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Weather: Windsor, October 20th 2009 / 6°C / Wind: 4 Km/h / Humidity: 81 %

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Uranium ban to become law

CAPE and Council support new legislation

by Nadine Armstrong/Hants Journal

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Article online since October 15th 2009, 11:09

By Nadine Eagles-Harvie A moratorium on exploration and mining of uranium in Nova Scotia will be made law.

The province introduced legislation Oct. 14, to entrench a uranium ban that had been in effect since 1981.



Citizens Action to Protect the Environment (CAPE) president Barbara Gallagher said she was thrilled to hear the announcement. "Our group has worked to bring this issue to the attention of the public and we are extremely pleased that this government has followed through on that promise."

She notes the Municipality of West Hants has been supportive of the CAPE's efforts to lobby for this legislation. In 2008 West Hants Municipal Council were unanimous in their objection to uranium exploration and mining in the province and demanded the provincial government create a legislation which would permanently ban those activities in Nova Scotia.



CAPE president Barbara Gallagher and West Hants Warden Richard Dauphinee had discussed the benefits of supporting a ban on uranium exploration and mining in Nova Scotia during a 2008 sitting of council. Hants Journal file photo.

Councillor Shirley Pineo had said at the July sitting of council that although the moratorium on uranium exploration has served its purpose, it was time to legislate a permanent ban.

Gallagher said this legislation would afford more protection for all Nova Scotians. "We need this kind of long-term protection for both human health and the environment."

The legislation contains three key elements:

- prohibiting exploration for, or mining of, uranium in Nova Scotia
- allowing mining of uranium that is encountered in the course of mining other minerals as long as the uranium is present in quantities less than the designated threshold value of .01 per cent by weight
- allowing radiometric or other normal exploration techniques to be used in exploration for other minerals

Natural Resource Minister John MacDonell said the legislation would send a clear message to the mineral industry and all Nova Scotians regarding government's long-term intentions with respect to uranium.

"We will legislate this moratorium because it is what Nova Scotians want," said Natural Resources Minister John MacDonell. "This measure responds to the concerns that Nova Scotians have expressed over the mining of uranium in our province."

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- **yes**
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