



## **Nova Scotia Nature Trust announces success in campaign to save 3 rare coastal gems**

(HALIFAX, Nova Scotia. March 8, 2022). Nova Scotians have once again stepped up to demonstrate their love for our iconic coast. Thanks to an outpouring of public support and matching funds unlocked through both federal and provincial governments, and other partners, the Nova Scotia Nature Trust has added three coastal properties to its growing natural legacy: a pristine coastal island, a beautiful South Shore beach and wetlands, and stunning Cape Breton coastal highlands. These new protected areas represent a \$1 million victory for coastal conservation across the province.

**Lowland Cove** is a stunning example of northern Cape Breton's incredible coastal mountains and rugged wildness. Its protection is not only a triumph for preserving 40 hectares (100 acres) of coastal habitats and connectivity for wildlife; it also represents a milestone in linking together the proposed [Seawall Trail](#), which promises to be 48 kilometers of world-class hiking along the cliffs and highlands surrounding the Polletts Cove - Aspy Fault Wilderness Area.

**Sand Beach** represents the potential for balanced synergy between people and nature. Just south of Liverpool, this easily accessible 62 hectares (154 acres) of wild coastline has been enjoyed by generations of local families and visitors eager to swim, camp, birdwatch, and appreciate nature. Its mosaic of diverse habitats also provides refuge for migratory and nesting birds, and endangered species including several species of birds, turtles and lichen, as well as critical climate change mitigation benefits.

**Middle Island** is the final link to ensure the ecological integrity in a coastal archipelago now fully protected by the Nature Trust, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Province. Located off Cherry Hill beach, near Port Medway, the island is a key waypoint on the Atlantic Flyway, a "bird highway" essential to feeding, resting, and breeding for many migratory birds. Its protection supports the movement of bird colonies within and beyond the archipelago - a critical step in helping to address rapid decline in global bird populations and impacts of climate change.

Coastal areas are among the most ecologically important in our province and beyond. However, not only are they highly sought after for development, but they are also at increased risk from the accelerating effects of climate change. Diverse coastal habitats and the wildlife they support - not to mention public access for enjoyment, education and recreation - are disappearing. Opportunities for protection are notoriously rare, particularly in Nova Scotia where over 85% of the coastline is privately owned.

But saving privately owned, ecologically valuable land is precisely why the Nature Trust exists. And last year they joined a global call to action on the biodiversity and climate crises, committing to move even faster in saving Nova Scotia's nature before it's too late. Their [Twice the Wild campaign](#) aims to double their protected lands across the province by 2023, with the help of the Government of Canada and other major partners matching funds donated throughout the campaign. Today's announcement is a great step forward.



Like the Twice the Wild campaign itself, the success in saving these three coastal wildlands illustrates the growing political and public support for accelerating climate change solutions and meeting Canada's ambitious conservation targets.

"The conservation wins announced today were only possible thanks to our federal conservation partners," noted Bonnie Sutherland, the Nature Trust's Executive Director. "We applaud the Government of Canada's bold commitments and historic investments in biodiversity conservation and nature-based solutions to climate change."

Major support for the land acquisitions was provided through the Canada Nature Fund and the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund.

"Canada is fortunate to be home to 24 percent of the world's wetlands, 25 percent of temperate rainforest areas and 28 percent of remaining boreal forests. These ecosystems are globally significant in terms of mitigating the impacts of climate change and protecting biodiversity. By working with partners like the Nova Scotia Nature Trust, we are protecting, restoring and enhancing important wildlife habitat, improving the resilience of valuable ecosystems and increasing their ability to capture and store carbon. The Canada Nature Fund and the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund are helping us make progress in our response to climate change and biodiversity loss. Our investments support Canada's efforts to conserve 25 percent of land and inland waters and 25 percent of oceans by 2025, and working towards 30 percent by 2030."

– The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada

"Nova Scotians are coastal people. Our communities, economy, culture and well-being are connected to the ocean and our coastal way of life define us as a people – strong, resilient, diverse. Our coastline is literally on the front line as we experience climate change. We must work together - governments, the private sector and Nova Scotians – to protect our coastline, which will help ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our province. The Government of Nova Scotia has committed to taking meaningful action on climate change, which includes protecting our coastline, through the Coastal Protection Act, and by protecting 20% of our land and fresh water by 2030. The Nature Trust's conservation leadership will provide climate resiliency and other benefits for generations. On behalf of all Nova Scotians, I thank them for their important work."

– The Honourable Timothy Halman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change for Nova Scotia

A second important player in these conservation successes was Nova Scotia's Crown Share Land Legacy Trust, a critical source of land securement funding for Nova Scotia's land trusts.

The Nature Trust expressed gratitude to the many Nova Scotians who also stepped up to help save these lands. Over 200 individuals, families and businesses responded to the Nature Trust's urgent public appeal, donating the remaining \$200,000, in just a few weeks.



“We had hoped this appeal would speak to the hearts of Nova Scotians, who cherish our beautiful coast, and they definitely delivered—immediately, enthusiastically and generously!” noted Sutherland. “With more than half of these donors supporting the Nature Trust for the first time, and the incredible passion and excitement we’ve seen with this campaign, we are optimistic that even more big wins for nature lie ahead.”

The Nature Trust is still raising funds through its Twice the Wild campaign to save even more incredible landscapes all across the province. To learn more visit [TwiceTheWild.ca](https://TwiceTheWild.ca).

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Photos and video available at [nsnt.ca/media](https://nsnt.ca/media). Interviews available upon request.

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**About Funding Programs:**

***Canada Nature Fund Challenge Fund***

Nova Scotia’s protected areas help fight climate change, provide clean air and water, strengthen biodiversity, provide habitats for our wildlife, fish and birds, and improve quality of life and the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of Nova Scotians. The Government of Nova Scotia has committed to protecting 20 percent of the province’s land and water by 2030, a goal that has been legislated through the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act. Through the Challenge Fund partnership, conservation organizations, the Mi’kmaq and governments are working together to safeguard our natural areas, protecting more of the land and water that Nova Scotians depend on and want protected.

The Government of Canada has committed to conserve 25 percent of the lands and oceans in Canada by 2025, and to work toward 30 per cent by 2030. As part of the Canada Nature Fund, the Target 1 Challenge will help establish new protected and conserved areas across Canada, supporting the conservation of Canada’s ecosystems, landscapes and biodiversity, including species at risk.

In Nova Scotia, the Government of Canada’s Target 1 Challenge funding flows through the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change to conservation organizations and other partners to protect natural areas in the province. The partners include the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Nova Scotia Nature Trust, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources, The Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq, Sespit’emnej Kmitkinu Conservancy, Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife Commission, Town of Amherst and the Municipality of the County of Cumberland. The Province can also use this federal funding for its land protection work.



### ***Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund***

The Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund (NSCSF) is a \$631 million, ten-year investment to help restore and enhance wetlands, peatlands, and grasslands in order to help tackle the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. NSCSF will focus on three main objectives: (1) restoring degraded ecosystems; (2) improving land management practices, especially in agriculture, forestry, and urban development sectors; and (3) conserving carbon-rich ecosystems at high risk of conversion to other uses that would release their stored carbon. Overall, these projects will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and increased carbon sequestration, while also providing benefits for biodiversity and human wellbeing.

### ***Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust***

This Trust was established by the Province in 2008 to support land trusts in protecting ecologically significant, threatened and irreplaceable natural areas on private land in Nova Scotia.

### **More about Twice the Wild:**

The Nature Trust's Twice the Wild Campaign is an ambitious campaign to double the Nature Trust's protected areas - from 15,000 to 30,000 acres - by 2023. Launched in September 2020, the Nature Trust set an ambitious goal to raise \$4 million that would unlock four times that amount in matching funds from generous government and other partners. Thanks to broad public support, that target was hit in November 2021, unlocking all of the matching funds available at this time for a total of \$20 million to save nature across Nova Scotia.

Although donations to Twice the Wild can no longer be matched 4:1, the campaign to double the Nature Trust's protected lands continues. They are continuing to identify and move forward on priority lands for protection – and they are continuing to raise funds to support this effort. While donations from this point forward will not unlock additional funds, they will provide essential and steady funding to support this ambitious campaign as it moves ahead. [www.TwiceTheWild.ca](http://www.TwiceTheWild.ca)