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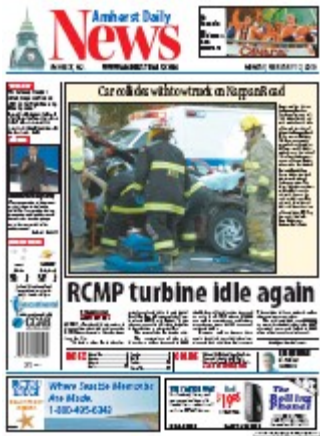
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Last updated at 10:56 PM on 03/02/10

Province buys county land

DARRELL COLE
The Amherst Daily News

HALIFAX - Just over 3,600 hectares of land in Cumberland County has been purchased by the province as it works to reach economic and environmental goals.

The land, in 21 parcels ranging from two to 759 hectares, is part of a purchase agreement with the J. D. Irving forestry company for 25,300 hectares of land in Cumberland, Annapolis, Digby and Yarmouth counties.

"The province has acquired some nice properties in Cumberland County. It includes a long stretch of wilderness coastline along the Bay of Fundy and important lands at the Isthmus of Chignecto near the Town of Amherst water supply," Chris Miller, national manager of wilderness conservation and climate change with the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, said Wednesday.

CPAWS has been pushing the province for the creation of more protected spaces including the development of a wilderness area on lands in and around the Chignecto Game Sanctuary. It has also supportive of the creation of another wilderness area around the isthmus.

Miller calls the purchase an important step that means more public land is being created for all Nova Scotians to enjoy and means more places for wilderness and nature.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. If these lands were picked up by private developers or land speculators, then these important wilderness areas would have been lost to the public forever," said Miller. "

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The land will support wilderness protection, heritage conservation, tourism, recreation, community use, fishing, hunting and potential Mi'kmaq uses. Some of the land will help protect jobs in the forestry industry in rural Nova Scotia.

Among the local parcels are pieces of land along the Cumberland Basin at Shulie as well as land in behind Springhill between Rodney and Wyvern and at Long Lake.

The sale may also be bad news for a number of people who leased camps from Irving. Those impacted were notified last month by the forestry company that they would have to remove their camps. An official with the Natural Resources Department said in January that the province is not interested in getting into lease arrangements.

Natural Resources Minister John MacDonell said the government is making a sound investment.

"Economically, an investment in land is always smart. This deal will give Nova Scotia a greater chance to lease land to enhance forestry activities, help municipalities protect their water supplies, and provide wilderness recreation spaces for tourism and health," MacDonel said in a news release.

Of the land purchased, about half will support economic development, recreation activities and potential Mi'kmaq uses. The remaining land has higher conservation values and will be a focus for environmental protection, which could also develop into economic advantages.

The purchase is expected to help the province meet its goal of protecting 12 per cent of Nova Scotia's land mass by 2015. Currently, 8.5 per cent of the province's land mass is protected.

Detailed protection decisions will be made over the next few years as part of the province's broader protected areas planning process, which will include opportunities for involvement by the public and interested groups.

The province confirmed in early January that it intended to buy the land, for \$40 million from its \$75 million budget for large land purchases.

dcole@amherstdaily.com



Comments:

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kurt from ns writes: A great investment if the province had ample money to play with, ER's closed at local hospitals, roads !!?, the ditches are smoother in places, agriculture in decline, local food security in peril. Money well spent , Irvings need the help anyway,, now? can farmers who have lost everything live in tarpaper shacks on this land?? and hunt rabbits for sustenance. Yes I'm a bit ticked

Posted 04/02/2010 at 8:54 AM | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to comment](#)

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Ron Jeremy from Amherst, NS writes: That was my reaction too. The NDP quickly gave \$300 million to universities and spend more on buying land. This created a big deficit already. Yet they wont give a nickel to unionized employees and they let the jail go to another riding in order to gain political advantage. Waste of my vote for sure.

Posted 04/02/2010 at 9:51 AM | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to comment](#)

Steve from Amherst, Nova Scotia writes: I'd like to know why this buy back of land is so important right now. As the two previous comments pointed out, there are much needed investments in other parts of our system. I highly suspect something is going to come of this, something like selling the wood to the states or even selling the land to a US company. I hope people are watching closely what happens to this land in the following years.

Posted 04/02/2010 at 10:19 AM | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to comment](#)

Jamie Hicks from Oxford .NS, Nova Scotia writes: Great response everyone !!! I am glad there are more than just me that realizes what is going on !!! It's really disgusting news for many of citizens of Cumberland . As said before pretty soon there will be no land to use for anything but take pictures of from the outside in .

I am positive there are other more important issues for the NDP government to look at spending money on ..

I recently sat in on a meeting with Mr Scabar in Springhill about this exact thing and with 17 members of our group around the table asking questions about the proposed WA ,,we were all on edge to hear what he had to say about Cumberland Wilderness and their efforts to make them WA's We took it as if he was in favor of them. I know I sure did , I and many members walked away from that meeting pretty discouraged .

They keep using this saying more means for Nova Scotians to enjoy ,,,,,,,,but how do they justify it when most are not in favor of these parcels of property being labeled as WA ????

After government has their hands on it ,,well look out Peter Labore mentioned I quote DOE has to abide by all stipulations and follow protocol as stated in the WA Act but if need be we can go to the courts to justify any means to change them !!!

Well there that just goes to show you nothing is ever concrete there will always be ways around things for them . They just have to get their hands on it first !!!!!

When will this stopit will not if they get their own way we will just keep losing and losing ..

Posted 04/02/2010 at 1:18 PM | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to comment](#)

Chris newman from amherst, NS writes: Sometimes you have to make a wrong right!!! I'd like to remind everyone that the land was previously owned by private wood land owners, who allowed people to hunt, fish, hike with their families and build camps on a hand shake. When JD Irving purchased this same land, they too honored the same principles. Now who would have thought our own tax dollars' would be used to evict us from our havens. We have spent decades enjoying these wooded areas and thousands of dollars on our camps. welcoming anyone and everyone who happened by.

Most of the people making these decisions have never been far enough away from a Tim Horton's to realize the magnitude of what we have lost in this land purchase. Lets keep this simple DNR, permit the existing camps to purchase their land if they so please. It is the honorable thing to do.

Posted 04/02/2010 at 3:57 PM | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to comment](#)

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