

Wetland

Conservation Policy Facts

NOVA SCOTIA'S WETLAND CONSERVATION POLICY REGULATES AND MANAGES WETLANDS IN NOVA SCOTIA

It aims to protect our wetlands for future generations, while allowing for sustainable economic development in our communities. The goal of the policy is to prevent the overall loss of Nova Scotia's valuable wetlands.

APPROVALS AND COMPENSATION

Avoiding wetlands when designing projects is the best way to conserve these special places, but the Nova Scotia Department of Environment may issue approvals to alter some types of wetlands. Any approval to alter a wetland such as draining, filling, flooding, or excavating, will require wetland to be restored elsewhere to offset any loss during the alteration process. This is called "compensation."

When planning a project that will alter a wetland, you must contact your local Nova Scotia Environment office to learn about the application process.

For more information on compensation, see the **Wetlands Compensation fact sheet**.

POLICY

OBJECTIVES

THE POLICY AIMS TO:

- ◆ manage human activity in or near wetlands to prevent the loss of Wetlands of Special Significance and the net loss of all other wetlands
- ◆ promote wetland protection and stewardship, and increase awareness of the importance of wetlands
- ◆ promote an increase in wetland types that have experienced high historic losses
- ◆ encourage the use of buffers to better protect wetlands near residential, commercial, and industrial development areas, as well as agricultural, mining, and forestry operations



Wetland infill requires compensation



WETLANDS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The policy classifies the following as Wetlands of Special Significance:

- ◆ salt marshes
- ◆ wetlands within designated sites - provincial wildlife management areas (Crown and provincial lands only), provincial parks, nature reserves, wilderness areas, or lands owned or legally protected by non-government charitable conservation land trusts
- ◆ intact or restored wetlands that are project sites under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and protected for conservation through Nova Scotia's Eastern Habitat Joint Venture
- ◆ wetlands known to support at risk species designated under the Government of Canada's Species At Risk Act, or the Nova Scotia Endangered Species Act
- ◆ wetlands in designated protected water areas as described within the Environment Act

Government is developing a process for classifying additional wetlands with exceptional qualities as Wetlands of Special Significance. These wetlands will have some or all of the following functions:

- ◆ support important or endangered species such as those that are part of our coastal plain flora
- ◆ support high wildlife biodiversity
- ◆ play a critical role in controlling the flow of water
- ◆ have high social or cultural importance

EXCEPTIONS

The policy applies to most wetlands, but there are exceptions. For example, wetlands under 100 square metres or approximately 1000 square feet in size and those in agricultural or roadway drainage ditches can be altered without an approval from Nova Scotia Department of Environment.



Dunraven Bog is a Wetland of Special Significance

LINKS For more information

- ◆ North American Waterfowl Management Plan
www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/NAWMP/index.shtm
- ◆ Nova Scotia's Eastern Habitat Joint Venture
www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife/conserva/nr-ehjv.asp
- ◆ Government of Canada's Species at Risk Act
www.ec.gc.ca/alef-ewe/default.asp?lang=en&n=ED2FFC37-1
- ◆ Soil maps online —
<http://sis.agr.gc.ca/cansis/publications/surveys.html>
- ◆ Nova Scotia Endangered Species Act
www.nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/endspec.htm
- ◆ Nova Scotia's Environment Act
www.nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/envromnt.htm

Contact Nova Scotia Environment's wetland program at **902-424-2117**, via email wetlands@gov.ns.ca, or visit their website for links to additional information www.gov.ns.ca/nse/wetland/ and Nova Scotia's Wetland Conservation Policy www.gov.ns.ca/nse/wetland/conservation.policy.asp

FACT SHEETS ALSO AVAILABLE:

- Wetlands in Nova Scotia
 - Wetland Compensation
 - Development & Wetlands
 - Farms & Wetlands
 - Woodlots & Wetlands
 - Wetland Checklist
- www.gov.ns.ca/nse/wetland/


NOVA SCOTIA