

# review

News from the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

## Cleaning up the past to improve our future: NRTEE launches its brownfield redevelopment strategy

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy's brownfield redevelopment strategy was launched February 10 in Ottawa.

Growing out of a mandate announced by the federal Minister of Finance in the December 2001 budget and supporting the federal government's goal to make Canada a world leader in remediation, *Cleaning up the Past, Building the Future: A National Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy for Canada* presents a blueprint for action on redeveloping Canada's brownfields to help build sustainable communities in every province.

"Cleaning up abandoned and contaminated properties, many of them along waterfronts and in the old industrial areas of our cities, is a complex but necessary task,"

explains Angus Ross, chair of the NRTEE brownfields task force. "Not reclaiming these lands detracts from our quality of life and in some cases poses health risks."

“The national strategy on brownfield redevelopment is guided by the following vision: The transformation of Canada's brownfields into economically productive, environmentally healthy and socially vibrant centres of community life, through the coordinated efforts of all levels of government, the private sector and community organizations.”

– Introduction, *Cleaning up the Past, Building the Future*



The blueprint for action on brownfields—sites of decommissioned refineries, empty railway yards, crumbling warehouses, abandoned gas stations, former drycleaners and other properties across Canada where toxic substances may have been used or stored—consists of over 30 recommendations. These recommendations are grouped under three

## Greening the Budget 2003: Achieving a more fully balanced budget

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy has released its annual *Greening of the Budget Submission*.

"This year, our budget submission focuses on creating a more fully balanced budget, one that goes beyond fiscal responsibility and is more about bringing into equilibrium economic, environmental and social objectives," explains Harvey L. Mead, NRTEE Chair.

Keeping in mind that there should not have to be tradeoffs between economic development and improving both the environment and our quality of life, the submission calls for action in four key areas: promoting sustainable communities; improving our understanding of the links between environment and human health; taking care of our natural heritage; and building Canada's knowledge base and capacity for achieving sustainable development, particularly through a set of environmental and sustainable development indicators.

• *New National Round Table Members*

• *Upcoming Publications – In Progress*

• *Nature Conservation Case Studies*

**NRTEE Publications Brochure Inside**

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**Brownfield redevelopment, continued...**  
 strategic directions intended to address the key barriers to brownfield redevelopment: lack of capital to invest in redevelopment, uncertainty surrounding legal liability and poor stakeholder understanding of the issues.

**Strategic Direction 1: Applying strategic public investments to address upfront costs**

Removing tax impediments and providing loans, grants and mortgage guarantees to lever private capital and overcome barriers in the market to accessing capital for the early stages of redevelopment are all proposed under this strategic direction. So is establishing an effective mechanism through which all levels of government can provide financial incentives to qualifying redevelopment projects.

**Strategic Direction 2: Establishing an effective public policy regime for environmental liability and risk management**

Since effective liability protection for participants in brownfield redevelopment is crucial, proposals under this strategic direction emphasize providing all participants in redevelopment with a coordinated and solid public policy regime to bring greater certainty and efficiency to questions of liability and risk management.

**Strategic Direction 3: Building capacity for and community awareness of brownfield redevelopment**

Successful brownfield redevelopment projects are built around community awareness, sup-

port and skills, and that is what the recommendations under this strategic direction seek to bolster.

**Public benefits of brownfield redevelopment are estimated to be between \$4.6 and \$7 billion annually. To find out more about how these financial benefits were calculated, consult our Web site.**



Specific recommendations under these three strategic directions include, for example, amendments to the *Income Tax Act* to create tax credits for investors, provincial or territorial legislation providing for termination of civil liability after the expiry of an applicable limitation period, and targeted funding for Technology Partnerships Canada to develop and demonstrate new remediation technologies.

*Cleaning up the Past, Building the Future* also includes case studies of brownfield redevelopment projects in Canada, descriptions of international activities, a summary analysis of the impact of brownfield redevelopment on the Canadian economy, a look at brownfield redevelopment policy instruments and a policy toolkit.

The brownfield task force includes representatives from across the country, all three levels of government and a broad range of sectors.

The NRTEE is calling for a flexible, phased-in approach to implementation of the national strategy. ■

**Cleaning up: Moncton Shops Project**

The initial estimate for cleanup of 285 acres in downtown Moncton, New Brunswick was up to \$100 million, but it looks like the actual cost for the five-year Moncton Shops Project begun in 1997 was between \$12 million and \$15 million.

The land, site of the former Canadian National Railways repair shops, was used for industrial purposes for almost a century. It now holds a recreation complex with four NHL-size hockey rinks. Outside there are soccer fields, football fields and 10 baseball diamonds. Construction began last September for the first commercial building in a technology park that will take a decade to complete. Plans are also in the works for hundreds of residential units on the site.

— *Cleaning up the Past, Building the Future.*

**Greening of the Budget, continued...**



Recommendations range from creating stable funding for urban transit and stimulating investor interest in the redevelopment of contaminated industrial sites to coming up with a strategy for a national network of marine protected areas.

These recommendations are based on the NRTEE's work on urban communities, brownfield redevelopment, nature conservation, and environment and sustainable development indicators. They are the result of multistakeholder processes involving diverse groups of participants.

Many of the recommendations also build on priorities highlighted in the federal government's most recent Speech from the Throne, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting innovation and productivity, providing opportunities for Aboriginal communities and improving the health of Canadians.

The annual *Greening of the Budget Submission* is one of the key ways the Round Table meets its mandate of giving policy advice to the federal government on promoting sustainable development. ■

The NRTEE has a Virtual Library section on its Web site ([www.nrtee-trnee.ca](http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca)) allowing access to over 300 NRTEE documents and publications that are organized into easy to search categories including: natural resources, community awareness, atmospheric issues, greening government policy, and health.

# Nature conservation case studies: *What makes a project really work?*

Looking at case studies of nature conservation projects in Canada provides valuable lessons on best practices, and NRTEE has just completed eight such studies.

These case studies are part of its Conservation of Natural Heritage program, launched in May 2001 to support development of new conservation tools and to encourage Canadians to undertake stewardship of public and private land and water. They will form part of a *State of the Debate* report on nature conservation scheduled to be released later this year.

The case studies demonstrate that for a nature conservation project to really work, it must have a clear purpose, engage all sectors and devote adequate resources to decision making.

To prepare the case studies, the NRTEE project team reviewed available information, then conducted interviews with representatives of key sectors involved in each initiative, including government, First Nations, industry, NGOs and community representatives.

Each case study describes a completed or ongoing project, outlines barriers and bridges to its progress, reports on results and discusses lessons learned.

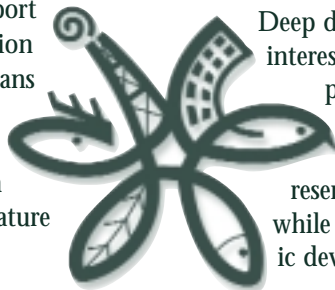
## Eastern Scotian Shelf Integrated Management Project

Announced late in 1998, this federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) project is one of the first integrated management initiatives launched under the 1997 *Oceans Act*. The project aims to develop and implement an integrated management plan for the entire offshore shelf area, where activities include fisheries, oil and gas development, maritime defence, scientific research, recreation and tourism, plus marine conservation.

## Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve

Clayoquot Sound is located on the west coast of Vancouver Island. For decades it was a flashpoint in the clashes between environmental interests and forest companies.

Deep divisions among competing interests eventually led, in 2000, to parts of Clayoquot Sound being designated a UNESCO biosphere reserve. These reserves promote conservation while fostering sustainable economic development.



## Lands for Life (L4L) Process

The Ontario government launched the L4L process in 1997 in response to public demand for better land use planning and wilderness protection. The L4L area included almost half the province. The outcome was Ontario's Living Legacy, announced in 1999. L4L has resulted in significant new protected areas in Ontario's most contested areas, but also demonstrates the challenges of managing land use amid competing demands.

## Pacific Estuary Conservation Program (PECP)

Over 400 estuaries along the British Columbia coast provide crucial habitat for a wide range of wildlife, including millions of birds. The PECP, created in 1987, is a partnership of government and NGOs that seeks to protect this habitat through land acquisition, preservation and stewardship. In 1999, PECP won the first international Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award.

## Yukon Protected Areas Strategy (YPAS)

Approved by the Yukon territorial government in 1998, YPAS aims to develop a complete network of protected areas in the territory. In 2000, YPAS was reviewed due to severe criticism of its initial implementa-

tion, and the strategy is being modified as a result of this review. An examination of YPAS underlines the role of land claims in conservation.

## Manitoba Mining Sector Consultation

For the past four years, the mining industry has been working with government and conservation interests in Manitoba to identify lands that should be protected from mining and other ecologically harmful activities. So far, over 50 areas have been recommended for protection and eight parks have been created.

## Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (M-KMA)

This area of northeastern British Columbia, traditionally used by First Nations for hunting, gathering and fishing, is one of North America's largest intact wilderness territories south of the 60th parallel. M-KMA is a valuable model for conservation planning and design, providing a comprehensive approach to conservation through a combination of core protected areas, special management zones and reclamation practices.

## Vuntut National Park

Officially established in 1995, this park is located in the northwestern corner of Yukon Territory in the ancestral territory of the Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation. The idea for the park arose during negotiation of the Vuntut Gwitch'in land claim. The park has the highest ecological integrity rating among Canada's national parks, and is an example of successful community engagement in a major conservation initiative.

These 10- to 15-page case studies are available on our Web site at [www.nrtee-trnee.ca](http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca). Please note that our site has a printer-friendly function that makes printing our materials easier. ■

## Introducing the Newest NRTEE Members

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy welcomes five members appointed in October by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

Since 1982, **Louis Archambault**, from Montreal, Quebec, has been President and CEO of Groupe-conseil Entraco Inc., which specializes in environmental studies. He has 25 years of experience in environmental policy and environmental project management.

**Katherine M. Bergman**, originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba, has written extensively on geological matters. She teaches in the Department of Geology and is Dean of Science at the University of Regina, where she has worked since 1992.

**William J. Borland**, from New Brunswick, is Director of Environmental Affairs for JD Irving Limited in Saint John and also sits on a provincial round table on the environment and the economy. He is currently the Chair of the Canadian Water Network.

In 1998, **Linda Louella Inkpen**, from St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, is a Member of the Order of Canada. She has been a physician in private practice since 1975, and also teaches in the Faculty of Medicine at Memorial University.

**Diane Frances Malley**, from Winnipeg, Manitoba, has worked on environmental and sustainable development issues, particularly in the area of aquatic ecosystems. She is President and owner of PDK Projects Inc. and teaches in the Department of Botany at the University of Manitoba. ■

## In Progress

NRTEE has a number of major publications scheduled to be released in spring and summer 2003. Watch for *State of the Debate* reports on environment and sustainable development indicators, urban sustainability, and nature conservation in Canada. NRTEE members are also hitting the road in the fall for two separate cross-country tours on urban sustainability and nature conservation. More details will be included in upcoming issues.

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