



UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL:
March 1, 2019

Baddeck River Lands Adds to Nature Trust's Historic Land Campaign

[Baddeck, NS]—A 130 acre gift of Cape Breton land to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust protects old growth forests, habitat for endangered wildlife, and ensures the future of a major provincial Wilderness Area. The achievement is part of an extraordinary Nature Trust land conservation campaign. Through matching fund commitments, every dollar raised by March 31 brings four more dollars to save land, up to 3,000 acres, across the province.

The Baddeck River land protects ecologically rich and important old growth hardwood forests, pristine river shoreline and habitat for endangered wildlife such as Canada Lynx and Pine Marten. The conservation benefits extend beyond the property as well - as an inholding of private land within the 6,800 acre Baddeck River Wilderness Area, the property is like a missing piece in a puzzle. Without protection, the property could have been developed opening the wilderness to roads, invasive species, clearcutting, and other threats.

Its protection eliminates these threats, and ensures an intact corridor for wildlife between the highlands and the river valley. This vast, unbroken wilderness with old growth forests is essential for wildlife like lynx, bears, owls and woodpeckers.

Irene and the late Ernest Forbes, the land donors, are delighted their treasured lands will be protected, forever. Many Nova Scotian families have strong, multi-generational connections to their land, and worry about what will happen to their special place after they're gone. Will it be sold, subdivided or cleared? Will the beautiful woods or pristine lakeshores be destroyed, and opportunities to enjoy these wild places lost?

The late Ernest Forbes did not want that to happen to his treasured lands on the Baddeck River. The lovely old hardwood forests and wild river had been perfect for Ernest, a hunter and angler.

"Ernest loved that piece of land," said Irene of her husband, who passed away in 2015. "It was good for his soul. It made him happy. He wanted other people to enjoy it as much as he did. That's why we have donated the land to the Nature Trust. They can ensure the property remains in its natural state, forever."

This conservation achievement is part of national efforts to address the growing crisis of biodiversity loss across Canada and beyond. The government of Canada has recently committed to protecting 17% of Canada by 2020, and made a historic \$1.3 billion investment to ensure that goal is reached.

To build momentum for this national effort, the Government chose key conservation leaders across the country, including the Nature Trust, to deliver quick wins for biodiversity—significant, immediate

land conservation gains. The Nature Trust launched an ambitious, landmark conservation drive, the *Lasting Landscapes Campaign* that aims to protect as many as 15 new conservation sites encompassing over 3,000 acres of Nova Scotia's natural areas, in just a few months. The campaign will protect as much land as the organization conserved in its first 13 years of conservation.

The Honorable Mark Eyking, Member of Parliament for the Sydney-Victoria riding where the lands are located, welcomed the news of the new protected lands. "Being from a rural community, I recognize the importance of maintaining our forests and wildlife. I commend the Forbes family for setting aside the 130 acre inholding to be protected, and I commend the Nova Scotia Nature Trust as the caretakers of this property and others across the province," noted Mr. Eyking.

By supporting the Nature Trust's Campaign, other citizens can be a part of protecting Canada's biodiversity too. Through matching funds from the Nature Fund and the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust, every dollar donated by March 31, 2019 leverages another four dollars to save land.

To meet matching fund requirements, and leverage over three million dollars for conservation, the Nature Trust must not only secure a record number of conservation sites by March 31, but must also raise another \$750,000 in public support. To date Nova Scotians have stepped up with \$600,000.

Bonnie Sutherland, Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust noted, "It's an incredible, unprecedented opportunity for individual Nova Scotians to make a big difference for nature. With this 4 to 1 match, a \$100 donation means \$500 to save land. A \$1000 donation means \$5000 to protect the places we love!"

Charitable donations can be made at nsnt.ca or by phone at (902) 425-LAND. Every dollar donated by March 31, 2019, will leverage four additional dollars in biodiversity conservation.

The Baddeck River Conservation Lands add to a growing network of over 100 lands protected by the Nova Scotia Nature Trust across the province, encompassing over 11,000 acres of priority habitats and rich biodiversity.

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Photos and map available—www.nsnt.ca/media

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