

Responsible Regulation of the Fur Industry

Nova Scotians want their environment protected and they want sectors like the fur industry to grow in a responsible way. Government listened to the concerns raised by communities about mink farming and developed regulations under the Fur Industry Act to balance protection of the environment with support for growing this important industry for rural Nova Scotia.

The regulations were approved and announced in January 2013 and existing sites at that time were given three years to achieve compliance. Starting on January 11, 2016, sites that were operating when the regulations were passed in 2013 are now subject to compliance, which will be enforced by the Department of Environment.

Staff from the Department of Agriculture worked with the industry over the past three years to encourage them to take the steps needed for compliance. In addition to meeting with site operators and industry representatives, more than \$1 million in funding applications for sites to make improvements were approved. The industry also accessed support from the federal and provincial governments to stabilize their income in the face of international pressure on pelt prices.

During Fall 2015, staff from Department of Environment attended the annual farm day for the N.S. Mink Breeders' Association to speak with industry representatives about the upcoming compliance dates and advise members that inspectors would be conducting inspections to ensure compliance with the legislation. In October and December, warnings and orders were issued to non-compliant sites as a further reminder. Starting in January 2016, inspections will be conducted on sites to determine if they are now in compliance with the act and regulations.

The industry can grow sustainably with a credible regulatory structure. Over the past 3 years, 14 new sites have opened and achieved full compliance. The provincial government has solid legislation and comprehensive regulations that will allow the fur industry to grow while ensuring good environmental stewardship and protection for landowners that neighbour sites.

If you have a question about the regulations, or need to report a concern, contact the Department of Environment at 1-877-9ENVIRO (1-877-936-8476).