



PHOTO: OLIVER MAASS

# Focus on the Tobeatic

## *Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise Background Information & Worksheet*

Autumn 2002

*Nova Scotian's have always maintained a close relationship with the land. Our Wilderness Areas are cornerstones in defining the province's character and image, and in securing its unique heritage for future generations. In many ways, the Tobeatic Wilderness Area is the province's flagship protected area, and requires careful stewardship by us all.*

*Welcome to the Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise. Your participation in this project is important, as we work together to develop the Management Plan for this outstanding wild place.*

*This newsletter summarizes information to help you better understand the Tobeatic Wilderness Area. It provides background on the area's natural values, reviews the legislation that guides its protection and use, and outlines the key topics that are likely to be addressed in the Management Plan.*

*I encourage and welcome your comments, and assure you that all your ideas, interests, and concerns will be considered as we work towards completing the Management Plan for the Tobeatic Wilderness Area.*

*David Morse*

*Minister of Environment and Labour*

## Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise

The Department of Environment and Labour is conducting a planning project to develop the Management Plan for the Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

The Tobeatic Management Plan will set the direction and priorities for long-term protection, management and use of the Wilderness Area.

Public involvement is essential to the success of this project. There are several ways for you to take part. You can begin by understanding the issues, and thinking about balanced solutions which meet the objectives of the Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Then take part by submitting written comment.

Throughout this project, the Department is working with a 26 member public *Tobeatic Advisory Group* (TAG), which represents the range of interests from around the Tobeatic and southwestern Nova Scotia.



## Tobeatic Wilderness Area

The Tobeatic Wilderness Area is located in the interior of southwestern Nova Scotia. It is our largest protected area, comprising nearly 104 000 hectares in Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne and Queens counties.

The Tobeatic Wilderness Area protects natural ecosystems and functions, and secures significant wildlife habitat. It is a major component of the Nova Scotia Parks and Protected Areas System.

As a provincial Wilderness Area, the primary objectives for the Tobeatic are protection oriented. Secondary objectives include research, education, and wilderness recreation, while providing opportunities for sport fishing, hunting and trapping.

The Tobeatic region has been managed in a special way since 1927 when *Tobeatic Park* was established as a game sanctuary and tourism destination. In 1968 the sanctuary was altered, and a portion was designated the Tobeatic Wildlife Management Area.

Today, the Tobeatic Wilderness Area protects this special region of Nova Scotia. It encompasses public lands, including the Sporting Lake Nature Reserve, a portion of the Shelburne Heritage River, and a portion of the Tobeatic Wildlife Management Area.

## Please Take Part

At this time the Department is seeking public input to help develop the Draft Management Plan.



Please review this newsletter and complete the enclosed Worksheet.

The Worksheet can be used to record your thoughts, concerns or ideas. Drop it off at your local Department of Environment and Labour office, or send it to us by mail.

We look forward to your comments.

*Thank you for helping  
us protect your  
Tobeatic Wilderness Area.*

  
**NOVASCOTIA**  
Environment and Labour  
Environmental & Natural Areas Management Division  
Protected Areas Branch

**Keep It Wild**  
Nova Scotia's Protected Areas 





# The Tobeatic – a wild place

The Tobeatic Wilderness Area contains many outstanding natural features, reflects a fascinating cultural history, and offers many high quality opportunities for wilderness recreation. Some of the main natural, cultural, and recreational values of the Wilderness Area are summarized below to give you a sense of the many sides of the Tobeatic.

## Natural Values

### A Large Wild Place

The Tobeatic is a remote and undeveloped region that is large enough to help maintain naturally functioning ecosystems. Its size also provides the best place in the Maritimes for multi-day wilderness travel.

### Glacial Landforms

Outwash plains, eskers, kames, moraine ridges, irregular hummocks, and erratics are present and are often made more visible by their unique or outstanding forest cover.

### Water

With five primary watersheds and the headwaters of nine major river systems, the integrity of the lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands in the Wilderness Area is high.

These water bodies provide important wildlife habitat, and are an integral part of the water cycle, supplying clean fresh water to the western counties of the province.

### Barrens and Semi-Barrens

The area contains the most extensive barren and semi-barren ecosystems in the province. Although, most of these ecosystems are a result of burning, they include unique plant species or communities and provide important habitat diversity.

### Important Wildlife Habitat

A large black bear population and the largest native moose population in the province are supported by the interior wilderness setting where they live, breed, forage, and hunt.

Predators like fisher, bobcat, and marten, and aquatic mammals such as otter, mink, muskrat, and beaver all live in the Tobeatic.

The area supports songbirds that are sensitive to disturbance and require forest cover, including hermit thrush, Canada warbler, and Blackburnian warbler. Uncommon bird species, such as black-backed woodpecker and northern goshawk are also present.

The Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora is a group of rare plants found on sand and gravel shorelines of lakes and streams. In Nova Scotia these glacial remnant species are found only in the south western interior of the province, many within the Wilderness Area.

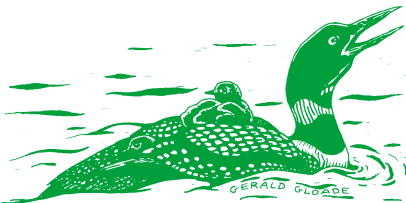
### Old Growth Forests

Spectacular old forest ecosystems are preserved in the Tobeatic, such as hemlock forests at Sporting Lake, mixed-wood forest at Dish Lake, and white pine forest at Big Pine Lake.

These increasingly rare, rich forest ecosystems are important for all levels of life, and are a high priority for preservation.

### Ecological Integrity

Low levels of human activity have helped the Tobeatic maintain a high level of ecosystem health. This health can be affected by intensive human activities, and more widespread threats such as acid rain and climate change.



## Human Heritage Values

In earlier times, Mi'kmaq travelled southwestern Nova Scotia (Kesputwik or “Land’s End”) including the Tobeatic region. Their oral histories, petroglyphs, ancient trails and encampments tell of frequent travel throughout the region for wildlife and trade, focused on the coastal encampment during summer months, and settlement on large inland lakes to spend the winter.

Early French and British settlement and land use in the region was limited, but included timber harvest and travel associated with nearby communities at New France, Milford, and Ohio. Gold prospecting, trapping, moose hunting, and trout fishing brought a deserved attention to the region, and built its reputation as a wild and rugged place for adventure.

For many, the “golden age” for the Tobeatic was in the late 1800s when backcountry guiding was flourishing. Local Mi'kmaq and other resident guides challenged “sports” on extended fishing and hunting excursions into the wilds of Tobeatic country. *The Tent Dwellers* is a popular written account of one such trip, and that route is one that many wilderness travelers still enjoy today.

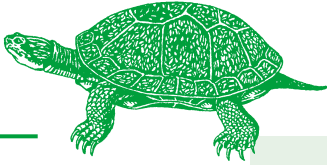
### Wilderness Travel

Built on a history of Native travel and guiding, and with over 100 lakes and nine major rivers, the Tobeatic continues to offer some of the province’s best backcountry travel opportunities, on routes that are still rugged and wild.





# Wilderness Areas Protection Act



Wilderness Areas are significant natural areas, designated in 1998 under Nova Scotia’s *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*, following an extensive, province-wide, planning and consultation process. Approximately 5% of the province is protected within the current 31 Wilderness Areas.

Wilderness Areas help maintain native biodiversity and ecological integrity by protecting examples of different landscapes, and outstanding natural features. Wilderness Areas also provide locations for enjoying wilderness recreation and renewing our spirits.

Wilderness Areas support education and research to help us understand the effects of human activity on the natural environment, and provide opportunities for nature-based tourism.

## Ecosystem Management

Ecosystems are managed with minimal interference to natural processes, using best available scientific information. Action may be required when there is a threat to property or the health and safety of humans.

## Research & Education

Research programs that meet the ecological research goals of protected areas are encouraged, and are conducted under the terms of a license which is designed to minimize environmental impacts.

## Protection Measures

Primary protection measures of the *Act* prohibit resource development activities such as forestry and hydro-generation. Other activities such as mineral development, agriculture, building structures, or using a vehicle are also generally prohibited, although they may be specifically approved under special circumstances which are outlined in the *Act*.

## Recreation

**Protected doesn’t mean prohibited.** Low-impact wilderness recreation camping, sport fishing, hunting, and trapping, are permitted. Users must follow special low impact rules and “leave no trace” guidelines, outlined in the brochure *Keep it Wild*.

## Vehicle Use

While vehicle use is generally prohibited in Wilderness Areas, some use may be permitted, through a license or agreement, on existing routes where there is no reasonable alternative, and continued use will have a minimal environmental impact.

## Campsite Leases and Private Inholdings

The Department of Environment and Labour recognizes owners of valid campsite leases and private land inholdings, and works with those owners to ensure appropriate stewardship.

## Management Planning

Using information from many sources, a management plan identifies key issues, and sets out goals and strategies for protection and use for a set time period (e.g. 10 years).

*Management direction statements* describe protected area values, identify key issues, and outline management priorities until a full management plan is in place.

*Management agreements and licensing* provide an opportunity for groups or individuals to participate in specific activities, and take on management-oriented responsibilities.

## Compliance

The Department of Natural Resources provides enforcement. Current efforts focus on public education, but charges may be laid where individuals cause harm or damage, or knowingly violate rules. Through shared stewardship, users play an essential role in enforcement and protection.

## Other Designations

The *Tobeatic Wildlife Management Area* (WMA) was designated in 1968, and is administered by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources under regulations of the *Wildlife Act*. It exists primarily for game and habitat management research. Hunting and trapping are not permitted, with the exception of a six day “muzzle loader” hunt in October.

The western half of the WMA is public land, with the eastern portion in private ownership. Part of the public land in the WMA is in the Tobeatic Wilderness Area, where the special protection measures of both designations apply. In the remainder of the WMA, the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act* does not apply, and a range of land uses is permitted.

The *Sporting Lake Nature Reserve* protects outstanding old growth forest within the northwestern portion of the Tobeatic Wilderness Area. This special place has a high level of protection in order to preserve some of the last remaining old growth hemlock-spruce-pine forest in Nova Scotia. Due to its sensitivity to human disturbance, camping, campfires, wood-cutting, littering and hunting are not permitted on the three islands that comprise this small reserve.

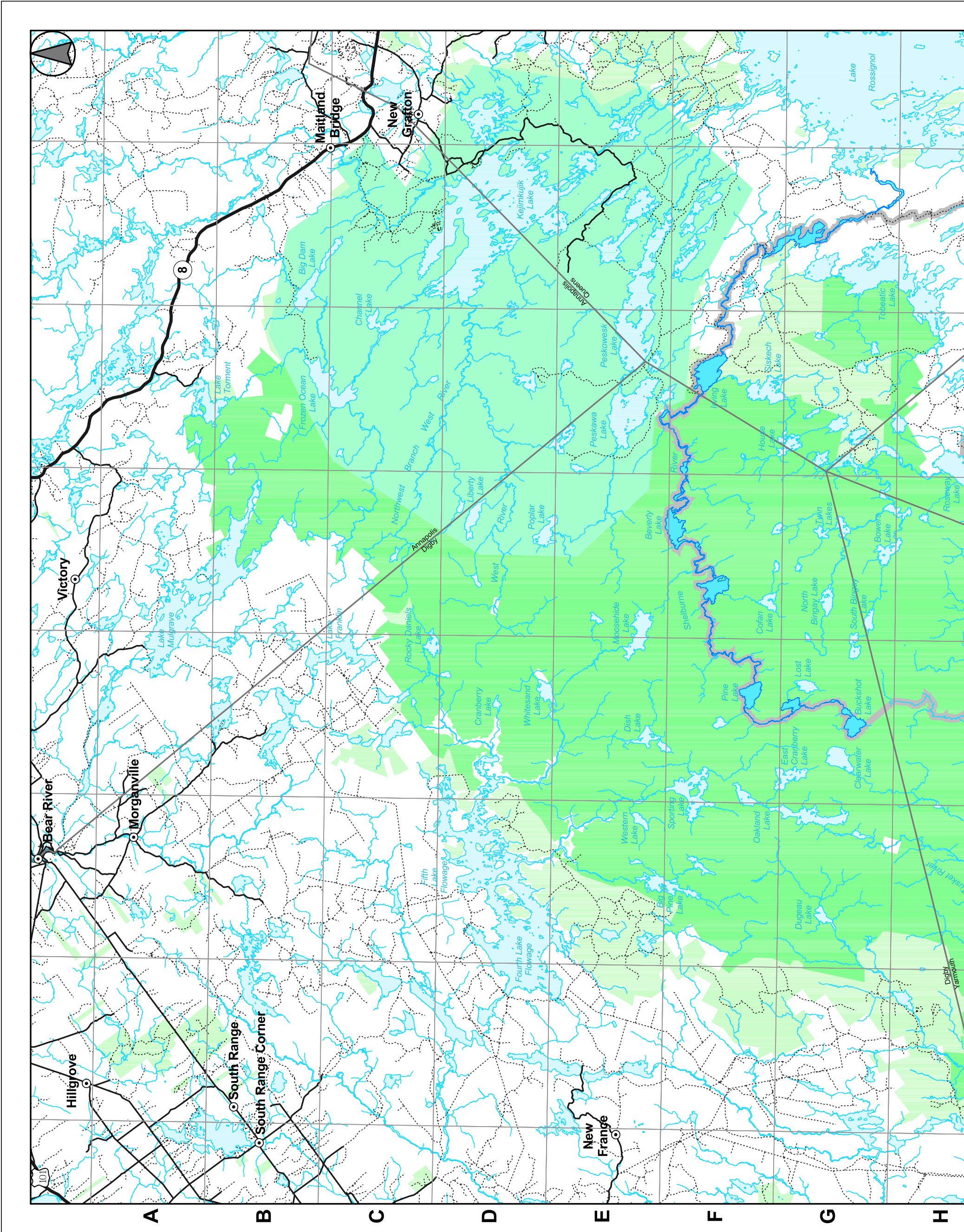
The *Shelburne Heritage River* flows through the heart of the Tobeatic Wilderness Area. The Shelburne was designated in 1997 as part of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. This designation does not involve any specific regulations; it recognizes the outstanding values of the river, and encourages sound management through an approved plan.

The Shelburne is a remote, wilderness river that originates in the granite barrens at Buckshot Lake and flows in an easterly direction to Lake Rossignol. The river is recognised for its high degree of ecological integrity, natural heritage resources, and outstanding recreational opportunities.

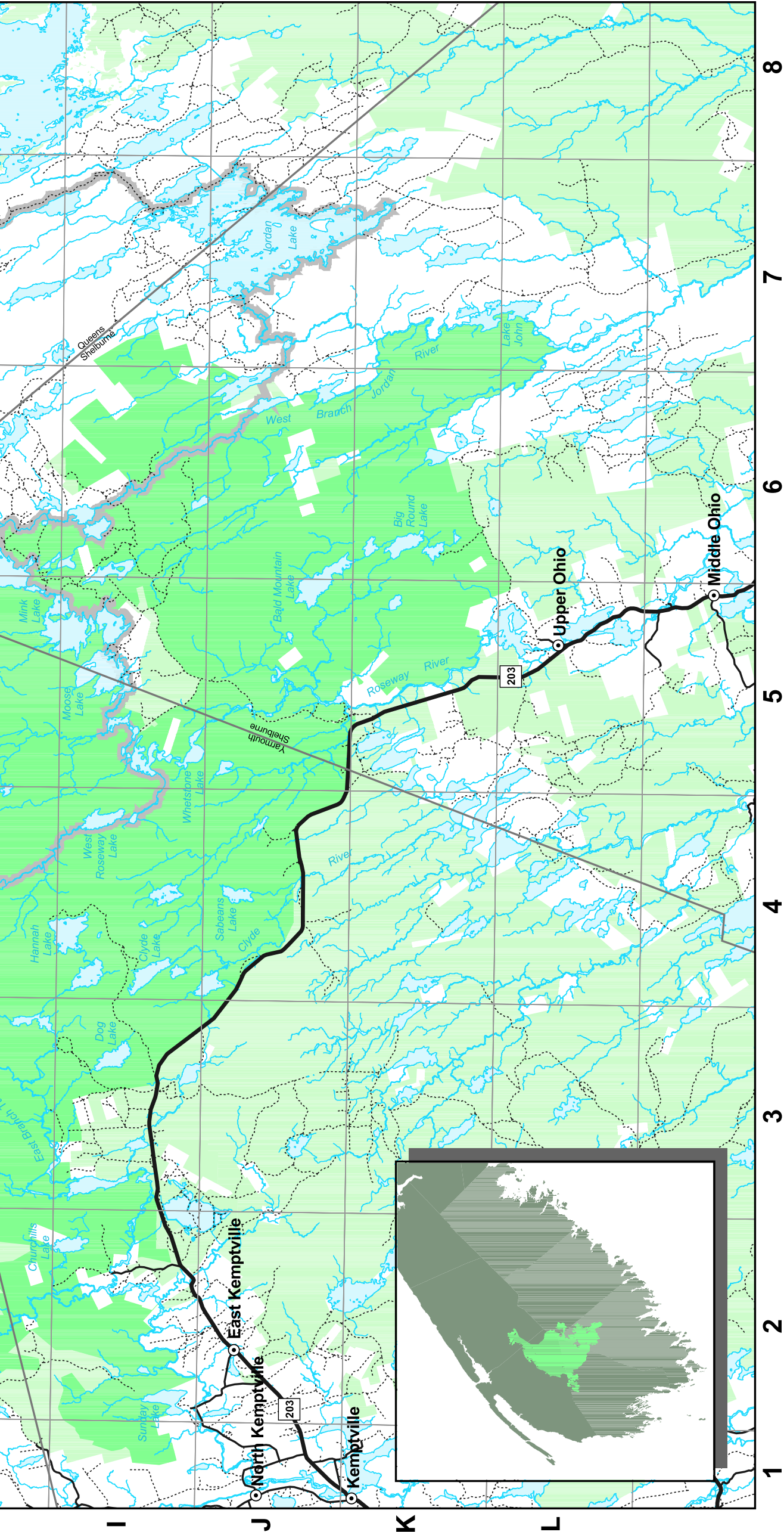
A dynamic partnership was created to protect the river. The upper 75% of the river watershed is protected in the Tobeatic Wilderness Area. A smaller portion of its headwaters are protected in Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada. The lower sections of the river are specially managed by Bowater Mersey and Nova Scotia Power Incorporated.











- County Boundary
- River
- Highway
- Local Road
- Loose Surface Road or Trail
- 1:10,000 Mapsheet Boundary
- Waterbody
- Tobeatic Wilderness Area
- Provincial Crown Land
- Shelburne Heritage River
- Tobeatic Wildlife Management Area
- Kejimikujik National Park



## Tobeatic Wilderness Area

Scale: approx 1:225,000

Datum: Average Terrestrial System, 1977.  
Projection: Modified Transverse Mercator, zone 5.

- This map is a geographic representation only and should not be used for legal purposes, or for navigation. Though effort has been made to ensure this map is free from errors it should be remembered that the information shown here may not be the most current available.

Data sources, and scale:  
Roadways - NSTDB, 1:10,000.  
Hydrography - NSTDB, 1:10,000.  
Kejimikujik National Park - NSTDB, 1:10,000.  
Tobeatic Wilderness Area - NSDEL, 1:10,000.  
Provincial Crown Land - DNR, 1:10,000.  
Map originally compiled - July 2002.







# Themes & Goals

The following outline reflects our current understanding of the topics to be addressed in the Management Plan for the Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

This preliminary list of Themes and Goals was compiled by the Department, based on the work of the Tobeatic Advisory Group from March to July 2002.

At this time, we are looking for your input on these preliminary Themes, and are especially interested in identifying important issues, and getting a sense of your priorities for area management.

The information you provide will be used in the development of the Draft Management Plan. We anticipate that the final versions of these topics will vary based on your comments and others arising from public consultation.

**REMINDER:** Use the Worksheet to record your comments as you work through this section. Be sure to submit your written comment by November 25th.



## Ecosystem Protection & Management

*To implement a high level of ecosystem protection and management.*

Protection and management of the ecosystems and habitats of the Tobeatic is a primary objective. Special protection measures are necessary to ensure the long-term preservation of wilderness and biodiversity values for this generation, and those that follow.

While some of the features of the Tobeatic, like old growth forests and geological features are enduring, others such as moose, rare plants and recreation resources may require special management if they are to be maintained or restored.

Management of natural disturbances such as wildfires and insect infestations, must also be considered.

## Scientific Understanding

*To develop, share and promote scientific understanding.*

Scientific research and monitoring are important tools to better understand our natural environment. These tools can be used to establish “benchmark” ecological conditions, detect change and determine trends.

Local, regional and global issues of concern may be studied such as endangered species, acid rain, mercury deposition, and climate change.

Strategies and actions to improve scientific understanding will be identified in the Plan.



## Cultural & Social Values

*To protect, share and promote cultural and social values.*

The significant cultural and social values of the Tobeatic Wilderness Area are important to consider when planning its management and use.

The human heritage of the region includes First Nations, historic land use, and traditions of recreational use such as guiding and wilderness travel. These important heritage features can be integrated into recreation, interpretation, and protection activities reflected in the Management Plan.



## Recreation & Use

*To support safe and responsible recreation and use.*

The Tobeatic is an important region for outdoor enthusiasts. It supports a range of wilderness recreation pursuits such as camping, hiking, canoeing and nature viewing, as well as sport fishing, and traditional patterns of hunting and trapping.



Appropriate planning and management can ensure safe and responsible stewardship by users. The challenge here is to establish a balance for the future between present recreational use, wilderness values, and conservation.

The Management Plan is a tool to help set this balance, and develop reasonable solutions that are consistent with the protection-oriented goals of the Wilderness Area.

Several issues require thoughtful, balanced solutions. These include access for wilderness recreation, camping site and trail development, vehicle use, the use of ranger camps, and special zoning within the Wilderness Area.

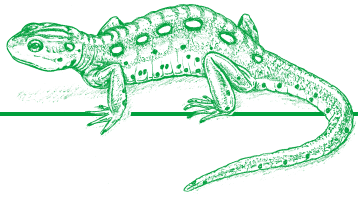
PHOTO: OLIVER MAASS



PHOTO: OLIVER MAASS







## Communication & Education

*To ensure understanding and appreciation through communication and education.*

Communication and education are key tools for developing appreciation and shared stewardship for the Tobeatic.

Interpretation and education can deepen one's appreciation of the natural world, build support for conservation, or inspire a new wilderness ethic.

The Management Plan will address outreach goals, including interpretive themes and literature (e.g. brochures, signage). Education and research opportunities will also be addressed.

## Partnership

*To encourage and secure long-term strategic partnership.*

Implementation of Wilderness Area objectives is more efficient when done in partnership with neighbours, users and other agencies.

Partnership opportunities might include a "Wilderness Watch" program where users are engaged in stewardship, coordinated management with other landowners, and collaborative research with the scientific community.



## Complementary Land Use

*To facilitate and integrate complementary land use.*

Complementary land use within, and adjacent to, the Tobeatic is an important consideration in planning and management for mutual goals.

The Plan will address approaches for working with neighbours to identify opportunities for collaboration.

In addition, it will help focus the Department's approach to respect pre-existing interests (campsite leases) and private land rights (inholdings) in the Tobeatic Wilderness Area.



## Development, Tourism & Marketing

*To facilitate appropriate development, tourism and marketing.*

The Plan will describe the desired level of development, tourism and marketing for the Tobeatic Wilderness Area. These topics require careful consideration for the future use and management of the area, and may impact users and surrounding communities.

The Plan could address various management approaches to support safe and responsible use. Such approaches may address tourism and promotional opportunities, which respect the integrity of the Wilderness Area, and include potential regional economic benefits.

## Tobeatic Advisory Group

Throughout the Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise, the Department is relying on the skills and expertise of the Tobeatic Advisory Group (TAG).

This group was established in December 2001 to advise on matters related to management planning for the Tobeatic. It represents the range of interests, and will provide balanced input and thoughtful consideration of solutions.

You may wish to contact a member organization that represents your interests.

### TAG member organizations:

- Acadia First Nation
- Annapolis Field Naturalists Society
- Bear River First Nation
- Bowater Mersey Paper Company Ltd
- Digby East Fish & Game Association
- East Shelburne County Rivers Association
- JD Irving Limited
- Kejimikujik National Park & National Historic Site of Canada
- Municipality of the County of Annapolis
- Municipality of Digby
- Municipality of the District of Argyle
- Municipality of the District of Shelburne
- Municipality of the District of Yarmouth
- Municipality of the Region of Queens
- Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour
- Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
- Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture
- Nova Scotia Power Incorporated
- Queens County Fish & Game Association
- Shelburne County Fish & Game Association
- Shelburne Wilderness Access & Recreation Association
- South Shore Tourism Association
- Southwest Paddlers Association
- Tobeatic Wilderness Committee
- Tusket River Environmental Protection Association
- Western Valley Development Authority





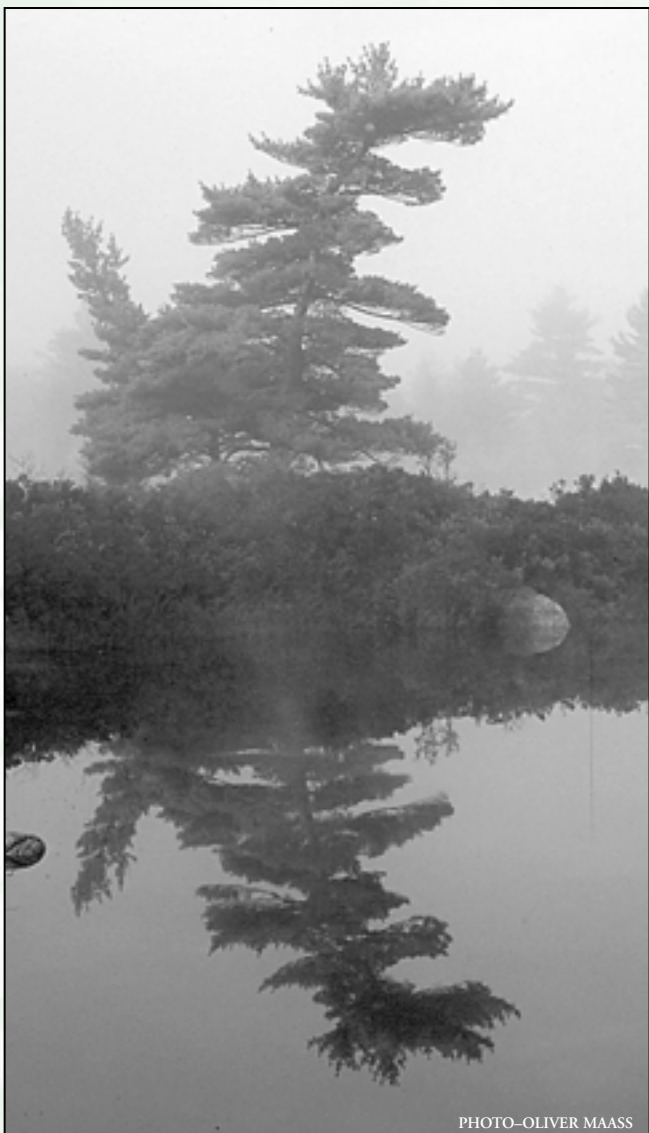


PHOTO-OLIVER MAASS

## Stay Involved

You are invited to take part in the upcoming public review of the Draft Management Plan for the Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

### *Workshops*

Watch for a Workshop in your area in 2003. Five sessions will be held throughout the western region, with one additional session to be held in Halifax.

### *Mailing List*

If you wish to receive further notification on this project, please indicate on the *Worksheet* that you would like to be added to the Tobeatic Mailing List.

## More Information

For other information on Wilderness Areas, contact your nearest DEL office to obtain or view the following publications:

- "Protecting Wilderness - A Summary of the Wilderness Protection Act"
- "Keep It Wild - A Guide for Low Impact Recreation in Nova Scotia's Wilderness Areas"
- Boundary Maps for Wilderness Areas (note: the 2001 NS Map Atlas includes all Wilderness Areas).



## Next Steps in the Planning Exercise

The information you provide on the Worksheet will be used by the Department as the basis for the Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise.

In the months ahead we will hold several meetings of the Tobeatic Advisory Group (TAG) to develop Strategies & Priorities. With the advice of the advisory group, we will compile and synthesize all public input to develop a Draft Management Plan.

There will be a second opportunity for public input early next year through a series of Workshops. The purpose of these interactive sessions will be to review the Draft, and provide input to help us develop the Final Management Plan.



## Contacts

For specific questions about this document, the Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise, or more information about the Protected Areas program in western Nova Scotia, please contact:

Leif Helmer—Regional Protected Areas Coordinator  
Nova Scotia Department of Environment & Labour  
Protected Areas Branch—Western Office  
60 Logan Road, Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, B4V 3J8  
Tel: (902) 543-4685 Fax: (902) 527-5480  
Email: [helmerpl@gov.ns.ca](mailto:helmerpl@gov.ns.ca)

For general inquiries about Wilderness Areas, or the Protected Areas program, please contact:

Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour  
Protected Areas Branch  
Box 697, 5151 Terminal Road  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 2T8  
Tel: (902) 424-7035 Fax: (902) 424-0501

***Please visit our website:*** [www.gov.ns.ca/enla](http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla)



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**NOVA SCOTIA**  
Environment and Labour  
Environmental & Natural Areas Management Division  
Protected Areas Branch

**Keep It Wild**  
Nova Scotia's Protected Areas





PHOTO: OLIVER MAASS

# Focus on the Tobeatic *Worksheet*

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Record your thoughts on this Worksheet as you read the Newsletter.

The Themes and Goals in Section 1 were identified by the Department through the work of the Tobeatic Advisory Group, and are discussed on pages 6 and 7 of the Newsletter.

If you need additional space, please attach extra sheets as required. Your feedback is welcome.

**Note: If you want to reference specific areas on the enclosed map, please refer to the appropriate grid location (e.g. "Pine Lake; F-4")**

## SECTION 1—Themes and Goals

For each of the following themes, identify issues which are important to you. Tell us why the issue is important, and if possible give a goal for managing this issue.

### Ecosystem Protection & Management

*To implement a high level of ecosystem protection and management.*

### Scientific Understanding

*To develop, share and promote scientific understanding.*

### Cultural & Social Values

*To protect, share and promote cultural and social values.*

### Recreation & Use

*To support safe and responsible recreation and use.*



### Communication & Education

*To ensure understanding and appreciation through communication and education.*

### Partnership

*To encourage and secure long-term strategic partnership.*

### Complementary Land Use

*To facilitate and integrate complementary land use.*

### Development, Tourism & Marketing

*To facilitate appropriate development, tourism and marketing.*

Do you have suggestions for other Themes and Goals?  
If so, please list them in the space provided below.

### SECTION 2—Management Priorities

What are your top 3 Issues to be addressed in the Plan:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How should these priority issues should be managed?

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### MAILING LIST

YES. Please add my name to the Tobeatic Mailing List.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this Worksheet by November 25, 2002 to:

Leif Helmer, Regional Protected Areas Coordinator



**Environment and Labour**

Environmental & Natural Areas Management Division  
Protected Areas Branch

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