Watershed Working Group

Minutes for November 3rd, 2025 Meeting on Q&A with NSECC

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (online)

Attendees: Brieanna Limkilde, Chris White, Megan Poulton, Matthew Nettle, Patricia Manuel, Natalija Vojno, Michael Fabiano, Kelly Schnare, Karen Robinson

Regrets: Anna McCaron, Shanna Fredericks, Elizabeth Montgomery, Sheri MacNeil

Notes:

Welcome and Introductions

- Matt spoke with Nova Scotia Salmon Association. Apparently a Watershed Alliance similar to PEI's was previously considered in NS. There are concerns that this proposal will duplicate the effort/compete with the Adopt-a-Stream program.
    - Someone should meet with them in next 1-2 weeks to try and get on same page
- Sandy Lake - Sackville RIver is a good case study showing why there is a need for a NS Watershed Alliance to fill roles not currently filled by existing programs like Adopt-a-Stream
- Use time to describe PEI Watershed Alliance and the strides the Water Caucus has made in establishing a cohesive body of watershed groups in NS, survey results summary,
    - Be prepared for them to cite Adopt-a-Stream
- Be sure to link our discussion/question to NSECC mandate
    - Why would they want to fund it?
    - What are their pain points? How would funding address some of those?
- Make them understand how committed Nova Scotians are to protecting water, doing it on shoestring budget
    - NSECC should not just acknowledge this symbolically, but materially
    - We acknowledge the need for economic development, but we can still protect watersheds too
- Avoid yes/no questions
    - How can NSECC help
- Minister Halman is genuinely interested in the environment
    - Karen has had encouraging experiences with him, but his environmentalism tends to get lost in politics
- Lead 1-pager with problem statement and NS focus, talk about PEI later in 1-pager
- Chris to ask NSECC tomorrow about what is the right approach to establish relationship/conversation going forward
    - Maybe the 1-pager is more appropriate for a future meeting
- We should explicitly state that we are meeting regularly (hours met in 2025) and we are functionally organized with staff support
    - Get some numbers on meetings, volunteer capacity and contributions

- All agree to take a more generalized approach on Nov 25 without proposing specific funding models
    - Chris will draft a question here and ask for feedback from the group
    - Anna, Sheri, Elizabeth, and Shanna in particular may have input but could not attend today

Meeting chat
12:12:05 From Brie Limkilde to Everyone:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hTg2o6B9cXdKsxzbqaPVZUQLY_yLPVtNuDlrkv1XTMc/edit?usp=sharing

12:31:21 From Natalija Vojno to Everyone:
To build support, letting them know that the intention is for a larger sum of dedicated annual funding for partners such as watershed associations.

12:33:32 From Patricia Manuel to Everyone:
I agree Chris - we should focus on letting the minister know of the scope of the effort that community-based watershed groups engage in, and their enormity of their contribution to water protection in NS

12:34:02 From Natalija Vojno to Everyone:
Folks in Alberta recently did a GR training for Meetings with Ministers. I can put some of those resources in the one-pager now.

12:35:42 From Kelly #RAH2050 to Everyone:
I would ask for clarity review on the one pager from the PEI watershed alliance

12:36:14 From Brie Limkilde to Everyone:
Sorry Megan thought it was you! haha

12:36:48 From Kelly #RAH2050 to Everyone:
I think a question would include what information would you like past to survey results to be able to have a meaningful discussion on funding for a NS watershed alliance

12:41:06 From Natalija Vojno to Everyone:
Something of interest to him, the Bill he introduced:
https://nslegislature.ca/legislative-business/bills-statutes/bills/assembly-65-session-1/bill-146

12:41:10 From NSEN to Everyone:
from NSECC website:

Our priorities are:
helping build a strong economy and thriving communities throughout the province

protecting the environment and human health through environmental assessment and operational approvals
helping lead the transition to a clean economy
continuing to help make the province resilient to climate change
modernizing the province's ambient air quality standards and air emission targets to help industry meet the standards and make sure the province has clean, healthy air
supporting human health and wellbeing by protecting more land and water through protected areas designations and by continuing to fund the work of private land trust organizations

12:47:46 From Chris White - NSEN to Everyone:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ERtdhCgdz6Zx0Tv4tZvRpZdl21dpXTvAmADqQzbLlGg/edit?tab=t.0

12:47:57 From Chris White - NSEN to Everyone:
^^ working doc for NSECC question

12:48:57 From Chris White - NSEN to Everyone:
Proceedings from 2022 meeting with Halman
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5df030303aa64411141a84e2/t/62826ac3b3a6f832a2bfc8f0/1652714179885/2022+NSEN-NSECC+Meeting+Proceedings.pdf

12:51:00 From Natalija Vojno to Everyone:
Possible reframing on a question:

The atmospheric river in Nova Scotia in 2023 resulted in over $170 million in insured losses whereas every dollar invested in action now avoids more than $17 in future damages.
Can a report be funded on the costs and opportunities of watershed management in the province? We would like to explore a model for securing dedicated funding that learns from the success of the PEI Watershed Alliance.
Thank you for your consideration. We too wish for our communities to grow and urge you to consider that the average sale price of homes in flooded communities is 8.2% lower with more days on the market.

12:51:33 From Matthew Nettle to Everyone:
Thanks for the clarification I hadn't noticed that was just part of the round table

12:55:09 From Megan Poulton - NSEN to Everyone:
the survey officially closed today so she will fill that in soon

12:57:52 From Kelly #RAH2050 to Everyone:
We should explicitly state that we are meeting regularly (hours met in 2025) and we are functionally organized with staff support

13:02:46 From Megan Poulton - NSEN to Chris White - NSEN (direct message):
do you want to stay on just a minute after the meeting ends?

13:02:57 From Natalija Vojno to Everyone:
In addition to stating the size of your coalition. Perhaps adding 2-3 sentences on the types of projects, events, impact and reach you have at the top of the one pager.

Summary of Action Items

- ☐ Someone needs to meet with Nova Scotia Salmon Association by Nov 18
- ☐ Chris to draft question for Minister Halman and send out for feedback
- ☐ Chris to ask NSECC staff about best approach regarding 1-pager
- ☐ Resume work on 1-pager after Chris gets feedback