

Stewardship Agreement Process

Any municipality, corporation, landowner or individual can inquire about becoming involved in wildlife and habitat stewardship by contacting the Stewardship Section of the Wildlife Division. If stewardship staff are aware your community contains significant populations of wildlife, special areas of wetland/coastal habitat, or species at risk, we may approach you to gauge your interest in acting to conserve wildlife and its habitat.

Step 1. Conduct site visits: Surveys of the area of interest are conducted by stewardship staff to determine the extent, ownership and biodiversity of the land in question.

Step 2. Proposal draft, presentation, review and acceptance: Once conservation area boundaries are agreed upon, a proposal is presented to the community, individual or corporation for review. When all parties are satisfied, the proposal is accepted. We encourage public involvement at this stage.

Step 3. Stewardship agreement signing: Stewardship Agreements are usually signed at a public ceremony. Agreements are incorporated within municipal planning documents and ensure the habitat for waterfowl, sea ducks, and associated wildlife is not forgotten by decision makers and residents when future land use planning decisions arise. Public commitment helps to ensure the goal

of maintaining or even enhancing wildlife and its habitat for future generations is not lost.

Step 4. Habitat Conservation Plan development, review and signing: Stewardship staff assists the signing body in preparing a Habitat Conservation Plan. This plan offers best management practices and will provide recommendations, project ideas, and best management advice for conserving, enhancing and/or managing habitat for the benefit of the wildlife that depends on it.

Step 5. Implementation of the Habitat Conservation Plan: This plan further sets out how the agreement signatories are to maintain and comply with the stewardship agreement over time. It also sets out, as appropriate, projects for habitat enhancement, restoration, and environmental education. The new stewardship town, corporation or individual implements the plan at its own pace and based on its individual interests and capacity, with assistance from stewardship staff if and where needed.

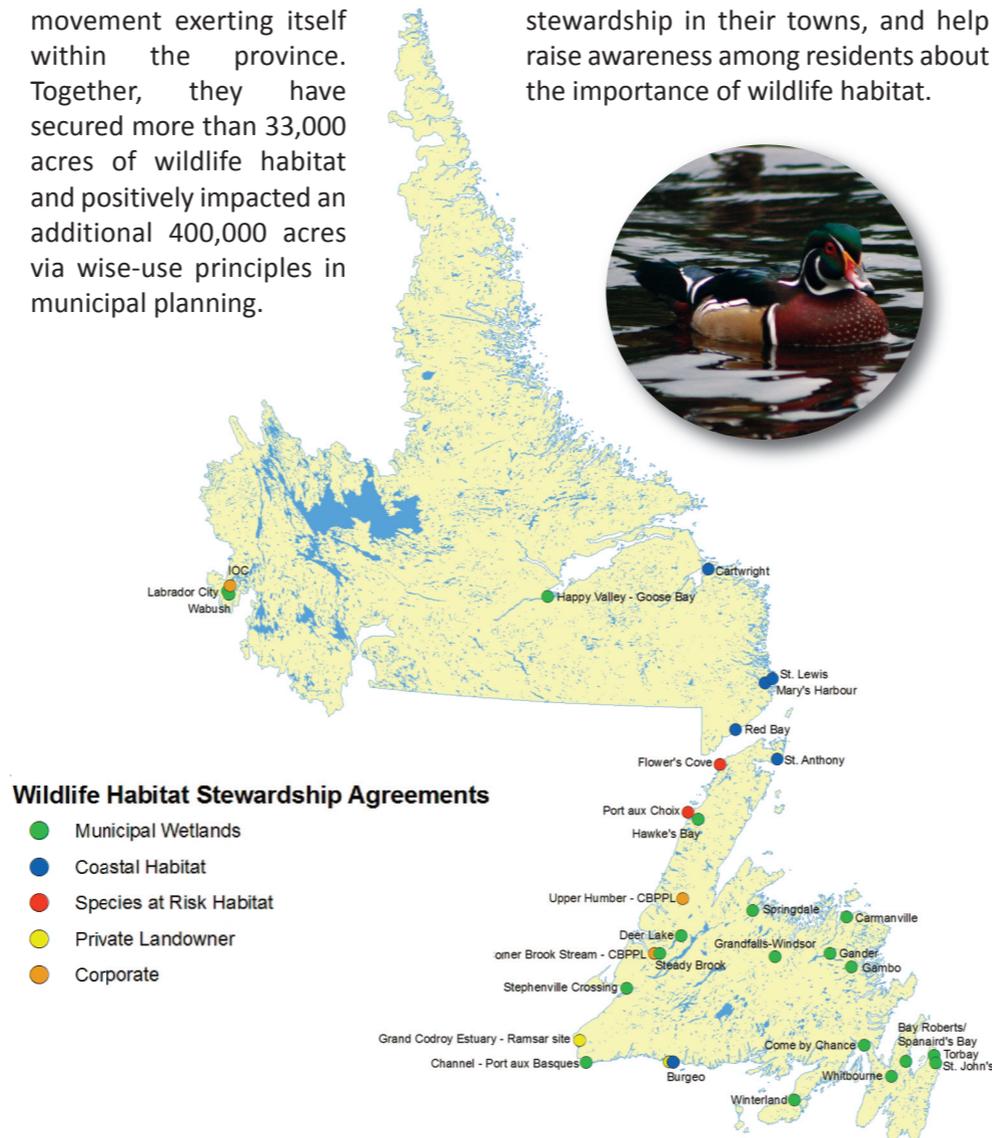
For more information, contact:
**Environment and Conservation
 Wildlife Division
 Stewardship and Education Section**
(709) 637-2025
<http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/wildlife/stewardship/index>

Stewardship Success

As of 2011, 26 municipalities, two corporate bodies and a number of private landowners in several communities have signed Stewardship Agreements with the province.

Collectively, these individuals, communities and corporations represent a significant conservation movement exerting itself within the province. Together, they have secured more than 33,000 acres of wildlife habitat and positively impacted an additional 400,000 acres via wise-use principles in municipal planning.

The municipalities that have signed stewardship agreements have formed an incorporated organization called the **Stewardship Association of Municipalities Inc. (SAM)**, which holds regular meetings hosted by the member communities. Members are actively involved in the promotion of wetland, coastal and species at risk stewardship in their towns, and help raise awareness among residents about the importance of wildlife habitat.



Wildlife & Habitat Stewardship

in Newfoundland & Labrador

Wetlands

Coasts

Species at Risk



Ours to Protect



Wildlife & Habitat Stewardship

Newfoundland and Labrador's Wildlife Division implements a Stewardship Program that partners with municipalities, corporations and private landowners to conserve significant wildlife habitat.

The program's primary objective is to help communities, developers and landowners become more aware of the value of wildlife habitat within their jurisdictions, and to empower them to conserve and enhance these areas. This conservation ethic leads to more informed, development-related decision making, which prevents negative impacts within designated habitats and minimizes potential negative impacts on wildlife habitat and local ecosystems as a whole. The support of like-minded people across the province serves to make a meaningful difference to wildlife habitat conservation and helps to ensure the resources we enjoy today will be sustained and available for future generations.



When a municipality, corporation or individual becomes interested in conserving valuable wildlife habitat through the Stewardship Program, they make a formal public commitment with the province to act together to conserve the habitat by signing a Stewardship Agreement. Such an agreement effectively outlines the commitment of a community, individual or corporation to protect the wetland, coastal, or species at risk habitat identified within or adjacent to a community's planning boundaries.

The **Newfoundland and Labrador Stewardship Program** owes much of its success and history to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). This plan outlines long-term objectives of ensuring the survival and increase of North American waterfowl populations by, in part, protecting the habitat on which their survival depends. A number of joint ventures across North America, ranging from species to regional specificity, have been established to achieve and implement the objectives of the NAWMP. In 1989, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador became a partner of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV), joining Canada's eastern provinces including Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

In NL, the EHJV program is administered through the provincial Wildlife Division under the Department of Environment and Conservation. Local contributors include Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

EHJV partners recognize the positive impact this approach is having on conserving habitat, not just for all avian species, but also for biodiversity in general, since wetlands and coastlines form some of our most ecologically diverse areas.

Wetland Stewardship

Wetland Stewardship focuses on conservation of wetland and associated uplands that support waterfowl populations; in particular, breeding and staging habitat. Most stakeholders that have signed Wetland Stewardship Agreements are municipalities that manage significant amounts of wetland habitat within their municipal planning boundaries, but corporations and individual landowners are also involved. The first such agreement was signed by the Town of Whitbourne in 1993.



Coastal Stewardship

Coastal Stewardship can develop or reinforce an existing conservation ethic within the residents of communities who have had an historic association with the ocean and its coastline. Municipal Coastal Habitat Stewardship Agreements signed to date focus on conservation of seabirds, sea ducks (namely Common Eider) and the surrounding coastal habitat.



Coastal stewardship often addresses activities in marine habitat that may be beyond the direct planning jurisdiction of a particular community. Several species of sea duck in the province, including Common Eider, nest on coastal islands where they raise their young on the nearby shoals. Coastal stewardship focuses on maintaining and/or enhancing this important habitat.

With the support of the signing community, the concept of stewardship is encouraged in resource users in an effort to increase conservation of coastal wildlife via residents implementing "wise use" principles during their everyday resource use activities. The first such agreement was signed by the Town of St. Anthony in 2008.

Species at Risk Stewardship

Species at risk stewardship aims to help municipalities, corporations, developers, and landowners become more aware of the presence and value of species at risk and supporting habitat that may be found within their jurisdictions, and to then empower them to take action to conserve these species and their habitat.

Agreements have been signed with municipalities and individuals that own or influence significant habitat important to species at risk. Some of these species at risk include Piping Plover, Harlequin Duck and Red Knot; Banded Killifish; and Limestone Barrens plants such as Barrens Willow, Long's Braya and Fernald's Braya. The program also has the opportunity to positively impact habitat for rare species that may not be formally considered species at risk, and therefore help to prevent them from becoming further at risk.

Species at risk stewardship has benefited communities by building a sense of pride in the habitat and species they are protecting, building a local identity as a "species at risk town," and increasing the public's knowledge of species at risk and nature in general. The first such agreement was signed by the Town of Flower's Cove in 2002.

