

Aggregate: the Cornerstone of Nova Scotia's Infrastructure

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Nova Scotia's infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, municipal services, buildings, railways, airports or wharfs, all have a common key ingredient used in their construction – aggregate.

Aggregate is produced from various pits and quarries throughout Nova Scotia, under government regulation with oversight by Nova Scotia Environment. Nova Scotia's aggregate industry produces 7 to 9 million tonnes of high quality aggregate annually, primarily for use in the construction and maintenance of Nova Scotia's infrastructure. An additional 4 million tonnes is produced for export.

The industry accounts for over 700 direct and 900 indirect jobs contributing over \$65M per annum to the Nova Scotia economy and generating nearly \$7 in income tax revenue.

The aggregate industry, ever changing with the times, faces numerous ongoing challenges. Urban sprawl has created an environment where many pits and quarries within urban settings have been surrounded by community growth. Potential sources of high quality aggregate have been taken out of potential production through other developments, limiting options for the development of new aggregate sources or expansion. This, coupled with increasing regulations, has created operating pressures and restrictions on producers. Producers are finding it increasingly difficult to find new sources and reserves of high quality aggregate close to market demands. This has forced producers to increase the length of truck hauls as pits and quarries are developed further away from end users, resulting in rising operating costs and increasing environmental impacts from trucking, ultimately impacting the cost to the people of Nova Scotia.

The industry must work hard to educate both government agencies and the public on the importance of aggregate within our society, to ensure a sustainable, cost effective and efficient industry. Not only does aggregate form the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's infrastructure, it is a key raw material for many other industries and is a valuable economic driver for the province.

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