

Nature's Big Day!

Nature Trust Celebrates Historic Investment in Biodiversity

February 28, 2018—The Nova Scotia Nature Trust is celebrating a historic investment in biodiversity conservation announced in the 2018 federal budget. A new billion dollar Nature Fund could leverage the passion and power of over 100 land trusts across the country to help Canada conserve 17% of our land and inland waters by 2020.

In 2010, Canada was one of 194 countries to adopt a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including 20 global biodiversity targets, known as the Aichi Targets. Under Canada's 2020 Biodiversity Goals and Targets, Target 1 commits Canada to protecting at least 17% of terrestrial areas and inland water, and 10% of marine and coastal areas of Canada.



The 2018 budget commits \$1.3 billion to help reach Target 1 by protecting Canada's nature, parks and wild spaces, including public, private and Indigenous protected areas. Five hundred million is earmarked for a Nature Fund focused on securing biodiversity through conservation of private lands and endangered species conservation efforts. With matching dollars raised by conservation partners, a billion dollars will be invested in biodiversity conservation over the next five years.

The Nature Trust is thrilled to see Canada leading global action on land conservation, and recognizing the critical role of land trusts in meeting Canada's biodiversity targets.

Canada has a once in a lifetime opportunity for unprecedented conservation achievement. With Canada's commitment to the 17% target, major federal investment in biodiversity, and surging public support for protecting wild spaces, the stars have aligned for land trusts to make historic conservation gains. Canada's land trusts, our grassroots supporters, volunteers and landowners are ready and eager leverage this opportunity to grow our impact as never before!



Reaching Canada's 17% target will require large new protected areas on government-owned lands. At the same time, the most ecologically rich and diverse landscapes are concentrated in southern Canada, where landownership is mostly private and threats to biodiversity are highest. In Nova Scotia, for example, over 70% of land (85% of our coast) is privately owned, and this privately owned land is disproportionately significant for biodiversity. Land trusts are the key to protecting these private lands.

Canada's land trusts have already protected almost 247,000 acres (100,000 hectares) encompassing some of Canada's most ecologically significant land, including habitat for over 90 federally-listed species at risk.



With this new injection of funding, land trusts are poised to nearly double their impact in the next five years, protecting 200,000 acres (81,000 hectares) more of Canada's most outstanding natural areas.

The Nature Trust's enthusiasm for the recent funding announcement is shared with our colleagues across the country. A working group representing over 100 community and regional land trusts, the Canadian Land Trusts Working Committee, joined forces to encourage national funding to accelerate biodiversity protection through land trust action and to maximize land trust impacts on Canada's 17% target.

"Land trusts across the country loudly applaud the Government of Canada's commitment to nature and biodiversity conservation in Budget 2018," noted Susan Walmer, member of the Canadian Land Trusts Working Committee. "Through community-based private land conservation, land trusts are uniquely positioned to leverage the government's investment to help slow or reverse species declines, protect watersheds, and mitigate the effects of climate change."

Together with our dedicated supporters and volunteers, we have achieved remarkable conservation successes in Nova Scotia, from the globally significant 100 Wild Islands, to spectacular conservation lands on the St. Mary's River, Rogues Roost and Troop Island, among many others. To date, we have protected over 90 conservation sites, encompassing nearly 11,000 acres of Nova Scotia's most important and treasured natural areas.

The new federal investments announced today will help to increase the pace and scale of land conservation even more, ensuring Nova Scotia's natural legacy is well stewarded and truly protected, forever. We are excited to step up to leverage this federal investment to accelerate priority conservation, contribute directly to Canada Target 1 and to support climate change adaptation and species at risk goals.

Be a part of these historic gains for nature conservation. Contact the Nature Trust for information about the Nature Trust, charitable gifts, bequests for nature, and volunteering: (902) 425-LAND, nature@nsnt.ca or www.nsnt.ca.



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