

# Shelter Cove Campaign

## *Final Report to the Habitat Conservation Fund* *October 2006*

### **Introduction**

The success of the **Shelter Cove Campaign** has allowed the Nova Scotia Nature Trust to protect one of Nova Scotia's last pristine, unroaded coastal gems. Shelter Cove is notable for its deeply indented and protected bays and coves, which support an exceptionally diverse range of ecologically distinct coastal habitats, species and stunning scenery. Shelter Cove also provides irreplaceable wilderness recreation opportunities, from sea kayaking and yachting to wilderness camping and hiking.



### **1. Project Goals and Objectives**

**Project Goal:** To permanently protect, for the benefit of future generations, one of the last undeveloped, unroaded pristine coastal headlands in Nova Scotia, a spectacular 145 acre property supporting a rich diversity of habitats and enjoyed by generations of local residents and intrepid visitors who treasure its wilderness hiking, sea kayaking, yachting, picnicking, fishing and hunting.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To permanently protect a spectacular 145 acre coastal wilderness and its diverse natural habitats,
2. To increase community awareness of the importance of land conservation,
3. To build strong support for long-term protection of the site through outreach and education,
4. To engage local community members in on-going stewardship and management of the property.

## 2. Work Completed

### Activities funded by Habitat Conservation Fund

| Activities (as described in Proposal)   | Progress  |
|---|---|
| Acquire a 145 acre coastal wilderness property through a combined purchase and donation of land near Pope’s Harbour | Shelter Cove was protected by a combination of land purchase and donation. One parcel of land was donated to the Nature Trust by the Friends of Nature, with the remaining parcel being purchased by the Nature Trust, with a combined area of 145 acres being protected. |

### Other project activities

| Activities (as described in Proposal)   | Progress  |
|---|---|
| Complete a “baseline study” which includes a habitat assessment, photograph record and mapping of key conservation features, fragile habitats and threatened areas              | The Baseline Study has been completed and will be used as a basis for the ongoing monitoring activities on the property.  |
| Develop a site management and stewardship plan  | A Stewardship / Management Plan has been developed for the property that outlines goals for the management of the property and directs the ongoing monitoring. Shelter Cove will be managed as a “forever wild” coastal wilderness area, with an overall management philosophy of minimal intervention to ensure the protection of the natural values of the property over the long term. Nature Trust staff will regularly monitor the property to ensure that no infringements take place that jeopardize the “forever wild” conservation values of the land. |
| Secure adequate funding to complete the campaign (including purchase price, legal, survey, appraisal, landowner negotiations, habitat assessment and management plan)           | All necessary funding for the acquisition was secured. In addition, a Stewardship Endowment Fund has been initiated and contributions have been received towards the fund. The Nature Trust will continue to raise these funds to support the ongoing stewardship of the property.  |
| Create educational signage to be placed on-site, providing background on the property, encouraging appropriate use of the site, and recognizing our project partners and donors | Interpretive signage, acknowledging our major campaign donors, has been installed on the property, adjacent to the beach. The signage provides a description of the property and asks users to respect this protected area, thus helping the Nature Trust to preserve this natural treasure for future generations to enjoy.  |
| Host public educational outings to the property to help Nova Scotians to learn about  | Guided boat and interpretive hiking tours, as well as guided sea kayak tours have been conducted. In addition, an educational brochure was distributed to further educate the   |

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| the importance of protecting our coastal habitats, and to learn about ways they can help in land conservation  | public about ways they can help in land conservation.   |
| Host a series of educational presentations to local community members and recreational users of the site (including local hunters, trappers, fishermen, local families, yachters and sea kayaking outfitters) to encourage appropriate use of the site   | Additional contact with the local community and the various user groups will be conducted as part of the on-going stewardship activities for the property.  |
| Recruit and train at least 4 local volunteers to participate in the Nature Trust's "property guardians" program and to help with property monitoring and management to keep its natural features protected.  | The Nature Trust has successfully recruited three volunteer Property Guardians who will monitor the status of the property and help to 'steward' the property. The information collected by the monitors will help us to ensure that no infringements take place that would jeopardize the conservation value of the land. Volunteers also notify the Nature Trust of any potential problems on an on-going basis.  |
| Secure media coverage for the campaign including local and provincial print, radio and television coverage, regional and national publications   | The project achieved excellent media coverage, with several articles published in provincial newspapers, as well as television coverage by CTV and CBC TV, and radio coverage by CBC radio and commercial radio. Articles were also published in <i>Eastern Woods and Waters</i> (June/July 2006), <i>Atlantic Boating News</i> , <i>Canadian Yachting</i> (July 2006), and <i>Lifestyle Nova Scotia</i> (Summer 2006), which reached a broad audience.   |
| Implement an advertising campaign including major regional business and local outdoor recreation and environmental publications to build awareness of land conservation, the efforts of the Nature Trust, the importance of the Shelter Cove property, and the need for funds to secure the property | A targeted public awareness campaign was implemented for Shelter Cove. As part of this campaign, an educational brochure was developed. The brochure was widely distributed to Nature Trust members, through partner organizations and supporters, and at Nature Trust events. The on-going progress of the campaign and the successful acquisition of Shelter Cove has been profiled on our website ( <a href="http://www.nsnt.ca">www.nsnt.ca</a> ) as well as in past issues of <i>Natural Landscapes</i> , the Nature Trust's newsletter. Because of our success in having articles published in targeted publications, there was no longer a need to place advertising in these publications. The published articles generated excellent coverage of the Nature Trust and the campaign and reached many of our target audiences. |

### **3. Results**

The overall Shelter Cove Campaign was a great success. As discussed above, the project activities succeeded in meeting the goal and objectives of the project.

The primary objective of the Shelter Cove Campaign was to permanently protect this spectacular coastal property. Shelter Cove consists of 145 acres on the southern part of a peninsula between Tangier Harbour and Pope's Harbour, on Nova Scotia's eastern shore. The site has now been permanently protected by the Nature Trust. The white sand beaches, windswept sea cliffs, and untouched salt marshes will remain preserved for the enjoyment of nature lovers, outdoor enthusiasts, and future generations. Shelter Cove also provides valuable wildlife habitat for a diversity of species, including endangered mainland moose, otters, seals, eagles, and osprey. Shelter Cove has been permanently protected as 'forever wild' conservation lands and an appropriate management plan has been put in place to ensure the protection of the natural values of the property over the long term.

The Campaign has enjoyed tremendous community support. In addition to the involvement of local volunteers, there were many donations made to the campaign by local individuals or others who enjoy visiting the area. Local community members have been further engaged in the ongoing stewardship of the property through the recruitment of volunteer Property Guardians.

### **4. Assessment of Achievements and Lessons Learned**

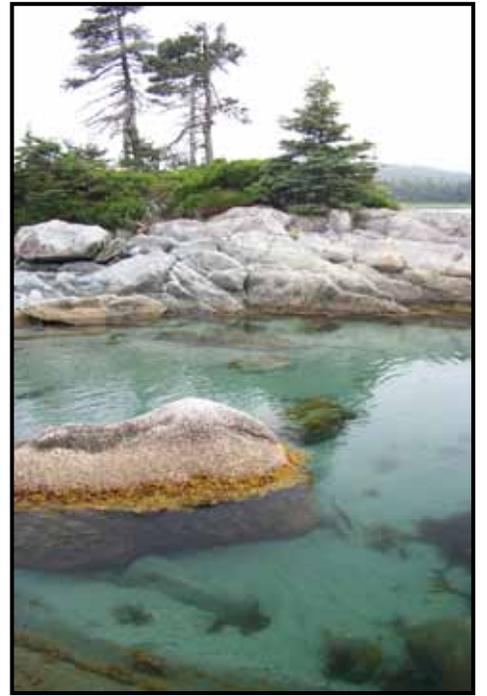
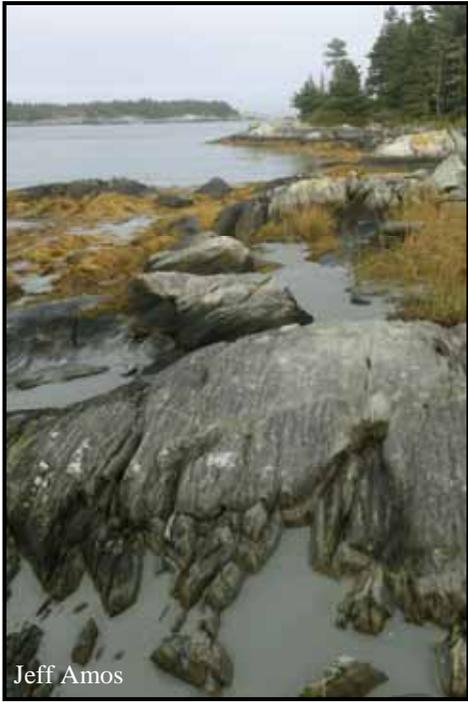
Protection of coastal habitat is one of the highest conservation priorities in Nova Scotia, as only 4% of the province's coastal land is protected from development. With 95% of the coast in private ownership, protection of private coastal lands is extremely important. The acquisition of Shelter Cove protects one of the few remaining undeveloped coastal peninsulas in Nova Scotia and is a wonderful achievement both for the Nature Trust and for conservation efforts in Nova Scotia.

The Nature Trust was successful in achieving the goals set out for the project, particularly the land acquisition and community outreach objectives. However, difficulties were faced in hosting a public celebration of Shelter Cove's protection. The Nature Trust anticipated hosting two major events to mark the successful completion of the land acquisition, a press event in Halifax and an on-site celebration. Unfortunately, the on-site celebration scheduled for July 2006 had to be cancelled. The site is remote and therefore is only accessible via boat. Due to complications with the Marine Liability Insurance of local boat operators, appropriate transportation could not be arranged for the number of individuals expected. The public announcement of the protection of Shelter Cove was instead made this October at the Nature Trust's annual dinner by Mr. Justin Trudeau. The Nature Trust accompanied Mr. Trudeau on a visit to Shelter Cove with members of the local media, which generated excellent media coverage for the Nature Trust and the importance of protecting Shelter Cove. Mr. Trudeau also participated in a press conference in Halifax regarding the successful completion of the Shelter Cove Campaign.

## **5. Recommendations for Follow-Up**

Shelter Cove will be protected as “forever wild” conservation lands, ensuring that the land is available for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. The Nature Trust will continue to ensure the property is appropriately monitored and managed. The Stewardship Plan for Shelter Cove guides all future management and activities on the property. Annual monitoring will be carried out by staff, as well as the ongoing monitoring by the volunteer Property Guardians.

The Nature Trust will also continue to foster support for Shelter Cove. This support may be financial in nature, as contributions are still being sought for the endowment fund. As well, the Nature Trust will continue to notify users of the protected status of the land and appropriate use of Shelter Cove to ensure that visitors conduct themselves in an environmentally appropriate manner.



Justin Trudeau enjoying a day at Shelter Cove



CBC Television interviewing Nature Trust volunteers



Educational signage installed at Shelter Cove