

Cape Split: Where are we going?

By Harold Carroll, Parks Division

Last summer the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) made a significant land purchase for Nova Scotians. We acquired lands at Cape Split from the Jodrey family of Hantsport. The 250 hectares (680 acres) of land occupies the very end of Blomidon Peninsula that juts out into the Minas Basin, with the nearest community being Scots Bay, Kings County.



Cape Split is internationally recognized as a hiking destination even though the trail crosses over privately owned lands. With the provincial purchase most of the trail is now on Crown lands. However, privately owned lands must still be crossed to reach the boundary where Crown land ownership begins.

Over the next two to three years, DNR will develop a management plan for Cape Split. There are several stages to the planning process. The first, and most important step, is to collect data on the land and its associated environment. We need information such as a

vegetation inventory, terrain mapping, identification of hazards, and inventories of wildlife species and wildlife habitat. Critical to the data collection will be information gathered from people having local knowledge.

Once compiled, we will analyze the data to determine if gaps exist or something has been missed and needs further study. Field investigations will help identify other issues or constraints that will influence management of the property. Access has already been identified as one of those issues.

The collected data will be used to draft a management plan. The draft plan will then be presented in a series of open houses in order to provide DNR with feedback and comments. We will use the information from the open houses, as well as any written submissions, to fine-tune the plan before DNR endorses it.

Once the plan is approved, we will develop a detailed implementation strategy. What we can accomplish will depend upon the available resources. As we manage the lands, DNR will monitor and evaluate the situation and adjust the plan to reflect new information.

A project such as this depends upon community input and support. We hope that this process will yield a management plan that reflects a vision and management philosophy representative of both the community and the DNR.

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