commitment - Nova Scotia's natural legacy has significant ecological value and must be protected.
- Connection to Nature - Protected natural areas are essential to the quality of life of present and future generations of Nova Scotians.
- Urgency - Action is needed to protect important natural areas that are increasingly threatened by development and resource use.
- Private Land - A focus on private lands is critical because they comprise the majority of Nova Scotia and contain irreplaceable sites and features of conservation priority.
- Landowners - Landowners have a key role to play in protecting Nova Scotia's special places.
- Service - Information and support for landowners and conservation-minded Nova Scotians is essential to protecting nature on their lands and in their communities.

##### Approach

- Conservation Science - The best available, most up-to-date conservation science informs our work.
- Land Acquisition - We acquire land through purchase, and acceptance of donations and bequests.



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- Conservation Agreements - We enter into permanent, legal conservation agreements with landowners.
- Stewardship - We provide long-term protection and management of conservation lands.
- Co-operation - We partner to implement creative conservation solutions.
- Engagement - We work at the grass roots level to create opportunities for community engagement.
- Leadership - We enhance capacity for private land conservation by developing, applying, and sharing forward-thinking policies and programs.
- Education - We foster appreciation and understanding of the natural environment and the critical importance of conserving natural areas.

The Nature Trust has permanently protected over 7,300 acres on 58 different conservation sites all over Nova Scotia.