

Tobeatic Wilderness Area Management Plan



Keep It Wild 
Nova Scotia's Protected Areas


NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Labour

Approval Statement

I am pleased to approve this Management Plan for Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Consistent with the Wilderness Areas Protection Act, this Management Plan will serve as the guiding document for the protection, management, and use of one of Nova Scotia's most outstanding wild places - Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Nova Scotia's Wilderness Areas are cornerstones in defining our province's character and in securing our unique wilderness heritage today, and for future generations. This plan recognizes the natural integrity and unique wilderness heritage of Tobeatic Wilderness Area, and provides a foundation for protecting these significant values through active stewardship and partnership.

This document is the result of the hard work and creativity of many people, each with a unique background, interest, and expertise. In particular, I want to thank the dedicated volunteers who served on the Tobeatic Advisory Group. Working through complex and challenging management topics, group members spoke openly, listened carefully, and found common ground on many issues. The valuable advice of the Tobeatic Advisory Group is reflected throughout this plan.

I also want to thank the many people and organizations who reviewed draft materials, attended public meetings, and submitted written comments for the consideration of the Advisory Group and Government. Please be assured that your views have been heard and carefully considered in developing a plan that looks to both the past and the future of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. I look forward to continued public involvement in implementing this plan and helping to ensure that this special part of Nova Scotia remains forever wild.



Honourable Mark Parent
Minister of Environment & Labour

Date: 26 October 2006

Executive Summary

Tobeatic Wilderness Area is an important natural area in Nova Scotia. It is an expansive region of forests, barrens, lakes, and rivers that protects parts of five natural landscapes in southwestern Nova Scotia.

As the largest protected area in the province, Tobeatic Wilderness Area makes a significant contribution to the protection of biological diversity. It also secures an important part of our wilderness heritage, and is enjoyed for the outstanding wilderness recreation experience that rewards those who seek it out.

This management plan guides the application of the Wilderness Areas Protection Act in protecting and managing the natural, cultural, and wilderness values of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. The plan enhances natural ecosystem and landscape protection, addresses the maintenance and restoration of natural processes, and improves the protection of outstanding natural features. It provides continued opportunities for high quality wilderness recreation, sportfishing, and traditional patterns of hunting and trapping. It also directs the coordination of scientific research and environmental education, and encourages public participation and community stewardship.

The management plan is built around the four guiding principles of: ecological integrity; heritage; wilderness recreation; and stewardship. Supported by a “best practice” approach to wilderness management, these guiding principles and associated management goals are the foundation of a new Tobeatic Wilderness Area management framework. This framework gives direction and sets priority actions under the major themes of: ecosystem protection, recreation management, neighbouring lands, and implementation.



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Photos and Images

Cover painting: *Fire in the Sky - Tobeatic Wilderness Area*, by Alice Reed

Modern Photos: Nova Scotia Environment and Labour, Department of Natural Resources, Parks Canada, Oliver Maass, Fred Joyce.

Archival Photos: Page 14 - *Tuesday 9th, Indian Guides, Lake Jolly, Wright's Mill* (c. 1893), Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management

1.0 Protecting & Managing Nova Scotia Wilderness Areas

1.1 A Rich and Diverse Place

Nova Scotia is a biologically rich and unique province. Despite its relatively small size, Nova Scotia hosts a significant array of natural features. Its diverse landscape is the result of its geographic position, and its varied geological history, including significant glacial events.

A rich mosaic of flora and fauna inhabit Nova Scotia, including at least 6,000 organisms ranging from northern boreal to southern Alleghenian species, and from coastal plain to arctic-alpine species. Unique natural ecosystems and communities have emerged from the interaction of these varied living and non-living elements.



1.2 Nova Scotia Protected Areas Program

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour plays a lead role in securing and managing natural areas. The Protected Areas Program includes four main elements: wilderness areas; nature reserves; Canadian Heritage Rivers; and private land conservation. The program focus on protecting and commemorating natural, cultural, and recreational features through research, responsible use, and stewardship.

Nova Scotia currently has 33 wilderness areas spanning more than 294,000 hectares, 15 nature reserves covering over 4,000 hectares of public and private land, and two Canadian heritage rivers totalling 173 km in length (Figure 1 - Nova Scotia Protected Areas Program).

Nova Scotia's wilderness areas make up roughly 5% of land in the province. Wilderness areas

protect examples of the province's natural landscapes, native biological diversity, and outstanding natural features. They are used for scientific research, education, and a variety of recreation and nature-tourism related activities such as hiking, canoeing, tenting, sportfishing, and hunting.

The initial 31 wilderness areas were identified through a multi-year system planning exercise and a comprehensive public review process. This work culminated with passage of the Wilderness Areas Protection Act in 1998. In 2005, two new wilderness areas were added to the protected areas system.

1.2.1 Management

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour is responsible for wilderness areas, under the authority of the Wilderness Areas Protection Act. Field management, land administration, and enforcement responsibilities are shared with the Nova Scotia

Department of Natural Resources.

Across Nova Scotia, ongoing wilderness area management is carried out consistent with the Wilderness Areas Protection Act, and applicable plans, policies, and standards. Activities include public consultation, campsite lease administration, scientific research, wildlife management, hiking trail development, wilderness recreation management, fire suppression, disposal of unauthorized structures, enforcement, and ecosystem management.

In 2001, Environment and Labour initiated a public outreach campaign featuring *Keep It Wild* - a guide to help users learn about standards for safely using and enjoying wilderness areas. This brochure, now in its second printing, features Leave No Trace principles specially adapted for Nova Scotia, and includes information for safe travel. The guide also contains details from the *Ministerial Order on Camping*

and Lighting of Fires in Designated Wilderness Areas, which provides conditions for safe and responsible camping and camp fires.

Current activities that contribute to the management of Tobeatic Wilderness Area include boundary signage posted at major access points, regular enforcement and patrol, communication and outreach with users, extensive consultation with stakeholders, partnership with neighbouring landowners, private land stewardship of major inholdings, and scientific research.

1.2.2 Planning

Public participation in planning is an important part of the Protected Areas Program. Consultation initiatives support policy development, area management, and system planning. Staff communicate regularly with organizations and individuals to discuss management issues and opportunities.

Management planning is an opportunity for government to work cooperatively with the public to effectively define and meet wilderness area objectives. While the basic structure for managing wilderness areas is laid out in the Wilderness Areas Protection Act, the Act does not provide the detailed management direction which may be needed for protecting the unique attributes of individual wilderness areas.

A management plan provides strategic direction for a specific wilderness area. Working within the context of legislation, the plan sets out goals, objectives, and priority

actions. Ultimately, the plan seeks to deliver shared benefits through public stewardship, partnerships and coordinated actions.

1.3 Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise

The Tobeatic Management Planning Exercise was designed to include a significant amount of public participation in planning, and to build partnerships for implementation.

A central element of the planning exercise was the 26-member Tobeatic Advisory Group (TAG). This group represented a broad range of interests in Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Membership included organizations from all five counties touched by the wilderness area, as well as representative groups from conservation, recreation, and industry, and federal, provincial, and municipal government interests.

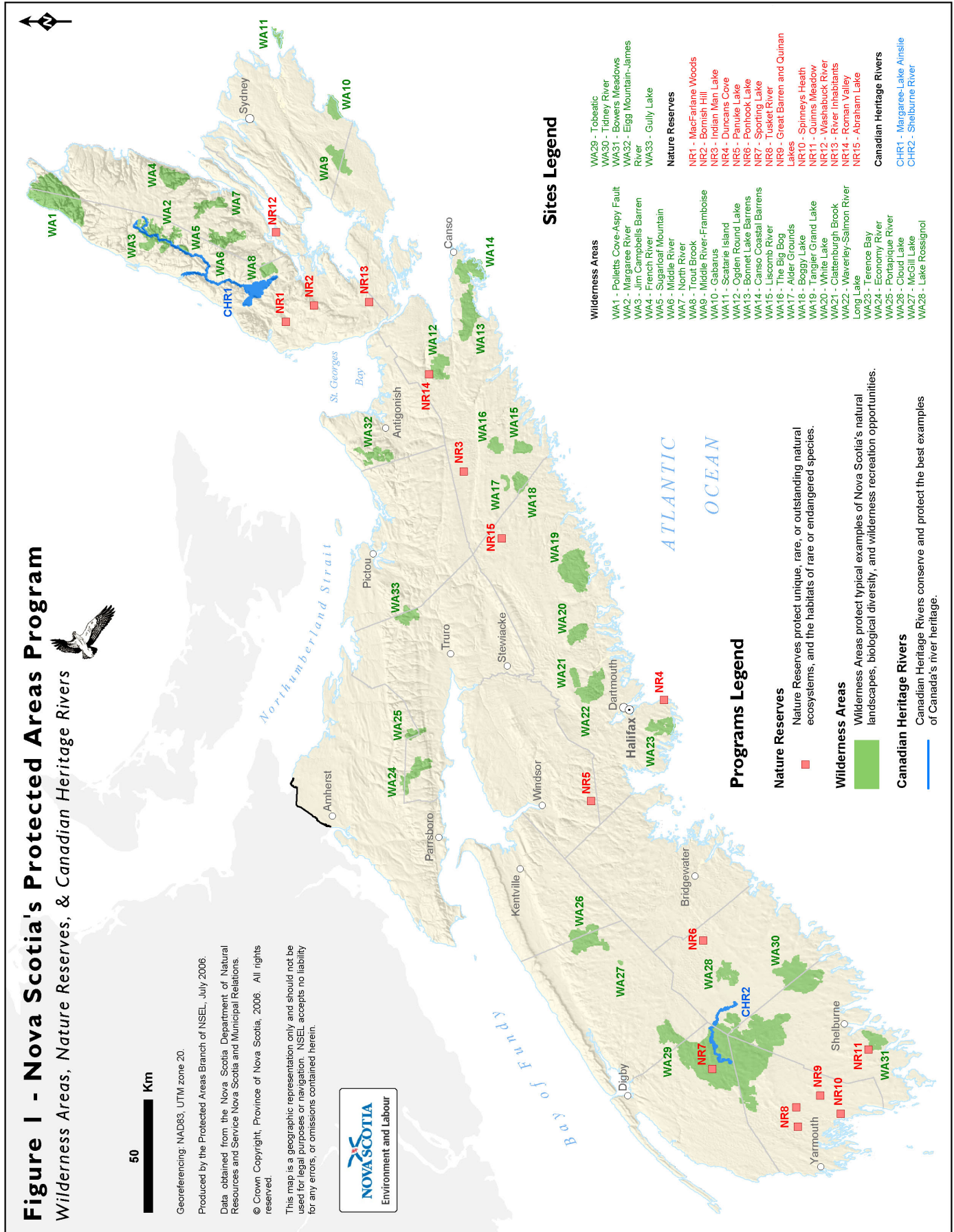
The Minister of Environment and Labour launched the management planning exercise in March 2002, at the initial meeting of the advisory group.

Through a facilitated consensus process, advisory group members considered issues, and provided advice on the content of the management plan. The first working sessions focused on identifying the major themes to be addressed in the management plan. Further meetings allowed members to broadly discuss themes, and reach agreement on management goals and objectives.

In October 2002, Environment and Labour published the newsletter *Focus on the Tobeatic*. This broad-sheet document provided background information, presented the broad goals and objectives for the plan, and was used to solicit public input. During this initial comment period,



Figure 1



government received 171 written submissions. These submissions were reviewed by government and the advisory group, and summarized in a Summary Report on Public Comment, which was released in winter 2003.

The Tobeatic Advisory Group worked throughout 2003 and 2004 to discuss principles and develop priorities actions. Specialists met with the advisory group to assist in resolving challenging topics. Based on advisory group advice, public comment, and wilderness manage-

ment “best practices”, Environment and Labour produced the Draft Management Plan, which was released in April 2004.

Following release of the draft plan, the Department launched a broad public consultation program to discuss its content. A series of library information displays, and public open houses were held throughout western Nova Scotia and in Halifax. More than 200 people attended the six regional open houses and the department received more than 250 written submissions. A summary

of comment, and the full text of all written submissions on the draft management plan, were released in October, 2004.

The advisory group reviewed and discussed the public comment on the Draft Management Plan, and provided final advice to government. In preparing the final management plan, government carefully considered all public comment, and the advice of the advisory group.

2.0 Context and Values of Tobeatic Wilderness Area

2.1 Provincial Significance

Tobeatic Wilderness Area is Nova Scotia’s largest protected area, accounting for roughly one-third of the total protected lands in the province. It spans 104,131 hectares in southwestern Nova Scotia, including parts of Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne, and Queens counties.

Tobeatic Wilderness Area is an important natural area to safeguard the native biodiversity of Nova Scotia. The area protects representative natural landscapes and outstanding natural features. It also secures part of Nova Scotia’s rich wilderness heritage. Generations of outdoor users have enjoyed the exceptional recreation opportunities provided in the Tobeatic region. This heritage includes canoe travels through connected lakes and rivers, renowned trout fishing, challenging hunting, and remote exploring.



2.2 Representation of Natural Landscapes & Ecosystems

Representation is a central principle of Nova Scotia’s protected areas system. It refers to the science-based approach of protecting typical examples of the province’s eighty natural landscapes and ecosystems. A natural landscape is characterized

by its ecosystems and elements, such as the local variety and distribution of land forms, plant communities, and unique climate, and natural disturbance patterns.

Portions of five landscapes lie within Tobeatic Wilderness Area. These are the Shelburne River Plain, Roseway River Glacial Plain,

South Mountain Rolling Plain, Tusket River Drumlins, and Fisher Lake Drumlins.

Tobeatic Wilderness Area protects a diversity of ecosystems, including 11 distinct ecosystem types within the Shelburne River Plain, six within the Roseway River Glacial Plain, and seven within the South

Mountain Rolling Plain. These ecosystems include barrens, conifer forests, mixed forests, bogs, fens, hummocks, drumlins, and flats.

Many ecosystems are largely undisturbed, with most native species, and natural processes intact. This high degree of ecological integrity contributes to the significance Tobeatic Wilderness Area holds for biological diversity and wilderness protection within the region, and Nova Scotia.

2.3 Natural Values

Tobeatic Wilderness Area protects expansive wild lands, unique glacial land forms, river headwaters, rich old forests, large undisturbed wetlands, extensive barren and semi-barrens, and significant wildlife habitat.

Large & Connected Wild Lands

Together with adjacent lands at Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada, this large and relatively undisturbed region is provincially and nationally significant for its ecological integrity and wilderness values.

The area is large enough to be the home for species that are sensitive to human disturbance and habitat fragmentation. This large area also increases the possibility that ecosystem functions will continue unimpaired.

Glacial Land Forms

Tobeatic Wilderness Area contains outstanding examples of glacial land forms. Prominent features include outwash plains, eskers, kames,



drumlins, moraine ridges and irregular hummocks, and erratics.

River Headwaters

Tobeatic Wilderness Area contains all or part of the headwaters of nine river systems. These are the Sissiboo, Tusket, Napier, West, Caribou, Clyde, Roseway, Jordan, and Shelburne Rivers.

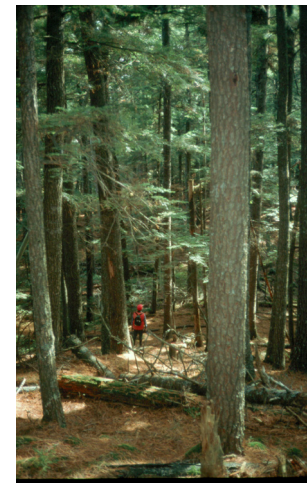
Headwaters play a critical role in maintaining the health of lakes and rivers and all their associated habitats. These river systems also provide high quality, interconnected wilderness travel routes.

Old Forests

Tobeatic Wilderness Area includes a number of old forest areas. These include old-growth hemlock forests at Sporting Lake and North Bingay Lake, old-growth mixed forest at Dish Lake, and old-growth white pine forest at Big Pine Lake.

These diverse forest ecosystems are significant because they provide habitat for many unique plants and

animals. Few old-growth forests remain in Nova Scotia.



Wetlands

A variety of large, undisturbed wetlands are found in the Tobeatic region, including bogs, fens, marshes, and swamps. These wetlands are found in areas of poor drainage, depressions, kettles, swales, slow-moving streams, and along lake shores.

Wetlands provide habitats for many forms of wildlife and are an integral part of the global water cycle. In their natural state, wetlands play

an important role in storing and regulating the release of large quantities of water. Wetlands also act as an important filtering system that removes suspended sediments from water as it flows through. Wetlands provide rich wildlife habitat, and provide food and cover for many species.

Barrens and Semi-Barrens

The largest concentration of barrens and semi-barrens in the province is found within the boundaries of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Many of these ecosystems contain unusual or unique floral species or natural communities.



Most of the barrens in the Tobeatic region are the result of human fires. Repeated burning has resulted in the loss of productive soils, impacts on aquatic systems, and the invasion of shrubs that slow the recovery to pre-fire conditions.

Significant Wildlife Habitat & Rare Species

Tobeatic Wilderness Area protects wildlife habitat within a relatively large, interior wilderness setting. This is important for species that require large, undisturbed expanses of habitat in which to live, breed, forage, or hunt.

A number of top-level predators

occur in Tobeatic Wilderness Area, including fisher, black bear, otter, and bobcat. Wetlands and waterways provide habitat for aquatic mammals like otter, mink, muskrat, and beaver. Warblers, waterfowl and owls are common in the woods and wetlands of the wilderness area.



The area supports a significant population of endangered Nova Scotia mainland moose. Other rare species known to inhabit Tobeatic Wilderness Area include several species of coastal plain flora, and lustre moss.

The American marten, once thought to be eliminated from mainland Nova Scotia due to



habitat loss and over-trapping, may inhabit Tobeatic Wilderness Area as a result of a reintroduction program conducted in Kejimikujik between 1987 and 1994. It is unknown whether marten currently inhabit Tobeatic Wilderness Area but suitable habitat is known to exist in the wilderness area.

2.4 Cultural Values

Tobeatic Wilderness Area reflects the rich cultural history of the region, connected to ancient Mi'kmaw sites, land use by British and Acadian settlers, and Nova Scotia's first tourism and wildlife management programs.

Mi'kmaw Heritage

Tobeatic (Toobeadoogook or Tupsie'katik) is considered a sacred place by the Mi'kmaq, Nova Scotia's first peoples. In earlier times, Mi'kmaw lived throughout southwestern Nova Scotia, including the Tobeatic region. Their oral histories and petroglyphs tell of frequent travel for hunting, fishing, and trade, using coastal sites during summer, and large inland lakes in winter.

Many ancient cultural features are evident in the Tobeatic region including encampment sites, footpaths, canoe routes, and burial sites. Initial archaeological research completed in the region supports ancient Mi'kmaw use of the land dating to at least 4500 years ago.

European Settlement

During the early settlement of Nova Scotia by the French and British, the Tobeatic region was

a remote hinterland. Small communities were established at New France, Milford, and Ohio, but the Tobeatic region remained largely inaccessible.

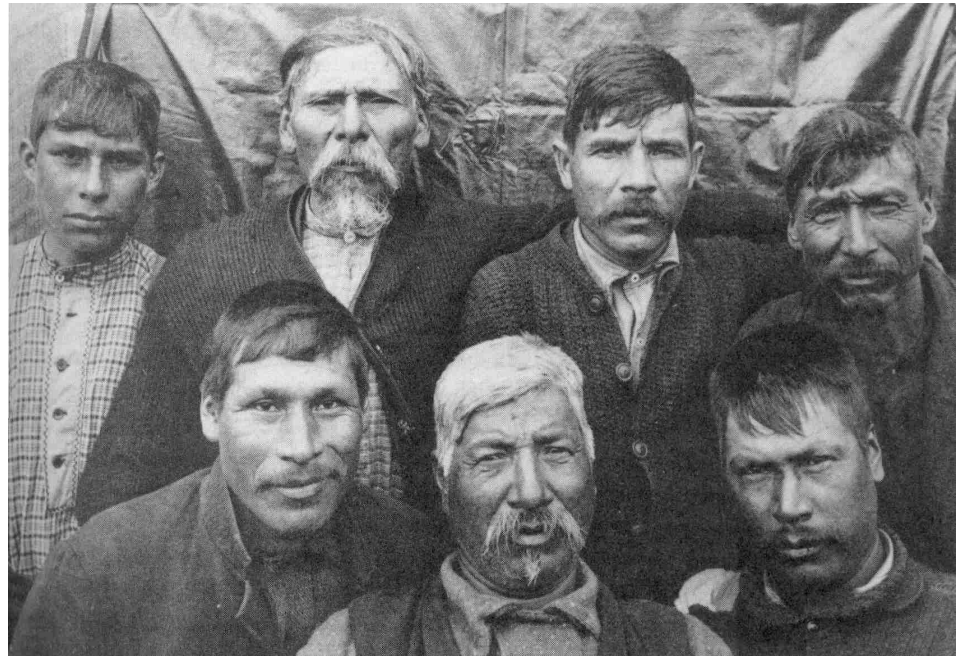
Despite its remoteness, small parcels of Crown land in the Tobeatic region were granted to several families. Land grants frequently included a town parcel on the coast, and an inland parcel. Some inland grants were for wetlands and river meadows used to pasture livestock and harvest meadow grass for winter feed. Modern land ownership in the region reflects these early grants.

Early Military & Economic Interest

The Old Annapolis-Shelburne Road was cut in 1784 to join the military outposts of Shelburne and Annapolis Royal. Later known as Pell's Road, named after a prominent Loyalist merchant, the route was an important connection between the Atlantic and Fundy coasts. Little more than a footpath for much of its length in the Tobeatic region, the route fell into disrepair and became impassable by the early 1800s. Today the "Soldier's Rocks", west of Wainwright Lake, remain and mark this past use.

Early commercial interest in the Tobeatic region included forestry, gold prospecting and nature tourism. Stories of life in the old woods camps, and remnant mill works and log flumes all attest to the importance the Tobeatic region once held for timber harvest.

Many sites remain to mark the



logging history of this remote part of interior Nova Scotia, including old sawmill sites at Roseway, Hansled and Little Tobeatic Lakes, and the remains of work camps at Silvery, Hansled and Long lakes. This forestry activity led to the establishment of an inn to support pioneering entrepreneurs, early tourists seeking fish, game and scenery, as well as other travellers passing through.

Sporting and Guiding

For many, the "golden age" of the Tobeatic region was the late 1800s, when outdoor recreation was flourishing. Local guiding businesses promised rugged adventure and bountiful game to clients.



Mi'kmaq and other resident guides, based in the nearby communities of Bear River, Milford, the Ohios, and Kempt, led paying clients or "sports" on extended fishing, hunting and camping excursions into the wilds of Tobeatic country. This early nature tourism provided seasonal work for guides, and supported the rural livelihood of many families.

The Tent Dwellers is a popular written account of one such trip that began at Milford House, in Annapolis county, and led from Kejimkujik Lake west to the Shelburne River, and further on to the Tobeatic lakes. The route chronicled in the story is one that many wilderness travellers still enjoy today.

Wildlife Management

The Tobeatic region has long been recognized by the province as an area worthy of special attention.

Tobeatic Park was established as a game sanctuary in 1927. At that time, guiding, angling, hunting and

canoeing were the focus of management. Rangers patrolled the major routes of the sanctuary to provide assistance to visitors and enforce wildlife regulations.



Several ranger cabins were constructed to support this work. Ranger cabins at Buckshot Lake, Sand Beach Lake, and Tobeatic Lake stand as hallmarks of this era.

In 1968, the Department of Lands and Forests adjusted the original game sanctuary boundary, re-designating the new area as a wildlife management area to more adequately address wildlife protection, and to

support wildlife research.

Administered by the Department of Natural Resources, the current wildlife management area includes both public and private lands, and overlaps with the central and eastern portions of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

2.5 Wilderness Values

Tobeatic Wilderness Area holds important social and cultural meaning for many people, and protects a wild region which connects present-day users to a rich outdoor heritage.

For some users the wilderness area is a favourite destination for spring angling on a quiet lake, walking the barrens on the fall hunt, or sleeping under a starlit sky. For others, it is a place to canoe a chain of waterways across landscapes marked by giant boulders and pockets of old forest.

Wilderness Recreation

Due to its size, the wilderness area provides one of the best opportuni-

ties in the Maritimes for multi-day wilderness excursions.

The Tobeatic region is Nova Scotia's premiere wilderness canoeing destination, linking from Kejimikujik via the Shelburne River to routes on the Roseway, Jordan, Sissiboo, and Tusket rivers. With over 100 lakes to discover and many streams to explore, there are many possibilities for long-distance travel. Tenting, hiking, and wildlife viewing are also enjoyed by wilderness travellers.

Sportfishing, Hunting, and Trapping

Angling, hunting, and trapping are a part of the recreation heritage of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Since 1927, special limits for hunting and trapping have been in place for lands that now make up the eastern portion of the wilderness area. This part remains specially regulated for hunting and trapping, supporting only a six day black powder hunt.

Sportfishing, and traditional patterns of hunting and trapping are still enjoyed in Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Wilderness Experience

Tobeatic Wilderness Area is important to frequent users and occasional visitors. Travellers value the remoteness of the wilderness area and the adventure that comes from moving through undeveloped wild lands, experiencing natural sights and sounds, and enjoying the solitude of being away from it all.

The area's quiet streams, ancient



forests, and open barrens also provide a sense of freedom and challenge, and inspire reflection and rejuvenation.

This remote and wild region is also important to people who may never travel its lakes and trails. They appreciate and value the wilderness area as a place where nature dominates and there is little disturbance from human activity.

2.6 Regional Relationships

Tobeatic Wilderness Area is located in the interior of southwestern Nova Scotia. Nearby communities include Bear River to the north, Weymouth to the northwest, Kemptville to the west, the Ohios to the south, and Caledonia to the east. The larger regional centres of Annapolis Royal, Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne, and Liverpool support businesses that provide goods and services to users of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Within the region, there are several large land owners. There are also other designated lands that protect natural, cultural, or wilderness features (Figure 2 - Tobeatic Wilderness Area Regional Relationships).

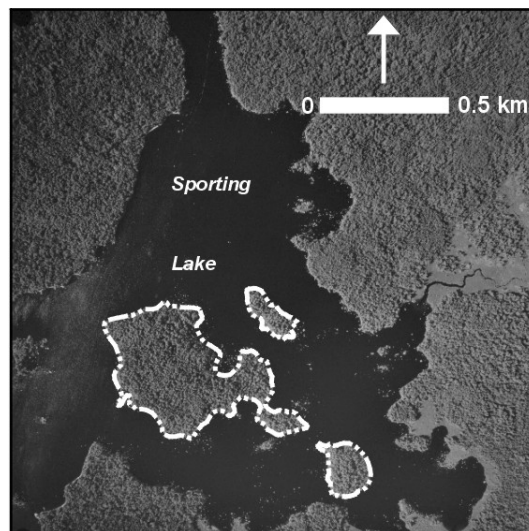
Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada

Kejimikujik is a federally protected area, managed by the Parks Canada Agency. The national park and national historic site lie directly adjacent to Tobeatic Wilderness Area, sharing a portion of its eastern boundary.

Kejimikujik was established as a national park to protect a representative portion of the Atlantic Coast Uplands natural region - one of 39 natural regions which have been identified across the country. The park is made up of a large inland portion and a smaller coastal adjunct.

The inland portion of the park protects 38,100 hectares in the upper Mersey River watershed. An active ecosystem science program contributes to species-at-risk recovery, and monitoring pollution such as mercury and acid rain. Recently, the inland portion was designated as a National Historic Site of Canada to commemorate the Mi'kmaw cultural landscape of the area.

Sporting Lake Nature Reserve



Located on one large island, and two smaller islands, Sporting Lake Nature Reserve protects outstanding old-growth forest within the northwestern portion of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. This 25-hectare site has been protected since 1990

under the provincial Special Places Protection Act.

The nature reserve has a high level of protection in order to preserve some of the last remaining old-growth coniferous forest in Nova Scotia. These forests include mixed and pure stands of old-growth eastern hemlock and white pine. Due to its sensitivity to human disturbance, camping, campfires, wood cutting, littering, and hunting are not permitted on the islands.

Sites of Ecological Significance

Tobeatic Wilderness Area contains three Sites of Ecological Significance which are located at Big Pine Lake, Silvery Lake, and Sporting Lake (designated a Nature Reserve -see above). These sites feature a variety of representative old forests that are increasingly rare in Nova Scotia.

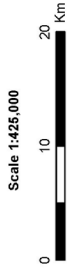
The Big Pine Lake site is a series of ridges and rock knolls separated by wet swales. Old forest stands of white pine and red pine line the east side of the lake.

The Silvery Lake site contains a fine example of old-growth hemlock forest. An impressive stand grows along the west side of the lake, while the site of ecological significance is located on Moosehead Island the largest island in the lake.

Additional Sites of Ecological Significance lie adjacent Tobeatic Wilderness Area to the west at Shelburne Barrens, and to the east at Pollard's Falls, and at Sixth Lake.

Figure 2. Tobeatic Wilderness Area Regional Relationships

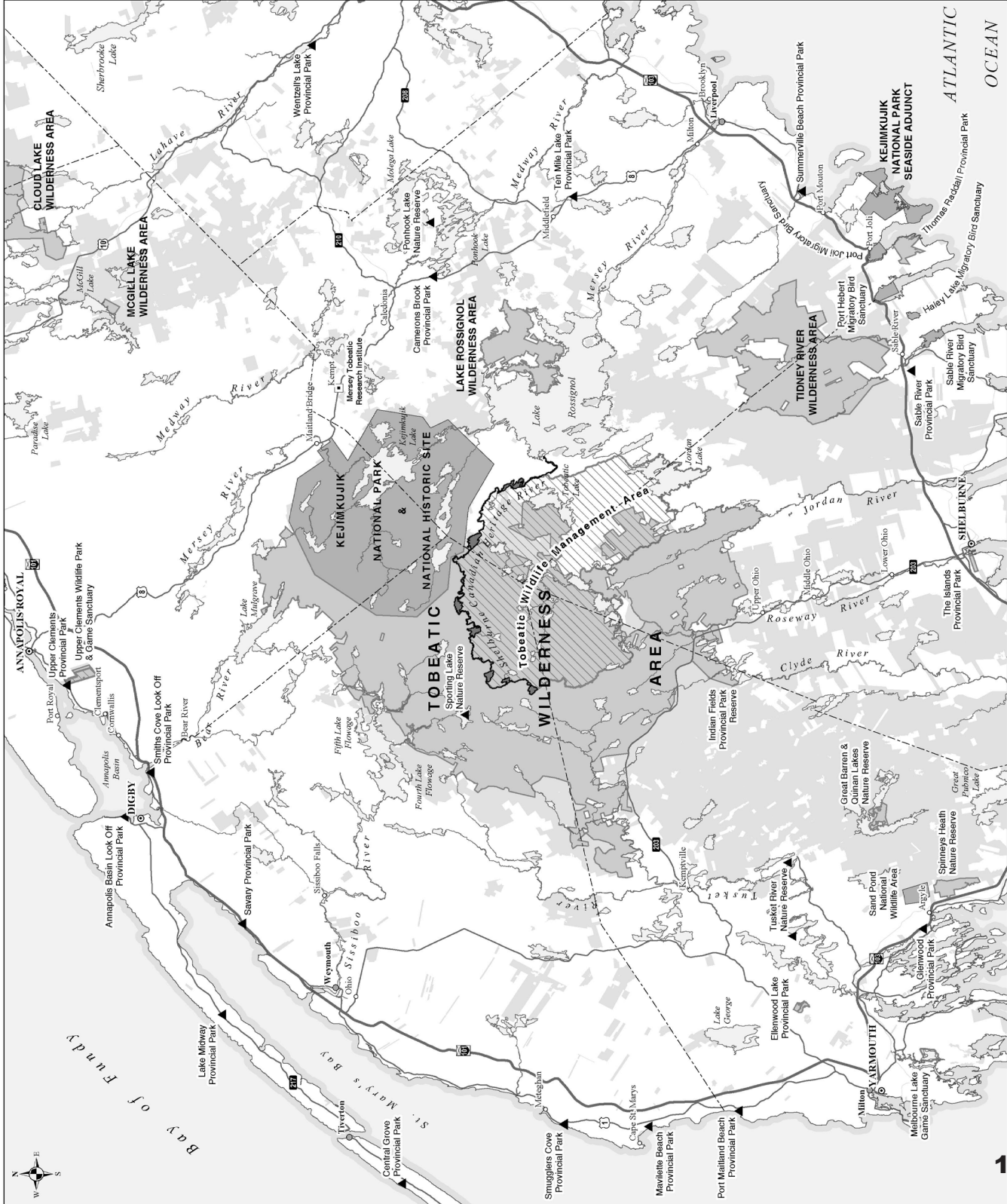
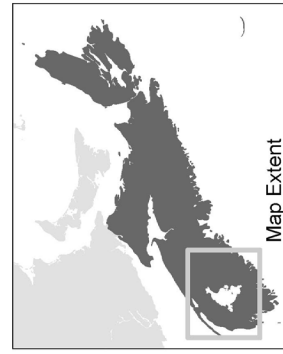
Nova Scotia's Largest Wilderness Area
Approximately 104,000 hectares



Georeferencing: NAD83, UTM, zone 20N.
Produced by the Protected Areas Branch of NSL, September 2005.
For information, contact the Protected Areas Branch, 2151 Terminal Rd., 5th Floor, PO Box 697, Halifax, NS, B3J 2T8.
All information used was obtained from NSDNR, and SWSMR, the Nova Scotia Geomatics Centre.
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Key

- Town
- Village or larger community
- Rural community
- ▣ Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute
- ▣ National Park or other federally designated area
- ▲ Provincially designated area < 100 Ha
- ▣ Provincially designated area > 100 Ha
- ▣ Provincial Crown Land



Tidney River Wilderness Area

Tidney River Wilderness Area is located ten kilometers southeast of Tobeatic Wilderness Area and straddles the Queens - Shelburne county line north of the village of Sable River. This wild area protects 17,800 hectares within the Sable-Broad River Basin natural landscape. Tidney River Wilderness Area consists of flat, basin-like terrain that drains to the Atlantic coast. It features large expanses of poorly drained flats, with isolated hills and eskers rising above the surrounding bogs and swales.

Lake Rossignol Wilderness Area

Lake Rossignol Wilderness Area is a 4123 hectare natural area located in northern Queens county near the village of Caledonia. The wilderness area lies on the northeastern shore of Lake Rossignol, on the Mersey system just south of Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada.

Lake Rossignol Wilderness Area features climax shade-tolerant deciduous and coniferous forests, a unique pine-ash wooded swamp, and a large wetland complex with a raised bog. The wilderness area represents parts of two natural landscapes - LaHave Drumlins and Lake Rossignol Hills. It offers excellent wilderness travel and recreation opportunities associated with canoeing, fishing, hunting, and camping.

Shelburne Canadian Heritage River

The Shelburne River flows through the heart of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. The Shelburne was recog-

nized for its ecological integrity, natural features, and recreational opportunities by its designation as a Canadian Heritage River in 1997. The heritage river designation does not involve any specific regulations, but recognizes the outstanding values of the river, and encourages sound management through an approved plan.

This remote river system is linked to several other rivers and numerous lakes by traditional travel routes. Approximately 30 km of the Shelburne River corridor, and nearly 75% of its watershed, are included in Tobeatic Wilderness Area. This includes all of the undisturbed headwaters and upper reaches of the river, from Buckshot Lake to Irving Lake.

Tobeatic Wildlife Management Area

Regulations of the provincial Wildlife Act established Tobeatic Wildlife Management Area in 1968. The Department of Natural Resources continues to administer

the Wildlife Management Area to support wildlife research and a six day primitive hunt.

The western portion of the Wildlife Management Area overlaps with Tobeatic Wilderness Area. This includes the lands bounded by West Roseway River north to the Shelburne River, south to Roseway River and the West Branch Jordan River.

Indian Fields Provincial Park Reserve.

Crown land adjoining the southwestern boundary of Tobeatic Wilderness Area, is managed by the Department of Natural Resources as Indian Fields Provincial Park Reserve. Although it is not currently designated under the Parks Act, this 1618 hectare property is reserved for future development and management as a provincial park.

Indian Fields Provincial Park Reserve is easily accessed from highway 203, and borders roughly 3 km of the Roseway River. It includes a portion of Barclay Brook and



several other intermittent streams that drain the Shelburne Barrens. The central feature of the Reserve is a chain of seven lakes stretching from Clamshell Lake west to Auger Lake, across the watershed divide between the Roseway and Clyde river systems. A canoe carry connects wilderness travel between these two major routes. The area is a popular summer destination for many recreational users.

Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve

Southwestern Nova Scotia was designated a Biosphere Reserve in September, 2001 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the Man and the Biosphere Programme. The title acknowledges ongoing efforts in conservation, sustainable development, and the voluntary cooperation among many partners in the region. Tobeatic Wilderness Area lies within the core area of the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve, and together with Kejimikujik, fulfils the conservation requirement of the biosphere reserve distinction.

Environment and Labour is a founding partner of the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve Association. Projects of the association include developing educational materials, supporting research, facilitating partnerships and building local capacities for sustainable development.

There are no regulatory or management requirements associated with the biosphere reserve distinction, and as such there is no requirement for special management of Tobeatic



Wilderness Area or any other part of the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve.

Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour is a founding partner in the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute. The Institute is an association of partners leading community-based research and monitoring.

The mandate of the Institute is to advance the use of science for decision-making on working landscapes and protected areas by enhancing communication, collaboration and cooperation with government, industry, educators, and the communities of southwestern Nova Scotia.

Key goals of this science network include promoting and supporting research and monitoring in the region, and the application of ecosystem science.

The Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute provides expertise and services for sustainable resource management. It is based in Kempt, where it maintains a field station that offers workspace, accommodation and basic lab facilities for researchers. The station also provides a centre for public presentations, specialized training, and demonstration of information technologies.

3.0 Protecting Tobeatic Wilderness Area

The Management Plan for Tobeatic Wilderness Area sets a strategic direction to achieve a broad vision for the wilderness area. This direction is guided by four underlying principles and nine management goals. These principles and goals reflect the range of conservation, understanding, appreciation, and involvement that is required to make the vision a reality.

3.1 Vision

Our Tobeatic is a peaceful place where nature dominates. Beautiful forests, barrens, lakes, rivers and wetlands, are protected here, providing natural habitats for wildlife.

Our Tobeatic is a place of true wilderness, with expansive landscapes, diverse ecosystems, and unique sites. While some features are resilient and enduring, others are sensitive and require our careful stewardship. Through research and exploration, our understanding of these values can be deepened, and applied to preserve the wild character of the place.

Our Tobeatic is a place of history where we connect to Nova Scotia's heritage. People feel a part of ancient times by walking a footpath, following an old canoe carry, or enjoying a look-off used by generations of people before. It is a place for sharing the company of family and friends, making lifelong bonds with others, and continuing traditions of our rich wilderness heritage.

In our Tobeatic, we enjoy feeling moss underfoot while walking in an ancient forest, and hearing a canoe part the waters of a quietly winding stream. We appreciate working a line for trout on a stillwater pool, and studying moose tracks while crossing an autumn barren. We value the wilderness experience, whether it is pausing to look across a frozen meadow, smelling smoke rise from the campfire after a long day, or lying back to take in the sights of a summer night sky.

The rugged and remote reaches of our Tobeatic provide challenging adventures, and demand self-reliance of wilderness travellers. For those that seek it out, its solitude offers relaxation and rejuvenation, inspires creativity, and imparts a sense of humility and awe.

The future of our Tobeatic rests with all of us. To sustain our Tobeatic, we must continue to build new relationships, share in its stewardship, and act for its protection. Through these actions, we ensure that the wild character of our Tobeatic remains for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

3.2 Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for Tobeatic Wilderness Area are reflected throughout the management framework. These broad principles are a foundation for decision making, and guide implementation.

Ecological Integrity: The integrity of natural processes and biodiversity is the primary consideration for management decisions.

Heritage: Natural and cultural heritage are important elements that will be protected, maintained, restored, and celebrated.

Wilderness Recreation: Opportunities for low-impact recreation are important to provide authentic wilderness experiences.

Stewardship: Greater stewardship is achieved by actively engaging users in partnerships for protection, management, and use.

3.3 Management Goals

The following management goals provide the overall management direction for the wilderness area. The management framework has been developed to meet these broad goals.

1. Implement a high level of ecosystem protection and management.
2. Develop, use, share, and promote scientific understanding.
3. Protect, share, and promote cultural and social values.
4. Facilitate safe and responsible wilderness recreation.
5. Encourage and integrate complementary land use and management.
6. Support appropriate tourism, development, and marketing.
7. Foster understanding and appreciation through communication and education.
8. Develop long-term strategic partnerships.
9. Ensure efficient implementation of the management plan.



4.0 Management Framework for Tobeatic Wilderness Area

This framework outlines a strategic approach for managing Tobeatic Wilderness Area and meeting the broader management goals. It will be applied to provide clear direction, and consistent management of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Application & Review

The management framework will be reviewed every five years, and may be updated at any time, to ensure priority actions meet management requirements.

Themes & Elements

The management framework for Tobeatic Wilderness Area is divided into four major themes: Ecosystem Protection; Recreation Management; Neighbouring Lands; and Implementation.

For each theme, an objective statement indicates the approach and sets a desired outcome. Statements of intent, supported by specific priority actions, clearly describe how each objective will be achieved.

Work Planning

On an annual basis, Environment and Labour directs financial and human resources to address program priorities. This work planning approach will be applied to implementing this framework.

The time line for initiating specific elements of the management framework will be identified within an implementation plan. In this working document, staff will prioritize each management action and identify an implementation approach based on existing programs, or new projects.

Some actions will be implemented with public involvement through user stewardship or cooperation with community groups and corporate partners. Environment and Labour will continue to work with partners to coordinate projects and identify opportunities to share resources and expertise.

Evaluation & Reporting

Environment and Labour will evaluate and refine its



approaches to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of management actions.

Management activities will be reported at an annual workshop and public information session, hosted by Nova Scotia Environment and Labour. The purpose of this annual event is to review activities, advise of anticipated projects, and identify emerging priority actions.

4.1 Ecosystem Protection

OBJECTIVE: TO IMPLEMENT APPROPRIATE ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT SO THAT THE INTEGRITY OF NATURAL PROCESSES AND BIODIVERSITY (ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY) IS MAINTAINED OR RESTORED.

4.1.1 Biodiversity

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will place a high priority on protecting biodiversity, and maintaining or restoring the natural conditions of ecosystems.

Biodiversity refers to the variety and variability within and among living organisms and their habitats. Tobeatic Wilderness Area, together with the adjacent Kejimikujik, is provincially and nationally significant for protecting biodiversity. This region of southwestern Nova Scotia is important for supporting natural ecosystem functions, and species that are sensitive to disturbance.

Due to its remoteness, many parts of Tobeatic Wilderness Area have not been studied. Limited information is available regarding species occurrence and distribution. Tobeatic Wilderness Area is known to harbour rare and endangered species, including moose and several coastal plain plants. However, the occurrence and extent of rare species is largely unknown.

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour contributes to meeting provincial and national biodiversity objectives in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources, Nova Scotia Agriculture and Fisheries, Parks Canada, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and community and corporate partners.

Priority Actions

- (a) Continue work towards a comprehensive biodiversity inventory to identify the species, genetic variability, habitats, and ecosystems of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.
- (b) Support recovery of species at risk through active participation in recovery activities, and the identification of core habitat for endangered species found in Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

4.1.2 Scientific Understanding

In collaboration with partners, Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will support new and existing research and monitoring to provide information for ecosystem management.

Ecosystem management relies on a solid scientific understanding of natural ecosystems, processes, and relevant human influences. These human influences are reflected in the social, economic and historic significance of natural areas.

Scientific understanding is gained by conducting research, monitoring and evaluating natural processes and stressors. A collaborative and inter-disciplinary approach supports the application of new knowledge and best practices.

Research also provides the foundation for making informed management decisions. Through research, baseline conditions are recorded, allowing accurate



measurement of adverse effects. Appropriate action may then be taken to protect or restore natural ecosystems and cultural sites.

Monitoring and reporting are also essential to making management decisions for ecosystem protection, and for sharing important information within appropriate regional, national, and global networks.

Priority Actions

- (a) In collaboration with academic, agency, and community partners, improve research capacity by building on existing programs and encouraging new research projects.
- (b) Evaluate information gaps and set clear research priorities for the wilderness area.
- (c) Share information with partners to maximize the use of research findings. Where possible, use findings of relevant research in the region to aid management.
- (d) Develop a comprehensive monitoring program framework to identify key ecosystem functions, structures, and stressors. Develop monitoring and reporting activities with regional agencies, and corporate and community partners.
- (e) Review and evaluate data from the environmental

effects monitoring program for the adjacent mineral development at Flintstone Rock.

4.1.3 Ecosystem Management

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will adopt and apply an ecosystem management approach to protect or restore ecological integrity.

Ecosystems will be managed with minimal interference to natural processes. Management interventions will be directed as narrowly as possible.

Ecosystems protected in Tobeatic Wilderness Area are part of the broader landscapes in which they occur, and are subject to varying degrees of human influence.

Ecological integrity is a condition of ecosystems with all natural components and processes intact. These components and processes include the type and number of native species and biological communities, rates of change, and supporting processes.



The ecological integrity of Tobeatic Wilderness Area is affected by several factors including adjacent road density, land use in its headwaters, air pollution, acid

precipitation, distribution and occurrence of native species, and human use within the wilderness area.

The most immediate stressors are the intensive human activities surrounding Tobeatic Wilderness Area, such as forestry, mining, hydro-electric generation, tourism development, road construction, and cottage development. Despite these stressors, the wilderness area has maintained a relatively high degree of ecological integrity.

Ecosystems will be managed with minimal interference to natural processes. Active intervention may be required to sustain critical habitat for species that are rare or endangered. Restoration activities to support the recovery of ecological integrity will be identified and implemented to re-establish and/or maintain natural conditions.

Some natural processes which occur in Tobeatic Wilderness Area may have implications for neighbouring lands if left unattended, particularly if they occur near the boundaries. These processes include those of natural and human origin, such as cycles in insect populations, and forest fires. To limit adverse effects for neighbouring landowners these may be managed more aggressively than other natural processes.

The Minister of Environment and Labour has authorized the Minister of Natural Resources to carry out the suppression of forest fires in the wilderness area. Woods closure orders issued by the Department of Natural Resources apply to wilderness areas.

The introduction of exotic species, or those not naturally occurring in Tobeatic Wilderness Area, will be prevented to the degree possible. Where such species are found they will be addressed in co-operation with relevant agencies, within resource constraints, according to the degree of risk to native species or natural processes. Addressing exotic species may involve long-term restoration.

Management interventions will be directed as narrowly as possible, and will follow adaptive management principles. This involves applying a rigorous experimental design, carefully monitoring results, and acquiring

new scientific knowledge to improve current and future decision making.

Priority Actions

- (a) Identify stressors (including human influences) to protecting biodiversity and maintaining ecological integrity. Where possible, identify and support measures to mitigate or eliminate such stressors.
- (b) Develop an integrated ecosystem management approach for Tobeatic Wilderness Area with other agencies such as DNR (Wildlife Division, Regional Services, Forest Protection), NS Fisheries and Agriculture (Inland Fisheries), Parks Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans (Habitat), so that agency roles are coordinated.
- (c) Monitor and document major natural disturbance events that occur in, or affect, Tobeatic Wilderness Area, to improve understanding of such events.
- (d) Work with partners to better understand regional activities related to water use and protection, and develop an integrated water strategy which includes the natural water quality and quantity benchmarks for watersheds.
- (e) Identify known and potential stressors for priority watercourses, and develop a practical monitoring program. Based on findings, implement measures to protect or restore water quality and quantity.

4.2 Recreation Management

OBJECTIVE: TO RESPONSIBLY DEVELOP AND MANAGE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES, SO THAT USERS CAN ENJOY WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES THAT ARE PART OF THE OUTDOOR HERITAGE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

4.2.1 Outdoor Heritage

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will identify, protect, and communicate the outdoor heritage of Tobeatic Wilderness Area, so that users can connect with the important cultural history of the region.

Tobeatic Wilderness Area connects present-day users



to a rich part of Nova Scotia's outdoor heritage. Traditions of wilderness travel, canoeing, tenting, hiking, hunting, trapping, and angling have been enjoyed in different parts of the Tobeatic region over many years.

Evidence of past use can be seen today as canoe carries, ranger cabins, remote camps, and traditional tenting sites.

To protect and manage outdoor heritage, research is required to fill information gaps in our understanding of the cultural heritage of the area, monitor stressors, and reduce loss.

Priority Actions

- (a) Identify and document sites and features with heritage values in Tobeatic Wilderness Area.
- (b) Evaluate heritage sites and consider restoration measures to protect or commemorate identified values. In particular, consider commemoration or restoration of the ranger cabin at Buckshot Lake, and the maintenance of the ranger cabins at Sand Beach Lake and at Tobeatic Lake.
- (c) Identify cultural heritage research needs, and encourage new research projects, seeking funding to support priorities.
- (d) Encourage archival research to compile information on the cultural heritage of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.
- (e) Investigate opportunities with local museums, heritage societies, and other partners for developing heritage

interpretation materials for outreach and education.

4.2.2 Wilderness Experience

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will administer activities and projects in a manner that ensures high-quality wilderness experiences are provided for users.

The scale of the natural surroundings and the sense of remoteness of Tobeatic Wilderness Area provides for a genuine wilderness experience which is very important to many people who visit Tobeatic Wilderness Area. The wilderness character of Tobeatic Wilderness Area will be maintained so that users can experience solitude, tranquillity, and closeness to nature in a natural environment. High quality opportunities for wilderness recreation provide users a sense of self-reliance, challenge, and reward.

Activities inconsistent with the wilderness character of the area, or which create adverse environmental effects will be minimized, or eliminated over time, to help restore conditions necessary for enjoying a high-quality wilderness experience.

Priority Actions

- (a) Survey users to determine the range of valued experiences, and the associated locations and features that contribute to these experiences.
- (b) Consider valued experiences and the quality of wilderness in making decisions respecting ecosystem, recreation, and complementary land management.

4.2.3 Wilderness Recreation

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will support a range of recreation activities for the interests and abilities of users.

Recreation management will favour wilderness-dependent activities, and consider site impacts, natural and cultural values, and the wilderness character of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Tobeatic Wilderness Area offers users high quality wilderness recreation opportunities. As defined by the

Wilderness Areas Protection Act, wilderness recreation includes non-motorized outdoor activities that have minimal environmental impact, including nature based tourism. Responsible use, site impacts, public safety, and enjoyment must be considered in providing recreation opportunities.

Trails, routes, main access points, and tenting sites will be managed to consider the wilderness character and carrying capacity of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. A wilderness standard will be applied in providing safe opportunities for enjoyment and appreciation of the area.

Hiking trails will minimize built structures, and integrate existing routes. In situations where designating and marking tenting sites is required, site selection will favour those sites traditionally used by wilderness travellers. Likewise, sensitive areas where tenting is not permitted will be clearly posted.

Priority Actions

- (a) Establish a voluntary user registration system.
- (b) Investigate the feasibility of establishing a mandatory user registration system, to provide information and encourage personal responsibility for safety.
- (c) Post wilderness area boundary signage at main access points to provide basic user information, and as a first step towards more complete boundary marking.
- (d) Provide additional user information at main access points at Indian Fields, Lake Joli, and Pebblelogitch



Stillwater. Secondary access points at Upset Falls, Silvery Lake, Crain Lake, East Branch Tusket River, and Sporting Lake Stream may also be used to provide user information.

(e) Evaluate hiking route opportunities, including those at Billy's Hill, Rocky Daniels country, Indian Fields and Bald Mountain; and investigate the feasibility of a long-distance hiking route to provide a unique wilderness experience for users.

(f) Work with partners to clearly mark and maintain carries (portages) on major canoe routes on the Sissiboo, Shelburne, Roseway, and West Branch Jordan Rivers. All other canoe route carries will remain unmarked, unless future use levels demand greater management of these routes.

(g) Partner with neighbouring landowners to establish recreation corridors that connect to canoe routes or hiking trails within the wilderness area.

(h) To protect natural values and minimize adverse recreation impacts, direct users to use designated and identified existing tenting sites along the Shelburne River at Sand Beach Lake, Beverley Lake, Granite Falls Irving Lake, Sand Lake, and Lake Rossignol with Shelburne Canadian Heritage River partners.

(i) Designate and mark established shoreline tenting sites on Sporting Lake, and Silvery Lake to protect the natural values found on the islands within these lakes.

(j) Develop a recreation risk-management strategy with established protocols for search and rescue and emergency evacuation, in conjunction with others agencies and community partners.

4.2.4 Sportfishing and Traditional Patterns of Hunting & Trapping

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will work closely with partners to address opportunities for sportfishing and traditional patterns of hunting and trapping as sustainable activities in Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Tobeatic Wilderness Area provides opportunities for



sportfishing and traditional patterns of hunting and trapping, subject to the same regulations and licencing as on other lands in the province.

The Wildlife Act regulations associated with the current Tobeatic Wildlife Management Area will be maintained in that portion of Tobeatic Wilderness Area included in the Wildlife Management Area (West Roseway River, north to Shelburne River, south to Roseway River, east to West Branch of Jordan River). Consistent with these regulations, the six-day primitive hunt with muzzle loader and black powder will continue, and no other hunting or trapping may occur in this portion of the wilderness area.

Animal baiting for hunting adversely effects the natural functioning of certain species, and can introduce significant quantities non-native food sources into the wilderness area. The habituation of bears through baiting can also pose a safety risk for wilderness users. To limit ecological impacts, and reduce safety concerns, baiting animals for hunting will not be permitted in Tobeatic Wilderness Area. As such, applications to develop a bear-baiting station will not be approved, and the use of drop apples, carrots, and other bait for deer hunting in the wilderness area is not permitted.

As a result of research, sportfishing, hunting, and trapping may be specially managed as required for the protection of wildlife populations and the maintenance of ecological integrity. Such management will be coordinated in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, and Nova Scotia Agriculture and Fisheries. For example, special wildlife management tools like habitat restoration, unique season limits, gear

restrictions, bag limits, and temporary closures may be applied.

Priority Actions

(a) Encourage continued research that estimates wildlife population numbers and health to provide information for management decisions.

(b) Work with DNR Wildlife Division and local and provincial hunting, trapping, and angling groups to gain further monitoring information on these activities specific to Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

(c) In partnership with DNR, build on existing monitoring and reporting tools to initiate a communication and mandatory catch report program for all trappers active in Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

(d) In continued cooperation with other responsible agencies, evaluate the sustainability of sportfishing, trapping, and hunting in Tobeatic Wilderness Area in relation to protecting wildlife populations and rare species, and maintaining ecological integrity. Evaluation will consider the effects of these activities on other users.

(e) In partnership with other agencies, apply special management for sportfishing, hunting, and trapping based on research findings and sustainability evaluation.

(f) Continue to support the development of a special management area for trout in the upper Mersey watershed.

(g) Explore opportunities to work with community and agency partners to improve aquatic ecosystem integrity in watersheds of interest.

4.2.5 Vehicle Use

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will not permit vehicle use in Tobeatic Wilderness Area except in specific limited circumstances, recognizing that vehicle use is permitted on the Crown road from Indian Fields to Silvery and DeMoliter Lakes.

Under the Wilderness Areas Protection Act, “vehicle” means a motor vehicle, and includes an all-terrain vehicle, a snowmobile, a motor boat, a motor vessel, and an aircraft. The Act generally prohibits vehicle use to protect wilderness areas from potential damage, while providing some flexibility to licence vehicle use in certain circumstances.

Unauthorized vehicle use in Tobeatic Wilderness Area is wide-spread. This causes significant adverse environmental effects, diminishes unique and broadly valued wilderness heritage values, creates considerable public safety and liability concerns, and presents significant challenges for management and enforcement.

Vehicle use will not be permitted in Tobeatic Wilderness Area, except on an approved route by a licence issued to:

- a landowner, for access to a private land inholding located within the wilderness area;
- a researcher, under the terms of a scientific research licence to access study sites;
- the holder of a legal interest (except a campsite lease) for the proper use of that interest; and
- a wilderness camp licence holder for access by aircraft or motorboat - for structure maintenance only .

For an interim period, land vehicle use may be author-



ized for campsite lease holders who are participating in the campsite retirement initiative (see section 4.2.6) when a vehicle is required to assist in the removal of campsite lease structures or materials.

Vehicle use is permitted by enforcement officers, provincial employees, or delegated persons where required for area management.

Licensing Considerations

All reasonable alternatives, and the range of environmental and recreational impacts will be evaluated in the decision to issue a vehicle access licence. Proposed vehicle routes that may have an adverse environmental effect on wetlands, watercourses, sensitive ecosystems, or wildlife will not be authorized. Where vehicle licensing is considered, it may be restricted by the number of trips, time of year, access route, type of vehicle, or other conditions.

This approach to vehicle management for Tobeatic Wilderness Area will maintain natural and cultural values, support management, and restore the unique and outstanding wilderness character of the area.

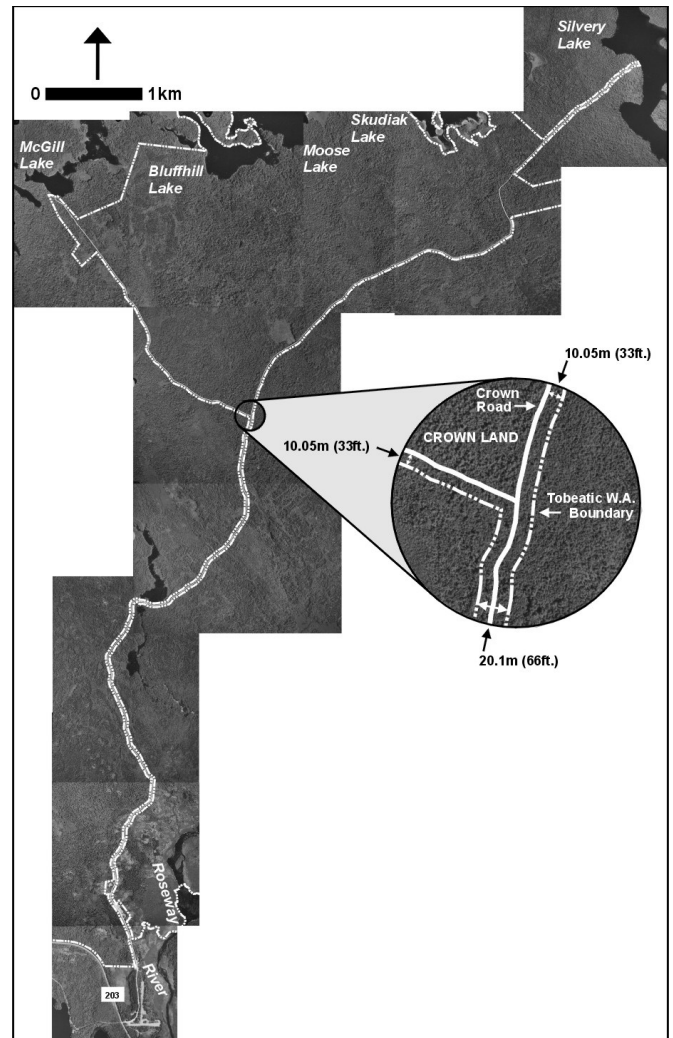
Crown Road to Silvery and DeMoliter Lakes

There is a strong history of vehicle use on the Crown road from Indian Fields to Silvery and DeMoliter Lakes. There is also public interest in continued vehicle access along this route for sportfishing, hunting, trapping, and wilderness recreation. The Crown road is managed by the Department of Natural Resources, and does not lie within the wilderness area.

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour recognizes the continued use of vehicles on this road, and supports this use in a manner which is consistent with Crown land integrated resource management. Environment and Labour will continue to work with the Department of Natural Resources to address issues related to this interior access route.

Motor Boats and Float Planes

As vehicles under the Wilderness Areas Protection Act, motor boats and float planes are not permitted in Tobeatic Wilderness Area, except under specific conditions, as described above.



Motorboat and float plane users should note that this restriction only applies to those portions of waterways and lakes which fall within the legal wilderness area boundary. Many lakes along the boundary are not included in the wilderness area. These lakes often have better access and support many of the recreation opportunities associated with Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Priority Actions

- Clearly communicate and provide appropriate notification to known users concerning vehicle-use directives, opportunities for public access, and road and trail closures to ensure understanding and encourage compliance.
- Work with private inholding land owners regarding vehicle access licensing to their sites.
- For campsite lease holders who are retiring their

lease sites, provide a temporary licencing program to allow lease holders to apply for vehicle access to assist in removing personal materials.

(d) Develop a licencing approach for considering aircraft and motorboat access by wilderness camp licence holders for structure maintenance.

(e) Work with DNR to address environmental, enforcement, and public safety issues related to use of the Indian Fields Crown road.

(f) Retire all unauthorized vehicle trails and routes.

(g) Work with interested users and others to discuss potential alternative vehicle use routes outside of the wilderness area.

4.2.6 Campsite Leases

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will guide the retirement of all campsite leases in Tobeatic Wilderness Area by considering renewal of remaining leases to a new protection-oriented wilderness camp licence - valid only for the lifetime of current campsite lease holders.

Campsite leases are legally established sites, with a camp structure, located on small parcels of provincially owned lands. Leases allow the holder to maintain a simple building for use as a hunting or fishing camp, or similar recreational purposes, for personal use. Leases were established under the Crown Lands Act with a ten year term and an option to apply for lease renewal.

The Wilderness Areas Protection Act recognizes the campsite leases in Tobeatic Wilderness Area as legal existing interests, and requires that these sites be used in a way that ensures minimal environmental impact on the wilderness area. The Act provides that leases may continue until their expiry, lawful termination or cancellation, and may be renewed according to legislation and policies.

Campsite lease management is particularly challenging in Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Isolated lease sites require significant resources for monitoring and inspections. It is also difficult for conservation officers to address



compliance concerns associated with such leases.

This plan outlines two options for campsite lease retirement for Tobeatic Wilderness Area. These options respect the interests of lease holders, increase ecosystem protection, and support area management. Most importantly, this approach helps to restore the unique and outstanding wilderness character of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Option 1 - Voluntary Campsite Retirement Initiative

In February, 2006 government announced a 3-year campsite lease retirement initiative for Tobeatic Wilderness Area. This initiative provides a one-time opportunity for lease holders to voluntarily terminate their lease for compensation of up to \$20,000, and apply for an alternative site on Crown land outside the wilderness area.

Lease holders wishing to participate in this campsite lease retirement initiative must apply to the Department of Natural Resources by December 31, 2006.

Option 2 - Wilderness Camp Licence

Campsite lease holders in Tobeatic Wilderness Area who do not voluntarily terminate their lease as part of the campsite lease retirement initiative can apply for a new wilderness camp licence for the same site. This new legal agreement is subject to regular renewal require-

ments, and is valid only for the lifetime of the current lease holders. The wilderness camp licence will contain additional protection-oriented conditions and require an enhanced stewardship role. Land-vehicle access to the site will not be permitted. Limited access by aircraft or motorboat may be considered on a case-by-case basis to assist in structure maintenance.

Lease holders wishing to renew their existing campsite lease to a wilderness camp licence, must apply in writing to the Minister of Environment and Labour by December 31, 2006. To be approved for a wilderness camp licence, lease holders must: a) sign a new wilderness camp licence, b) commit to a legal stewardship agreement, and c) demonstrate a high level of compliance and cooperation.

Licence Conditions

Wilderness camp licences will include conditions to minimize adverse impacts to wildlife, habitat, and other recreational users such as:

- limits on local firewood collection and strict rules for wood stove & chimney installation and use;
- strict requirements for site cleanliness, waste disposal, and privies;
- limits on structure size, number, design, and construction/repair material;
- protection for water frontage, water courses, wetlands, and other sensitive ecological areas; and
- prohibitions on the planting or introduction of non-native plant species.

Wilderness camp licences will be valid only for the lifetime of the currently named lease holders, and can not be assigned. However, valid written requests for assignment made prior to release of this plan will be honoured.

Stewardship Agreement

To improve wilderness area compliance, protection, research, and monitoring, wilderness camp licence holders will need to play a greater stewardship role than that expected of other area users.

Stewardship agreements will vary based on the typical use and location of the camp but will generally include:

- mandatory reporting of damaging use and

suspected violations;

- annual reporting on camp use, and associated hunting, sportfishing, and trapping activities;
- participation in wildlife and recreation monitoring and associated training;
- commitment to 'leave no trace' low-impact practices;
- assistance in public education and scientific research projects; and
- concurrence that, with appropriate notification and conditions acceptable to the camp owner, camp structures can be used to assist in area management, enforcement, and research.

Compliance

Wilderness camp licence holders are expected to be model stewards and users of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. As such, they will be held to a high level of compliance, both in the use of their camp site, and their general use of the wilderness area. They will also be expected to play an active role in addressing compliance concerns such as the closure of off-highway vehicle trails leading from the camp, and the removal of unauthorized structures associated with their site.

If licence or agreement requirements are not met, the wilderness camp licence will be cancelled, and the camp structure will be removed.

Priority Actions

(a) Continue assisting Natural Resources in implementing the voluntary retirement and campsite lease relocation program for participating lease holders.

(b) Administer a wilderness camp licence program for holders of campsite leases who are approved to remain in Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

4.2.7 Nature Tourism

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will work with tourism partners to support appropriate nature tourism for Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Tobeatic Wilderness Area holds good potential for nature tourism in Nova Scotia. The wilderness character of the area provides unique nature tourism oppor-

tunities for both day-use and extended-stay travellers. Nature tourism can allow a broader group of people to learn about and enjoy Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Opportunities for regional economic benefit associated with the wilderness area may also be identified, extending interest in the protected area to a wider audience. In any case, tourism development and promotion must respect natural and cultural values and consider carrying capacity, so that tourism use does not adversely affect area protection or significantly detract from the experience of other users.



Priority Actions

- (a) Identify current and anticipated recreation activities that support, or hold potential to, support nature tourism for Tobeatic Wilderness Area.
- (b) Work with tourism partners to discuss commercial recreation practices, focusing on consistent marketing and establishing ethical and operational standards for outfitters.
- (c) Work with the Department of Tourism, Culture & Heritage, with input from regional and specialized tourism associations, to create a tourism strategy and

opportunity analysis for day-use and guided interior experiences.

- (d) Work with tourism industry partners to ensure accurate information is available to interested organizations.

4.3 Neighbouring Lands

OBJECTIVE: TO ENGAGE NEIGHBOURING LAND MANAGERS, AND PRIVATE LAND OWNERS RESPECTING COMPLEMENTARY LAND MANAGEMENT, SO THAT GREATER VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP MEASURES ARE APPLIED FOR TOBEATIC WILDERNESS AREA.

4.3.1 Adjacent Lands

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will collaborate with neighbouring land managers to encourage voluntary, complementary management for lands adjacent to or affecting Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Protected areas are influenced by the regional context within which they occur. Many stressors to the integrity of natural or cultural values can originate beyond protected area boundaries. Such is the case with stressors in southwestern Nova Scotia, including acid deposition, climate change, and introduction of exotic species. In some cases complementary management of adjacent lands plays an important role in mitigating the effects of stressors on protected areas.

The boundary of Tobeatic Wilderness Area is nearly 550 km in length, and is shared with a number of land managers. Lands adjacent to the wilderness area include woodlands owned by the Bowater Mersey Paper Co., Ltd. and J.D. Irving Limited, federal Crown land protected within Kejimikujik, and provincial Crown land administered by the Department of Natural Resources. Land uses carried out on or near the boundary of Tobeatic Wilderness Area include forest harvesting, hydro-power generation, tourism, mining, and cottage development.

Lands adjacent to or affecting Tobeatic Wilderness Area are a focus for voluntary complementary management.

Some may serve as functional buffers and connectivity corridors. Management tools and approaches that address biodiversity objectives can be applied with the voluntary cooperation of partners. Such partnership may lead to the identification of ecologically important adjacent lands to apply “best practices”, establish demonstration sites, or initiate land transactions through voluntary sale.

Adjacent lands that are particularly important to Tobeatic Wilderness Area include those with portions of significant natural, cultural, or recreational values not adequately protected within the wilderness area, and those lands that serve an essential function in delivering wilderness area benefits.

The current boundary alignment excludes some significant elements, such as portions of ecosystems, key links for recreation routes, and historic features. Such exclusion creates boundary-related, site-specific issues within the wilderness area, where the values for which the Tobeatic was designated may be diminished or management opportunities not optimized. In some instances, addressing such critical adjacent lands would benefit the protection and management of important values of the wilderness area.

Boundary evaluation, in the context of minimizing potential impacts of adjacent land use, can address site-specific issues related to effective management, and/or improved protection of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Priority Actions

- (a) Work with Crown land managers and industry partners in forestry, tourism, hydro power, mining, and real estate to develop complementary management measures for adjacent lands.
- (b) Work with partners to address landscape-level ecological processes within the region, such as habitat connectivity.
- (c) Develop a boundary evaluation process for the purpose of minimizing potential impacts of adjacent land use on the wilderness area. This process will include an opportunity for public participation, consider a complete range of management tools, and be concluded

within two years of the Minister’s approval of this management plan.



4.3.2 Inholding Lands

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will encourage stewardship by owners of private land inholdings, and assist interested land owners who wish to consider voluntary options for land management that complement the objectives of the wilderness area.

Inholding lands are those parcels surrounded by Tobeatic Wilderness Area, or by the wilderness area and a watercourse. While these lands are not governed by the Wilderness Areas Protection Act, they may contribute to important natural, cultural, or wilderness values of the wilderness area.

At the time of designation in 1998, inholding lands accounted for roughly 820 hectares within Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Through partnerships, the provincial government has acquired significant private land inholdings through voluntary sale. For example, large inholdings at Stewart Brook and Sheepfarm Stillwater, once owned by the Bowater Mersey Paper Company, have been purchased by the Nature Conservancy of Canada in partnership with the province of Nova Scotia. These lands have been designated as part of Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Private land conservation continues to be a priority for Tobeatic Wilderness Area. In this regard, in situations where the owners of inholding lands wish to voluntarily

increase their conservation role, purchase agreements may be considered with interested land owners. Other options such as the development of conservation easements may also address the stewardship interests of private land owners.

Priority Actions

(a) Complete an inholding landowner contact program to provide information to landowners on a range of options including conservation easement and tax incentive opportunities.

(b) Work with landowners to develop and encourage a stewardship role, and create a stewardship recognition program for landowners.

(c) Continue working with the Department of Natural Resources in their role to administer land negotiations and transactions.

(d) Seek funding partners to establish an acquisition fund for purchasing inholdings through voluntary sale.

4.4 Implementation

OBJECTIVE: TO IMPLEMENT PRIORITY ACTIONS USING AN APPROACH OF PARTNERSHIP AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, SUPPORTED BY APPROPRIATE OUTREACH AND ENFORCEMENT, SO THAT THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN ARE FULFILLED IN A TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE MANNER.

4.4.1 Partnership & Public Participation

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will establish opportunities for public participation in future planning, management, and implementation activities, and will work with partners to address priority actions.

Protected area management relies on cooperative solutions to address complex challenges. Partnership is the primary mechanism for implementing this plan and will lead to the most secure and cost-effective long-term solutions with shared benefits for the parties involved.

Likewise, opportunities for public participation help

engage people in planning and management, develop a sense of ownership, and improve awareness of stewardship needs. For Tobeatic Wilderness Area, this approach has been used successfully to provide advice on the development of the management plan.

Active involvement of community partners will be pursued to develop and maintain long-term positive relationships. This will include creating further public participation opportunities and ongoing information exchange.



Priority Actions

(a) Identify and evaluate a full range of partnership-based options for increasing resources to implement the management plan.

(b) Establish partnerships with tourism associations and regional development authorities with an interest in Tobeatic Wilderness Area to develop projects of shared interest, and accrue benefits to local businesses.

(c) Collaborate with First Nations partners to identify cultural values associated with Tobeatic Wilderness Area, support the use of traditional knowledge, and investigate opportunities and provide support for First Nations involvement in aspects of area management.

(d) Participate in regional planning exercises, such as the Department of Natural Resources' integrated

resource management approach for Crown land.

(e) Continue active partnerships with neighbouring corporate partners with an interest in land management and consider new opportunities for corporate partnership.

(f) Collaborate with municipal units to develop and support projects of shared interest related to Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

(g) Participate in the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve and Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute for research, monitoring, education, and training with respect to the conservation and sustainable management.

(h) Evaluate public participation options to support ongoing citizen involvement in management of the Tobeatic.

(i) Develop and implement a wilderness stewardship program to involve users in education, monitoring, and reporting.

(j) Continue active liaison with community groups and the public to involve partners in project development and delivery.

4.4.2 Outreach

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will improve public understanding and appreciation through regular communication, and the development of high quality educational materials to interpret natural and cultural heritage, and provide guidance for wilderness recreation.

Active stewardship can be encouraged and supported by increasing public understanding of the wilderness values and conservation requirements of Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Environmental education, focused on natural history and cultural heritage themes can also benefit Tobeatic Wilderness Area.

Priority Actions

(a) Implement an outreach strategy, building on the “Keep It Wild” campaign, that includes notices and ar-

ticles in local papers, an annual open house workshop, and regular liaison with community groups.

(b) Develop communication materials for wilderness trip planning.

(c) Support the development of interpretation materials for both on-site and off-site programming.

(d) Support the use of Tobeatic Wilderness Area as an outdoor classroom for outdoor and experiential learning.



4.4.3 Compliance and Enforcement

In partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will use a range of tools to address immediate violations and achieve long-term compliance.

The remote nature of Tobeatic Wilderness Area presents unique challenges and relies on a flexible and adaptive enforcement approach to address immediate violations and achieve compliance.

Where appropriate, public participation may be sought to assist in education, monitoring, and reporting. For Tobeatic Wilderness Area, emphasis will be placed on building stewardship through education and awareness. However, all necessary enforcement tools will be employed to protect wilderness area values and ensure compliance.

Priority Actions

(a) Post signs to encourage compliance and ensure public awareness of wilderness area protection measures.

(b) Continue to develop and apply an integrated enforcement approach for Tobeatic Wilderness Area, in partnership with Department of Natural Resources Enforcement Division.

(c) Identify enforcement issues requiring improved tools, such as new regulations or standards, and develop these tools as a priority.

(d) Conduct an annual workshop with enforcement partners to review enforcement priorities.

(e) Work with the Department of Natural Resources and other agencies to provide appropriate information to better meet the specific requirements of wilderness enforcement.

4.4.4 Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will monitor, report and evaluate implementation of the management plan.

Management plan implementation benefits from regular monitoring and evaluation. This helps confirm that anticipated results are achieved, and provides the information required to adapt the management action to improve outcomes. This adaptive management approach includes regular reporting of management actions and results.

Priority Actions

(a) Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of priority actions, and apply measures to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

(b) Host an annual public workshop to report on the implementation of priority actions, share information and solicit public input.

(c) Support an information-sharing network to support collaboration and information exchange. Consideration will be given to existing community-based networks such as the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve Association and Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute to provide this function.

Appendix 1 - Glossary of Terms

Biodiversity

The variety of life, from genes and species to communities, ecosystems, functions, and processes.

Ecological Integrity

Ecological Integrity refers to the capability of an ecosystem to maintain natural processes and the diversity of native species over time. An ecosystem has integrity when its native components and processes are intact, and it is deemed characteristic for its natural region - including the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change, and supporting processes.

Ecosystems

A community of organisms and all of the physical elements of their environment, and the linkages or interactions between them.

Invasive Species

Non-native species that have been moved beyond their natural range as a result of human activity, and may affect resident native species (competition, predation, etc). Also known as alien, exotic or introduced species.

Habitat

The locality, site, and particular type of local environment occupied by an organism.

Natural Processes

Processes that support life, such as solar irradiation, climatic processes, geologic processes, and ecological processes, such as water cycles, fire cycles, wildlife population dynamics.

Restoration

The processes or actions to restore an area or ecosystem to a specified state or condition; may be accomplished through natural processes (passive management) or by human manipulation (active management).

Stewardship

Active involvement in environmental and/or cultural protection that ensures values can be passed on with integrity to those who follow us.

Appendix 2 - Contacts and Additional Information

Information is available in the following publications:

- Keep It Wild - a guide for low impact recreation in Nova Scotia's wilderness areas
- Protecting Wilderness - a Summary of Nova Scotia's Wilderness Areas Protection Act
- Protecting Private Land - nature conservation on private land in Nova Scotia
- Nature Reserves of Nova Scotia - protecting special natural places
- Into the Tobeatic - a guide for planning wilderness travel in Tobeatic Wilderness Area

Wilderness areas are mapped in the Fifth & Sixth Editions of The Nova Scotia Atlas, available in most bookstores.

General Information and Management Inquiries

Nova Scotia Environment & Labour, Protected Areas Branch

60 Logan Road

Bridgewater, NS B4V 3J8

tel; 902-543-4685

www.gov.ns.ca/enla/protectedareas

Wildlife Management Area, Hunting and Trapping Regulations, Forest Fire Index

Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, Regional Services Division

99 High Street Suite 211

Bridgewater, NS B4V 1V8

tel; 902-543-8167

www.gov.ns.ca/natr

Sportfishing Regulations

Nova Scotia Agriculture & Fisheries, Inland Fisheries Division

Box 700

Pictou, NS B0K 1H0

tel; 902-485-5056

www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/sportfishing

National Park Information and Registration

Kejimikujik National Park & National Historic Site of Canada, Visitor Services

Box 236

Maitland Bridge, NS B0T 1B0

tel; 902-682-2772

www.pc.gc.ca

Tourism Information and Vacation Planning

Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture & Heritage

tel; 800-565-0000

www.novascotia.com