

## **Final Report to the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund**

### **Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) – land securement project – Port Joli, N.S.**

**November 2007**

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

The goal of the project was very straight forward: *To preserve a 43 acre property on Port Joli Harbour in its natural state in perpetuity through purchase of the property.*

#### **2. Outline of Work Completed**

Prior to receiving Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) support, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) had completed some land negotiations and field investigations relating to the property. The acknowledgment of HCF support allowed the project to proceed as follows:

- April 2007: Negotiations with owner of PID 70067673 were completed to agree to sell at market value
- May 2007: An agreement of purchase and sale was signed
- June 2007: An appraisal was completed that determined the property to be 50.3 acres in size and having a market value of \$42,000.
- June 2007: Title search and other legal issues involved with land purchase completed
- June 22, 2007: Nature Conservancy of Canada obtained title to property

#### **3. Results**

##### **3.1 Project Description**

Purchasing land at market value is one of the most expensive forms of habitat conservation; therefore such purchases must be done very strategically by carefully selecting properties that fit into a larger ecological landscape. The property chosen and purchased with the assistance of the Habitat Conservation Fund is very strategically situated, as explained below.

One of the NCC's target areas for conservation in Nova Scotia under the Northern Appalachian Forest Ecoregional Plan is the *Scotian South Shore Natural Area*. The

Natural Area is a relatively narrow band of forested and coastal habitats running parallel to the Atlantic coastline from Yarmouth to Halifax, yet close or adjacent to larger tracts of protected forest that extend inland. Conservation within the Natural Area over time would have the potential to connect larger provincially protected forested areas such as the Tobeatic and Tidney River Wilderness Areas to forested habitats further east. This connectivity is critical to the survival for such species as the provincially endangered mainland moose in Nova Scotia.

Within the Scotian South Shore Natural Area is the Port Joli Focal Area and in particular a stretch of undeveloped coastline along the western side of Port Joli Harbour. The attraction of this area is the opportunity to secure privately owned coastal and forested habitats located between and among existing conserved areas including a Migratory Bird Sanctuary, a provincial Park and lands already owned by the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

The property purchased with Habitat Conservation Funds is situated on the western side of Port Joli Harbour between the East Side Port L'Hebert Road and the Port Joli Migratory Bird Sanctuary. While the most important ecological function for the property is to provide a buffer for the bird sanctuary, it contains a diverse mix of forest, coastal wetlands, beach and dunes and, as mentioned, also fills a gap in a larger ecological conservation plan for the area. The actual size of the property purchased was determined to be larger than originally thought – 50 acres instead of 43.

### 3.2 Project Costs

The \$25,000 Habitat Conservation Fund contribution represents 55% of the project's total direct cost. NCC contributed the remainder of the funds required for the appraisal, legal and purchase costs. NCC also contributed significant indirect dollars to the project by using their staff to facilitate the purchase.

## 4. Lessons Learned

This was a fairly straight-forward land securement project that followed existing protocols – no surprises. It was the first project funded by the HCF for the Nature Conservancy of Canada and it demonstrates the ability of HCF and NCC to work together to effectively deliver habitat conservation programs.

## 5. Recommendations and follow-up

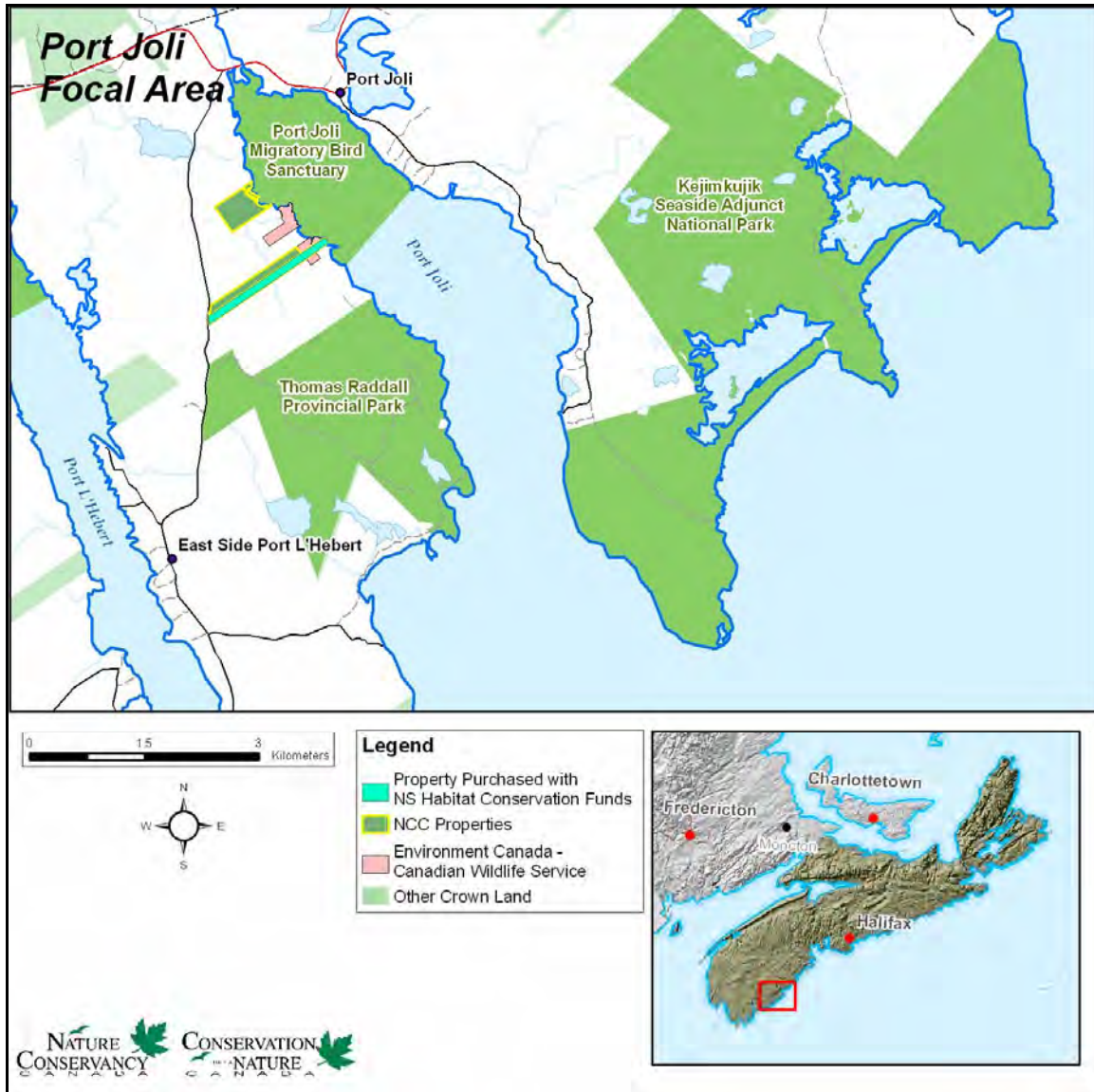
The Nature Conservancy of Canada is developing a long-term stewardship and management plan for the Port Joli area and will rely on local community involvement. The goal will be to maintain the property in its natural state for the benefit for all to enjoy. This process is already underway with open house meetings planned for this fall.

The Port Joli area will continue to be a focus for additional habitat securement for the NCC as opportunities and funding permit.

## Appendices

### Images

Map showing project location



**This property is an important upland buffer for the Port Joli Migratory Bird Sanctuary, but also contains a very diverse habitat mix including coastal wetlands and a naturally regenerating mixed native species forest**

