

Habitat Conservation Fund
Wildlife Division
Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
136 Exhibition Street
Kentville, Nova Scotia
B4N 4E5

May 11, 2006

RE: Final Report for *Coastlines* Natural History Column for 2005/2006

The Ecology Action Centre has been running the *Coastlines* natural history column in weekly newspapers around Nova Scotia since February 2002. This illustrated column focuses on coastal wildlife and habitat in Nova Scotia. The objectives of the column are threefold: 1) to develop a greater appreciation and understanding of coastal wildlife and habitat conservation in Nova Scotia; 2) to foster greater involvement in wildlife habitat conservation among the people who have the most impact on the coastal and marine environments, principally landowners and resource users; and 3) to provide an opportunity for students and amateur naturalists from across the province to gain experience in writing about science for a general audience.

In *Coastlines'* first two years, we succeeded in producing weekly articles on coastal animals, plants, habitats and processes that were distributed to community newspapers around Nova Scotia. Habitat related articles included those written on the topics of salt marshes, tide pools, tidal barriers, estuaries, coastal plain flora, barrier beach systems (barachois) and impacts of coastal flooding.

Over the last four years, we have gradually increased the distribution of *Coastlines* from 6 to 12 to 24 weekly community newspapers around the province and now potentially reach over 75,000 readers weekly.

We have approached various organizations, including the Clean Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Federation of Naturalists, Dalhousie University, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to invite their members, students and faculty to write articles for the column. This year our outreach activities proved extremely fruitful. We have expanded our *Coastlines* webpage considerably and have several articles posted on the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership (BOFEP) website. A presentation was delivered to students in the School of Resource and Environmental Studies at Dalhousie University to discuss the *Coastlines* Column and to invite students to write articles for the column. In addition to receiving several articles from various freelance writers and environmental enthusiasts (e.g., attached - aquaculture), we were published articles submitted by a DFO shark expert (attached – blue sharks), an Environmental Studies professor (attached -horse mussels), an Environmental Studies student (attached – blue crabs) and a nonprofit environmental staff member (attached – shoreline clean-up). We covered stories about changes in hurricane strength, the importance of healthy watersheds, right whale population status, brook trout habitat use, reduction of storm damage by healthy

coastlines, fog, sea ice, drumlins, wood frog life history, spotted salamanders, salt hay, lobsters, whale strandings, herring weirs and much more. You can see most of the stories from the last year and the photos that accompanied them posted on our website at <http://www.ecologyaction.ca/coastlines/>. Unfortunately, we missed our chance to receive new funding so this will be our final report on the project.

The *Coastlines* column has been well received and we are pleased with the progress made since our beginnings in February 2002. We are not sure about the future of *Coastlines* at this time but have appreciated and enjoyed the opportunity to educate Nova Scotians about coastal wildlife and habitats thanks to support from the Habitat Conservation Fund over these last years.

EAC financial officer, Carla Vandenberg, will be submitting the invoices for 2005/2006 separately. Thanks again for your generous support.

Sincerely,

John Brazner
Coastlines Coordinator