

BACKGROUND

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust

- The Nature Trust is Nova Scotia's leading private land conservation organization, active in protecting our natural legacy since 1994
- The organization protects ecologically significant natural areas through private land conservation, offering a unique solution for a significant conservation challenge. Unlike most of Canada, over 65% of Nova Scotia is privately owned, not government land. Land Trusts provide landowners with a non-government community based option for protecting their land
- Private lands include many of most ecologically important areas, yet face unprecedented development pressures.
- Through permanent conservation easement agreements, we help families to protect, forever, their treasured and ecologically important family lands. We also accept land donations and bequests of land, and in exceptional cases, we purchase outstanding and threatened natural areas.
- All conservation lands entrusted to our care become part of the land legacy that we safeguard for all Nova Scotians. Our commitment is to protect those lands, forever through ongoing monitoring, stewardship and management.
- An active program of volunteer "property guardians" help to care for this growing network of protected areas
- Our innovative, community-based educational initiatives are helping to build understanding and appreciation for the natural world. We give Nova Scotians the knowledge and tools they need to take an active part in protecting the places they love and ensuring that the legacy is passed on to future generations.
- The Nature Trust is an active partner and collaborator in conservation with all levels of government, with other non-profits and local communities
- Over the last 25 years, the Nature Trust has successfully and permanently protected over 14,000 acres of significant natural areas, including over 115 conservation properties across Nova Scotia.

Barren Meadow Property

- The 93 acre Barren Meadow property is located near the community of Colpton, Lunenburg County.
- The property is an inholding within the Shingle Lake Nature Reserve (pending designation by the province) and adds to an existing assemblage of Nature Trust Conservation Lands within the pending Nature Reserve boundary.
- The property is known to provide critical nesting and over-wintering habitat for the nationally and provincially endangered Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) and the nationally and provincially threatened Eastern Ribbonsnake (*Thamnophis sauritus*).
- The protection of this property compliments a growing assemblage of protected lands in the Barren Meadow Brook area, contributing to achieving both national and provincial conservation objectives of protecting critical habitat for the Blanding's Turtle and Eastern Ribbonsnake.
- A unique feature of the property is the naturally occurring rock piles and small rocky outcrops. The rock piles provide basking and overwintering habitat for Eastern Ribbonsnakes. These rocky outcrops also provide potential nesting habitat for Blanding's Turtles.
- The property is 1 of 17 protected through the Lasting Landscapes Campaign.

Blanding's Turtles

- one of the longest-lived and slowest maturing freshwater turtles in Canada
- live up to 80 years and reach maturity at age 20
- hatchling survival rate of less than 1%
- listed on both the Canadian and Nova Scotian endangered species lists
- within Nova Scotia, they are only found in the southwest and only on a small number of lakes, rivers and wetlands
- Experts on the provincial Recovery Team for Blanding's Turtles cite land conservation as essential in addressing some of the most serious threats to these turtles, ranging from habitat destruction, fragmentation and loss to human-caused mortality.
- Blanding's turtles are endangered on a national scale, so our success protecting their critical habitat in Nova Scotia is essential to their survival in Canada.
- The Nature Trust and other conservation partners are working to create connected corridors of habitat, so the turtles will be able to move between feeding, breeding and overwintering habitats without facing significant risks, particularly from road mortality.

The Lasting Landscapes Campaign

- Thanks to major support from the Government of Canada's Nature Fund and the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust, the Nova Scotia Nature Trust launched an ambitious land conservation campaign in February 2019.
- By raising over \$850,000 in donations through the *Lasting Landscapes Campaign*, the Nature Trust was able to leverage \$3.5 million in Federal and other funds to protect 17 high priority conservation sites, encompassing over 3,200 acres of land, in less than 3 months.
- This is the largest federal investment ever in protecting Nova Scotia's biodiversity.

Canada's Nature Fund

- The Canada Nature Fund is a \$500 million investment to support the efforts of non-federal partners whose commitment is critical to achieving success in nature conservation. Canada Nature Fund contributions are matched by philanthropic foundations, corporations, not-for-profits, provinces, territories and other partners, raising a total of \$1 billion for conservation action.
- The Fund supports the establishment of a coordinated network of protected and conserved areas and helps with the conservation of species at risk and their habitats.
- To launch the program, the Government invested the first \$15 million with key conservation leaders across Canada through the Quick Start program.
- Quick Start was designed to support projects which had a short timeline, and would quickly add to Canada's total protected and conserved lands. These projects will help Canada reach its goal of conserving 17 percent of our land and freshwater by 2020.
- Projects/partners were selected based on their contribution to hectares protected or conserved, ecological integrity, advancement of indigenous reconciliation priorities, connectivity to each other or existing conserved and protected areas, and proximity to completion.
- The Nature Trust was chosen as one of a small number of partners selected to receive funding in 2018/19 to deliver quick wins for Canada's biodiversity. The Nature Trust could receive up to \$1.45 million towards private land conservation directly benefitting the 17% by 2020 goal.
- Additional Nature Fund programs will launch in the spring of 2019.

The Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust

- The Land Legacy Trust is a \$23 million fund established up by the Province in 2008 to support private land conservation in Nova Scotia. It was funded from Crown Share Payments
- This provincial investment has been a 'game changer' in Nova Scotia, significantly advancing the scale and pace of private land conservation
- It has supported the protection of almost 100 properties that total 7,775 hectares
- Funding committed to date, just over \$10 million, has leveraged the securement of conservation efforts worth over \$32 million.
- It has provided vital funding for the Nature Trust, including work that initiated many of the major land assemblages proposed in the Lasting Landscapes Campaign
- The Land Legacy Trust has been approached to help in leveraging this new federal investment in Nova Scotia, by supporting the proposed land projects