



For Immediate Release
Halifax, Nova Scotia October 25, 2007

Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson Support Nature Trust

October 26, 2007--Distinguished guest speakers Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson drew a record crowd (approximately 450) to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust's 10th Annual Dinner and Silent Auction on October 25.

Atwood and Gibson share the Joint Honourary Presidency of BirdLife International's *Rare Bird Society*, are deeply concerned about the well-being of the environment, and believe in the work of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust. Internationally celebrated Canadian author Margaret Atwood has been writing literature for over 35 years and has received numerous awards and many honorary degrees. She has authored more than 40 volumes of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction.

Last night Atwood shared an engaging reading from her recent book *The Door*—a poem about her father entitled “Butterfly” and another entitled “The Weather”—as well as a prose selection from *Moral Disorder*.

With the Nature Trust's announcement of the permanent protection of the spectacular coastal wilderness of the Long Cove Conservation Lands near Port Medway, Atwood revealed that her father—a naturalist, conservationist and forest etymologist—enjoyed spending time along the coast near Long Cove and knew it well. The property is a spectacular 145 acre coastal wilderness at Ragged Harbour. Four kilometres of shoreline, including extensive saltmarsh, mudflats, coastal islands, beach and headlands provide excellent habitat for a diversity of birds--including the endangered piping plover--and countless migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Atwood and Graeme, both passionate naturalists and birders, will be accompanying the Nature Trust to visit the Long Cove Conservation Lands, the Nature Trust's 27th protected area.

Gibson—a member of the Order of Canada—is an award-winning author who communicated his passion for birds by sharing compelling stories about human's relationship with birds from his most recent book, *Beside Book of Birds*. Gibson has served as a council member of World Wildlife Fund of Canada and is chairman of the Pelee Island Bird Observatory.

Gibson reminded the audience of the important role the Nova Scotia Nature Trust plays in the preservation of the province's natural landscapes by explaining that if we lose our natural habitats there will be nothing else left. To illuminate this point, he shared an experience that he and Atwood had in the high Arctic when they came across three “endangered species”: a polar bear standing atop an ice flow with ivory gulls and a seal. The endangered species are the polar bear, the ivory gull and the ice. Gibson explained that if the ice disappears, the polar bear and ivory gulls will disappear as well. Using the ice as a metaphor, he explained that “the ice” is land that the Nature Trust protects, which provides the critical habitat for all living things.



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The momentum of the Nature Trust's conservation success continues to build. The Nature Trust made major conservation news with the announcement of two new coastal preserves, Vogler's Cove and the previously mentioned Long Cove, both in the Port Medway area.

According to Nature Trust Executive Director, Bonnie Sutherland, "These recent coastal acquisitions are particularly exciting in light of the startling revelation that 95% of the coast is not public, but in fact privately owned. We need to act quickly to protect the best of our coastal legacy, before it is too late." Development pressures on the coast are unprecedented and increasing.

The Nature Trust celebrated three other major conservation successes achieved in 2007. New protected areas securing critical habitat for endangered plant species were acquired on Gillfillan Lake, Yarmouth County, and the St. Croix River area of Hants County.

Farley and Claire Mowat's September 7th donation of a 200 acre Cape Breton nature sanctuary was highlighted in a video featuring the stunning scenery of Farley's Ark and the musings of this Canadian literary and environmental icon, and Patron and ambassador of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust.

Mayor Robert Stead and the Town of Wolfville were honoured with the Nature Trust's Annual Conservation Award in recognition of their vision, leadership and inspiration in breaking new ground in Canadian land conservation. The recently signed conservation easement to protect the 605 acre *Wolfville Watershed Nature Preserve* set an exciting Canadian precedent for conservation. It is the first conservation easement in Canadian history to protect Municipally-owned lands through permanent legal protection by a non-government land trust.

Atwood and Gibson add to the list of celebrated environmental leaders, writers and thinkers that the Nature Trust has brought to Halifax to help spread the message of land conservation. From David Suzuki and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to Harry Thurston, Monte Hummel, Wade Davis and Justin Trudeau, the Nature Trust continues to find unique ways to engage Nova Scotians in thinking about and supporting their mission of protecting Nova Scotia's most treasured natural places.

Thanks to the readings and personal stories shared by Atwood and Gibson, the Nature Trust dinner was enlightening, engaging, and rich with compassion and inspiration for land conservation.

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