



Nature Trust's Historic Land Campaign to Exceed Ambitious Targets

March 28, 2019 (Dartmouth, NS) – The Nova Scotia Nature Trust's Lasting Landscapes campaign was already on track for historic land conservation achievements. Now, an unexpected \$400,000 top-up in matching funds means even greater biodiversity wins can be leveraged for Nova Scotia. The Nature Trust has just added 2 more potential conservation sites to the 15 already being protected across the province. To seize this new opportunity, the Nature Trust needs to raise another \$100,000, and secure both new conservation sites, by April 5, 2019.

The Nature Trust began its historic "Lasting Landscapes" conservation campaign just months ago, providing nature-loving Nova Scotians with a rare opportunity: for every dollar donated, four additional dollars are generated through the Government of Canada's Nature Fund and the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust.

To date, the Nature Trust has raised its minimum goal of \$750,000, which has leveraged matching funds of over \$3 million for land conservation. With these funds the Nature Trust is working to secure 15 outstanding conservation sites across the province, encompassing over 3,000 acres of Nova Scotia's best wild areas. It took the Nature Trust its first 13 years to save 3,000 acres of private land. Though this inspiring campaign, the Nature Trust aims to repeat that feat in a matter of months.

The new protected areas include spectacular forest and freshwater wilderness in the Mabou Highlands and Cobequid Hills, and the renowned Seal Island, a critical refuge for migratory birds. New lands will also be added to the Barren Meadow Turtle Sanctuary, the 100 Wild Islands, and the majestic St. Mary's River conservation lands.

The charity credits the campaign's success to an unprecedented outpouring of support from donors and landowners across the province who took full advantage of a 4 to 1 matching of donations.

Recognizing the Nature Trust's inspiring track record, the Government of Canada offered a last-minute increase to their funding incentive. Up to \$400,000 can be leveraged to save land, if the Nature Trust can deliver two additional conservation sites and raise at least \$100,000 by April 5.

Bolstered by the outpouring of support to date, the Nature Trust has seized this opportunity and signed offers to acquire the two additional properties: one in the Mabou Highlands and another in a popular near-urban wildland just minutes outside of Halifax.

The deadline to close on both land deals, and to raise \$100,000 in donations, is April 5.

“Seeing so many people support this campaign, including many who’ve never supported us before—it’s clear that saving nature matters to Nova Scotians,” says Bonnie Sutherland, Executive Director of the Nature Trust. “And yes, it’s a tight timeline, but we simply can’t say no to this historic 4 to 1 conservation funding opportunity and from the generosity we’ve seen so far, Nova Scotians agree.”

One of the new sites targeted for protection encompasses 100 acres of forest lands near Inverness, Cape Breton. The property fills a critical gap between the vast coastal lands already protected by the Nature Trust and Crown lands slated for designation as a Wilderness Area.

The other new site is a 100 acre property, just outside of Halifax, with extensive shoreline on Frederick Lake. The land is surrounded by the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area, a vast, wild landscape of rugged, rocky barrens, unique forests and lakes, home to endangered mainland moose and rare plants, birds and lichens.

The risk of development of this ‘inholding’ of private land has long been a concern to the many environmental groups who helped to establish the Wilderness Area, and the countless volunteers and organizations who help to steward the area and the spectacular Bluff Wilderness trail.

“We are just thrilled that the Frederick Lake property will be saved,” says Richmond Campbell, a long-time volunteer with the Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization and Nature Trust supporter. “Development of that shoreline would seriously impact connectivity of habitat within the Wilderness Area. Housing all along that shore would also devastate the incredible vistas and wilderness values for the many people who like the Bluff Trail and paddle these wilderness lakes.”

“With the Bluff Wilderness Trail and the Mabou Highlands so cherished by so many people, we’re confident the community will step up to help us save these special places,” says Sutherland. “With every dollar donated leveraging another four dollars, there’s never been a better chance for Nova Scotians to make a difference for nature.”

All donations will be matched 4 to 1, but only until the April 5 deadline.

Charitable donations can be made online at www.nsnt.ca or by phone at (902) 425-LAND. For more information visit nsnt.ca/lastinglandscapes.

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Backgrounder, photos and map available—www.nsnt.ca/media

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