

## THE PATH WE SHARE

A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia  
2011-2020 Five-year Progress Report

# Executive Summary

Over the past five years, the Department of Natural Resources has done considerable work in our efforts to move toward the vision outlined in *The Path We Share: A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia 2011–2020*.

Much of that work has been internal. We have created new divisions, moved responsibilities to other departments to create efficiencies, and developed frameworks for action and policy development.

We have built partnerships and strengthened working relations across government and with other interested parties, non-government organizations, and the Mi'kmaq. This work has resulted in many innovative new initiatives, such as Atlantic Canada's first community forest.

We are staying true to our commitment to be transparent by sharing natural resources data on publicly accessible websites—a move that has already inspired local entrepreneurs to develop a new web tool to assist private landowners.

## Other major achievements include

- establishing a Forest Biodiversity Science Advisory Committee
- implementing a guiding Code of Forest Practice that is mandatory on all Crown lands and takes an ecosystem approach to planning on a landscape scale
- introducing our new Mineral Resources Act (2016), which reduces red tape, streamlines processes, and also helps ensure the sustainability of our land
- launching *Our Parks and Protected Areas Plan* in 2013, which secures and strengthens our park system

Along with these successes we have had some challenges. In November 2015, the Nova Scotia Auditor General concluded that we needed to improve the way we were monitoring the implementation of our long-term strategic plans for forests, and in June 2016 we were cited for not meeting all of our legislated obligations for the conservation and recovery of species at risk. We have accepted all of the Auditor General's recommendations and are acting on them.

In 2011, we committed to meeting 23 goals to fully implement the strategy, and broke those down into 91 actions. This report highlights our progress to date on all of those goals and actions.