

Habitat Conservation Plan for the Municipality of New-Wes-Valley



Photo: Newtown, New-Wes-Valley (staff photo)

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Preface

In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) some of the wildlife habitat that is in greatest danger of being negatively impacted is found within municipal planning boundaries. In this province, the primary focus of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV) is to conserve such valuable wildlife habitat through Stewardship Agreements. The municipality of New-Wes-Valley was identified as having ecologically valuable and unique habitat located within and adjacent to its Planning Area and first signed a Habitat Stewardship Agreement in 2017 to protect two special places in town, Business Pond and Queen's Meade, Newtown.

The intent of this proposed Expansion Agreement (attached as Appendix A) and this Habitat Conservation Plan is to indicate the municipality's support for the long-term conservation of additional areas of important wildlife habitat found within municipal planning boundaries. The agreement also provides guidance in relation to managing possible future activities which could impact the designated Conservation Areas.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following partners for their support in the continued implementation and activities of the Habitat Stewardship Program: Stewardship Association of Municipalities Inc, Environment Canada and Climate Change, United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

Plan Objectives

- (1) To present an assessment of the habitats and wildlife species designated for conservation.
- (2) To recommend protection and enhancement strategies which will maintain and/or increase wildlife use in designated Conservation Areas.
- (3) To describe potential engagement initiatives designed to increase Council and public awareness of the value of 'their' habitat for conserving wildlife.
- (4) To empower Council and Municipal residents to conserve these habitats through informed development decision-making with the support of residents.

Section 1: Habitat Conservation in Newfoundland and Labrador

Human development has resulted in the destruction or alteration of many types of habitats all over the world. The number and diversity of North America's wildlife species has been declining over the latter half of the twentieth century. Natural wildlife habitats are regularly lost to urban, industrial, and agricultural expansion.

Recognizing the importance of habitat conservation to waterfowl populations, in 1986 Canada and the United States (later followed by Mexico) signed the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). This committed these countries to a long-term partnership to protect wetland habitats. Twenty-four 'joint ventures' have been subsequently established across North America to achieve the objectives of NAWMP. The province of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) formally committed to its participation in the **Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV)** in 1989.

The **EHJV (ehjv.ca)** conserves, enhances, and restores wildlife habitat for birds found across the six eastern Canadian provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, PEI, and NL. Each province implements the partnership slightly differently, with each provincial program coordinated by a separate program manager and involving the cooperation of international partners, including government agencies and non-governmental conservation groups. In NL, the program is administered by the provincial Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (Wildlife Division). Other NL partners include the Stewardship Association of Municipalities, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service (a branch of Environment and Climate Change Canada), Intervale Associates Inc and the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

As its primary contribution to the EHJV in NL, the provincial Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture created a "municipal habitat stewardship program" to help municipalities conserve important wildlife habitat found within planning boundaries. The program signs formal agreements with municipalities so that when future land use decisions are made, the value of that wildlife habitat will not be forgotten and that future activities will not have negative impacts on the lands ability to sustain wildlife. Since 1993, over forty municipalities have signed Municipal Habitat Stewardship Agreements in NL becoming important links in a chain of conservation areas in NL and indeed, across North America (Figure 1).

The municipality of New-Wes-Valley first signed a Habitat Stewardship Agreement in 2017, which conserves important wetlands within the planning boundary, namely Business Pond and Queens Meade, totalling 459 hectares. Since this time, New-Wes-Valley municipal council and staff have remained committed to this agreement and become an active member of the Stewardship Association of Municipalities Inc. Through this expansion proposal, the municipality would agree to the conservation of additional important wildlife habitat found within its planning boundaries. This expanded commitment would also demonstrate the municipality's leadership across

the province in habitat conservation. It is an opportunity to further foster a community of conservation stewards not just within the municipality of New-Wes-Valley, but across the province, and acknowledge the important benefits of environmental protection in a public way.

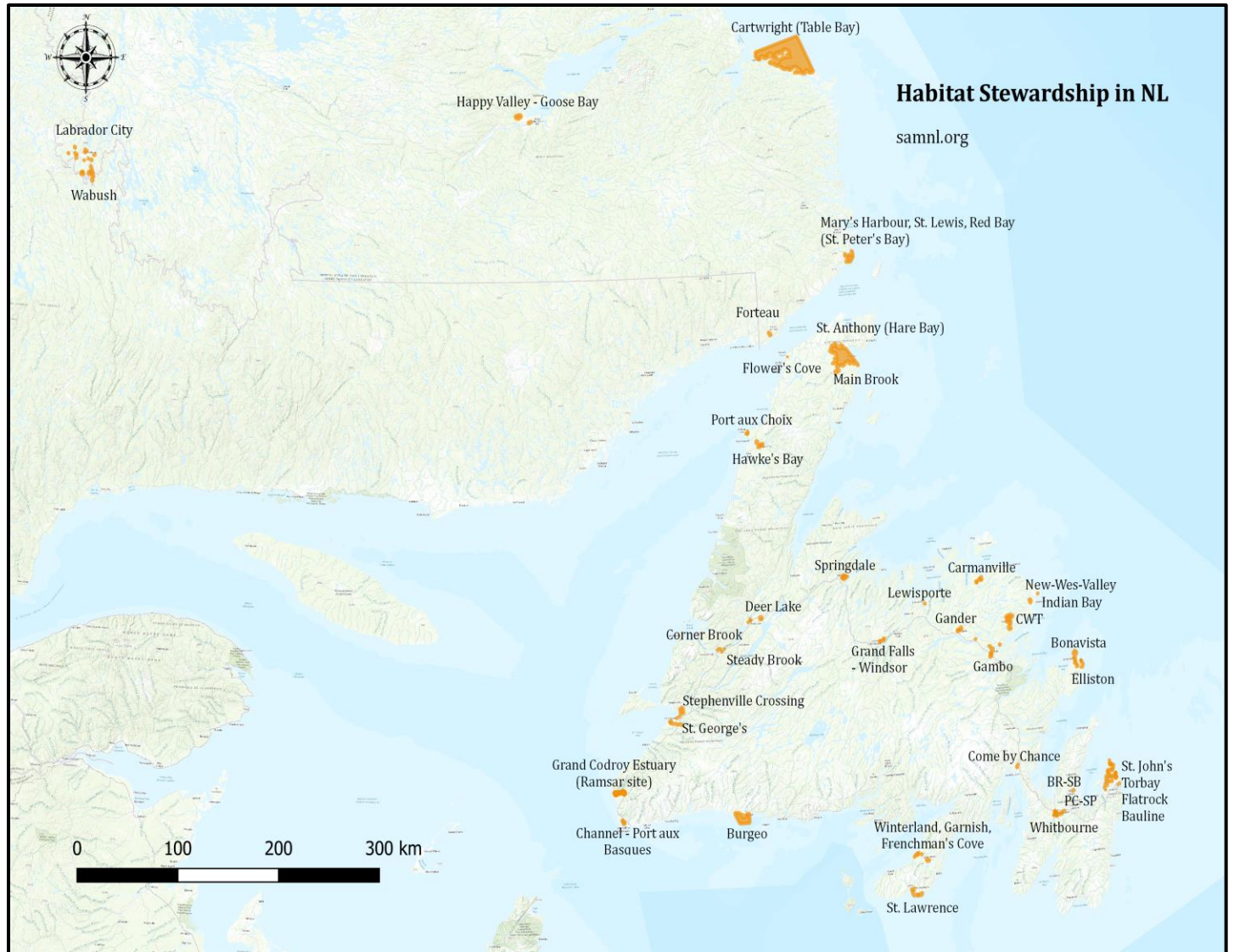


Figure 1- Municipal Habitat Stewardship Agreements across Newfoundland and Labrador

Roles of Habitat Stewardship Agreement Signatories

When the Stewardship Agreement was signed, each signatory committed to certain responsibilities:

The Province: The NL Department of Fisheries, Forestry, and Agriculture, through its Wildlife Division, would be expected to:

- Write a Habitat Conservation Plan in consultation with the Municipality (this plan).
- Work with the municipality of New-Wes-Valley on the review of any future developments which would impact the designated Conservation Areas.
- Support Council and local groups in implementing the Habitat Conservation Plan; often with the partners of the NL Eastern Habitat Joint Venture. This can include assisting in carrying out, where appropriate, wildlife and habitat conservation education, restoration or enhancement projects.

The Municipality: The municipality of New-Wes-Valley and its Mayor and Council would be expected to:

- Ensure that the designated wildlife habitat areas (“Conservation Areas”) are protected from destruction or degradation; the municipality is to contact the EHJV Program Manager at the Wildlife Division (contact info on Page 2) in a timely manner to allow a 30-day written review of proposed development activities.
- Incorporate the Habitat Conservation Plan concepts into the municipality of New-Wes-Valley next Municipal Plan update centrally through appropriate zoning and associated development regulations.
- Implement over time, and as opportunities allow, the Habitat Conservation Plan in the community with the assistance of the NL EHJV partners.
- Participate, as capacity allows, in the activities of the Stewardship Association of Municipalities (SAM) Inc.

Section 2: Wildlife habitat in the municipality of New-Wes-Valley

The Eastern Hyper-Ocean Barrens, the habitat type and ecozone of NWV, is a fragmented landscape bordered by rocky coastlines with a flat to gently rolling elevation fluctuation between sea level and approximately 200 metres land elevation. The proximity to the ocean strongly defines the climate as this area often experiences cool summers, mild winters, and a greater frequency of fog. The soils of this area are mainly defined as organic fibrisols, that occur in peatlands and are composed of mostly organic matter. The inland habitat is dominated by open barren and bogs carpeted with heath moss (*Rhacomitrium lanuginosum*), and blanket and plateau bogs where water drainage is poor. Coastal barren vegetation and arctic-alpine plants are typical in the area; Bakeapple (Cloudberry), Partridgeberry, and blueberry for example. These low-growing plants are well adapted to exposed conditions and nutrient poor soils. Tree distribution is very limited, composition is almost entirely balsam fir, and due to the typically high wind and ice crystal abrasion, trees often appear stunted in dense thickets known as tuckamore or krummholz.

Conservation Areas:

1) Business Pond Conservation Area

A large inland area that includes Business Pond, the adjacent riparian habitat and a sizeable, untouched and undeveloped section of forest north of Business Pond (Figure 2). The terrestrial habitat within this Conservation Area is typical of the transition between the Eastern Hyper-Oceanic Barren Ecozone and the North Shore Forest Ecozone and is dominated by conifers. There is a lovely municipal trail with interpretive signage that circumnavigates some of Business Pond, and provides the public with low impact, sustainable access to a beautiful environment and important wildlife habitat. Notable species that utilize this habitat include Greater yellowlegs, Boreal chickadee, Dark-eyed junco, Blackpoll warbler and Northern pintail.



Figure 2- the large, open water of Business Pond Conservation Area

2) Queen's Meade Conservation Area

This beautiful, coastal Conservation Area can be found in the historic community of Newtown. It is a popular birding hotspot and is important habitat to many different types of seabirds, shorebirds and sea ducks and other types of waterfowl, including the provincially endangered Red knot (Figure 3). It is approximately 16 hectares of tidal shoreline, with a short trail leading to an artistically and beautifully designed bird blind. Common eiders, greater yellowlegs, semipalmated plover, semipalmated sandpipers and many other species of avian wildlife utilize this area.



Figure 3- the long and meandering coastline of Newtown supports great shorebird feeding habitat

3) Cape Freels Conservation Area

Most of Cape Freels Conservation Area is comprised of open water and wetland habitat, dominated by peat bogs, with marshland on the coast, particularly near the northeastern corner, with small enclaves of fen habitat throughout (Figure 4). Pockets of bare land (sandy dune) habitat can be noted on the northeastern corner of the CA. The forest types contained within the area are characterized by scattered tuckamore with pockets of small tracts of black spruce and scrub.

The northern boundary of the Conservation Area boundary extends west along the NWV municipal planning boundary until it meets Shoal Arm Pond. To the west, a 50m buffer is applied to Shoal Arm Pond, while the eastern boundary follows the shoreline. The Conservation Area includes some tidal marine flats (Pinchards Bight), a tidal sand bar connecting Cape Island to the land, and Cape Island. While the ocean/marine environment is not included in the CA and outside of the municipal planning boundary, the intent of including these tidal, land-based areas within the Conservation Area is to demonstrate the connectedness between the land and the sea, the actions of New-Wes-Valley residents impacts adjacent area, and that wildlife utilize all available habitat, despite static political boundaries.



Figure 4- Cape Freels is a special place with an impressive sandy coastline that extends into the Atlantic Ocean.



Figure 5- an Eider duck, a common waterfowl species that utilizes the special

Large flocks of migrating waterfowl like Common goldeneye, Greater scaup, Green-winged teal, Northern pintail, Red-Breasted mergansers, and Canada geese, utilize Cape Freels, with particularly higher densities in Pinchards Bight and Shoal Arm Pond. The area is a haven for Eider ducks (Figure 5) and it is estimated that at one point approximately 9% of the population of wintering Northern eiders could be present between Cape Freels and the Wadham Islands.

Several populations of species designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) to be “At Risk”, have been documented to utilize habitat within Cape Freels Conservation Area. These include the Red knot, Piping plover, Peregrine Falcon, Short-eared Owl, Bank swallow, Lesser yellowlegs and Red necked phalarope. From a provincial level, sensitive rankings of species that utilize Cape Freels include Rough-legged hawk and Pectoral sandpiper (imperiled to vulnerable (S2-S3), the Northern goshawk, Ruddy turnstone, Snowy owl, Semipalmated sandpiper, and Short-billed dowitcher (vulnerable (S3).

For flora, Cape Freels has been surveyed at least three times between 2001 and 2010 as part of the Newfoundland Rare Plant Project and other targeted species surveys have resulted in locating rare and uncommon plant species of conservation concern. There are at least eight rare plant species that are located within the Conservation Area, with provincial sensitivity rankings: the Rattlesnake Fern (S2- Imperiled), Red fescue and Marsh feltwort (S2-S3, Imperiled to Vulnerable), and Red clubrush White addersmouth, Mackenzie’s sedge, Loose-flowered sedge, and Little yellow-rattle (S3- Vulnerable).



Figure 6- The bird blind at Queen's Meade Conservation Area

Section 3: General Policies for Habitat Conservation Leadership by the Municipality of New-Wes-Valley

A) Incorporate your Habitat Stewardship Agreement into your Municipal Plan

During the preparation of any draft Municipal Plan, or during the process of a future Municipal Plan Review or development regulations, Municipal Council will incorporate the Habitat Conservation Agreement and Plan concepts and maps into any resulting Municipal Plan or related Master Plan. The "Conservation Areas" **shall be zoned Open Space Conservation, Environmental Conservation, Open Space Recreation**, or some similar consistent zoning designation within any future municipal planning documents as governed by the *Urban and Rural Planning Act (2000)*.

B) Refer all possible developments to the Wildlife Division

Activities within the Conservation Areas will be managed whereby permitted activities do not result in the loss of wildlife habitat or wildlife populations. As such, wildlife conservation will be at the forefront of management decisions. When council reviews/approves permits, regulations, developments or by-laws which could affect Conservation Areas, **Council will first consult with the NL EHJV Program Manager** at the Wildlife Division, Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture providing a 30-day notice period.

C) Reducing Marine Pollution

Perhaps one of the greatest ecological challenges facing coastal communities is reducing the amount of waste, plastic, garbage, and pollution that enters our waters. The negative effects of plastic pollution in our marine ecosystems is well documented, causing marine life to die and for the toxins found in plastics to move throughout the food web and wind up on our dinner tables. For those that rely on ocean resources for food security and our livelihoods, the impact of this ecological disaster will be felt even more acutely.

Marine pollution is a problem that can seem insurmountable at times, but small actions can have a large impact. Promoting, developing, and implementing the following practices is a great way to start:

- Keep shorelines and waterfronts clean. Keeping debris away from shorelines and out of the water reduces how much waste gets carried in by wind and rain.
- Properly maintain boating and fishing equipment in order to minimize accidental release of oil into the water.
- Organize beach and waterfront clean-ups.

- Promote the proper disposal of single use plastics which can otherwise accumulate in our oceans and on our shores.
- Encourage reduction and diversion of waste. The best way to reduce marine pollution is to cut it off at the source. Fewer plastics, diversion of organic waste to compost, and proper management of wastewater all result in less waste in our oceans.

D) Protecting species at risk and their habitat

The greatest threat to species at risk in the province is the loss, degradation, and disturbance of the habitats on which they depend. Disturbances from development, heavy road, boat, or ATV traffic, or human activity can all cause degradation to sensitive habitats. When considering development applications, the potential impacts, both direct and indirect, of that development on the surrounding ecosystem and habitats needs to be considered and will be impacted by federal and provincial Species At Risk legislation. Council should be aware the future development which may impact species at risk should be brought to the attention the federal and provincial governments responsible for this legislation and can assist council in responding to such development applications.

Given the known history of Piping Plover, Red knot and other recognized shorebirds of habitat in Cape Freels, we provide the below guidelines for sustainable use of beaches with higher amounts of avifauna biodiversity:

1. Obey signs restricting use of motorized vehicles on beaches during the breeding season (May 1 to August 31).

A central factor confronting many shorebirds which might potentially nest/breed in Cape Freels is the use of all-terrain vehicles/dirt bikes on beaches. Inappropriate use of these vehicles on critical beaches used for species breeding and chick-rearing has been documented in other areas to result in destruction and/or abandonment of nests and eggs, and has very likely caused the death of chicks and adult birds.

Many shorebirds are designed to be very hard to see in their natural habitat, and the nests are even harder to see. An ATV or dirt bike rider could crush a nest and/or chick and not even be aware of it. Even if the nests and birds are spared, motorized vehicles on shorebird beaches can alarm the birds and prevent them from returning to their nests, consequently putting the nests in danger. Riders need to be made aware of the existence of significant shorebirds utilizing the area and understand that the loss of one bird or one nest can have implications for the entire provincial population of birds.

2. Observe and photograph shorebirds from a distance, walk at the water's edge, and conduct all activities away from nesting or feeding areas.

Many shorebirds are easily disturbed. Even someone hanging around the beaches trying to get a picture can prevent a shorebird from feeding and resting, putting the nest in danger. When a nest is approached, the incubating adult will be forced to leave the nest, causing a break in incubation. When this occurs, the eggs can become overheated or chilled which could kill the embryo. Disturbed adults may even abandon the eggs completely.

Cape Freel's beaches are a popular place for recreation, especially during the summer. Studies show that fewer young are raised on beaches that are popular for recreation than on less-disturbed beaches. Therefore, to be sure no shorebirds are affected by beach users, all human activities should be conducted far from nesting or feeding areas as possible.

3. Do not remove natural debris such as driftwood.

Not only can shorebirds be disturbed when individuals walk along the beach to remove the debris but beach cleaning removes important components of avifauna habitat. Things such as wrack and other natural debris provide feeding areas and shelter from inclement weather for many shorebirds.

4. Remove trash and food scraps.

Predation has been identified as one of the most important factors limiting populations of many shorebirds across the North American breeding range. Trash, food scraps, and dead fish attract predators. These predators will also hunt or opportunistically take chicks, or eggs. Therefore, it is important for beach users to not litter in the first place and to remove any trash they may see lying on the beach.

5. Keep pets leashed.

Domestic pets, specifically cats and dogs, pose a serious threat to many shorebird eggs, chicks, and adults. While domestic cats are not suspected to be a great threat on sandy beaches, cats are natural born hunters and even well-fed cats chase and kill birds. Domestic dogs are more likely to pose a threat and unleashed dogs have been known to chase adults, destroy their nests, as well as kill chicks. Even when these pets are on leashes, they can frighten shorebirds who see them as predators, which keeps the birds from feeding.

All pets, dogs in particular, should be kept on a leash (less than 6 feet) and walked at the water's edge to prevent them from disturbing shorebird or their habitat. Furthermore, under Wildlife Regulation 40(3), it is illegal to allow your dog to chase or harass wildlife.

6. Do not pick up shorebird chicks or eggs.

Although this is an uncommon occurrence, there have been several confirmed instances of children removing chicks from nesting beaches. Young children should be supervised at all times while on shorebird nesting beaches and it is important to make them aware of the importance of avoiding Species at Risk nests.

7. Protect the dune systems by limiting ATV/dirt bike activity to designated trails and by not burning beach grasses.

Beaches and dunes are important feeding, breeding, and nesting grounds for many shorebirds. These beaches and dunes are also a popular place for human recreation and this popularity means that many sand dunes are at risk of sustaining irreparable damage. Grasses create wildlife habitat and help hold the dunes in place. The loss of dune vegetation due to vehicular traffic and fires is a major trigger for dune erosion. When vegetation is lost, the exposed, dry sand is easily mobilized by high winds and large volumes of sand can be rapidly transported, sometimes forming large depressions in the dunes resulting in loss of important habitat.

E) Promote wise use of ATVs and snowmobiles

The use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), four-wheelers, and snowmobiles, is common in NL. While the use of these vehicles is essential for a variety of activities, their irresponsible use in wetlands and other sensitive wildlife areas can have negative impacts on the habitats and wildlife that inhabit them. In addition to the wheels tearing up plants and leaving clear tracks in the soil, the weight of the vehicles can compress the delicate substrate, damaging the soil and plants and changing the hydrology patterns. Wetlands habitats can take years to rehabilitate and recover from this kind of damage, if they are able to recover at all.



ATV damage in wetland habitat. These tracks can destroy vegetation, compress underlying soil, change hydrology patterns, and create scars on the landscape can take years to heal. SAM staff photos.

There are a number of existing regulations in place designed to protect ATV users and sensitive habitat. A summary of ATV Regulations and Safety Tips, as well as a link to the relevant legislation can be found at gov.nl.ca/snl/drivers/atvsafety/. Notably, the use of ATVs is restricted to approved areas, designated trails, or to persons holding a big game license in order to transport an animal from where it was killed. In the case of the latter, the number of trips is restricted to 5. Note that ATVs are only to be used in these areas **after** it is killed, not for the purposes of locating the animal.

Section 4: Habitat Conservation and Education Strategies

This section presents a few central ideas for community education, engagement, and habitat enhancement that could be implemented over time in the community as resources and opportunities may arise. Community engagement and partnerships are the true strengths of any stewardship agreement. Communities across the province who have also signed stewardship agreements have had great success becoming involved in exactly these types of projects and will also be resources for you to connect with, especially at SAM meetings. The ideas below, and many others like them, can be found at samnl.org/resources.

A) Explore grants and funding

Many activities and programs are free or can be funded through small community grants and via partnerships. Large grant applications may take several months to prepare if committees are involved. Allow enough time to apply for these grants and to obtain the letters of support that local partners such as SAM or the Wildlife Division may provide; keeping an eye on deadlines as they approach.

SAM provides a regularly updated list of many grants that will be relevant to you along with their deadlines at samnl.org/resources.

B) Apply to Hire a Green Team

Funding from the Conservation Corps Newfoundland and Labrador (ccnl.ca) can help you hire summer Green Teams and interns. Students or recent graduates can work with municipalities on environmental projects. Municipalities with Stewardship Agreements have often received Green Teams. Examples of potential projects could include nest boxes, bird monitoring, trail maintenance, community outreach, wildlife surveys, and developing field guides. Green Team members and interns could help train local high school students in monitoring and could develop educational material designed to raise awareness for conservation and stewardship initiatives. Sharing a CCNL Green Team with neighbouring towns might be explored, especially if other towns are beginning environmental projects as well.

C) Construct trails & put up interpretive signs

Many SAM municipalities have found that trails increase recreation and health for residents and improve tourism possibilities. When constructed carefully, trails can increase stewardship by allowing people to discover new areas. They can help residents and visitors connect to nature, especially where interpretive signage is used to help point out interesting landscape and wildlife.

Recreational and tourism opportunities can help raise awareness and educate visitors and residents about waterfowl and the importance of wetlands. Hiking, walking, birdwatching, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and geocaching are popular activities



in many Conservation Areas across the province. Other activities such as photography and paddling (canoeing and kayaking) could be further encouraged as low-impact, healthy recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors.

In developing recreational and tourism opportunities, wildlife must be carefully considered during the planning process. Otherwise, human activities can negatively impact the resource that provides the attraction.

D) Watch wildlife

Local groups and interested volunteers can watch and monitor birds, plants, and wildlife in all areas of the Town. This can provide information on changes in populations and can indicate problems or progress. By involving residents, they become more aware of these special places.

iNaturalist and **Seek** are free smartphone apps for those interested in learning to identify plants, butterflies and other insects, other invertebrates, birds, fungi, and mammals. They can be used to build plant and wildlife lists for any area, as a learning tool, for school students, family nature walks, and just for fun.

iNaturalist is great for adults as each nature observations turns into a real scientific data point. It also has a neat feature where other experts will identify your sightings for you - after taking a photo, it will often be identified within a few hours by another experienced user on the app. Turn your location services on so that your sighting can be found on the map and so others can help with your identifications. **Seek** is best for kids as it never saves location data and provides fun badges.



ebird.org is another free website and app to record bird sightings. It is already very popular across NL with more than 10 000 bird lists submitted each year.

Start contributing to eBird at secure.birds.cornell.edu/cassso/account/create

When watching wildlife, be mindful of tides and wetland (damp, soft, slippery) habitat, making safety your priority. Aim to cause as little stress and disturbance as possible to wildlife.

E) Help New-Wes-Valley residents enjoy nature

It's not just kids that enjoy the outdoors – adults and seniors benefit from spending time in nature as well. Birdwatching workshops have been successful in SAM communities, and snowshoe hikes in the winter or hikes in the summer are often enjoyed by adults as well.

Themes such as winter tracking or edible plant hikes can increase interest. Hikes can be inexpensive ways for adults in New-Wes-Valley to discover the natural areas of the town, socialize, and learn something new. CCNL Green Teams are required to give

interpretive presentations as a part of their work programs; SAM's **Guide to delivering interpretive hikes** and field guides at samnl.org/resources could help CCNL Green Teams or summer staff lead hikes for residents and/or visitors. These could be used to create a small brochure and 'bird checklist' or wildlife list of the area, or as the basis for field guides which could be developed by a Green Team, high school, or a relevant committee.

F) Explore outdoor education programs

Public education can help foster a greater sense of habitat stewardship among town residents.

There are excellent wetland education programs that can be adapted for activities in New-Wes-Valley. Programs span every season and age group including *Wetlands in Winter* (Tantramar Wetlands Centre, weted.com), *Marsh Bingo* and *Creatures of the Night* (Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre, oakhammockmarsh.ca), *Junior Naturalists* (Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre, wyemarsh.com), and *Wetland Field Trips* (Ducks Unlimited Canada, ducks.ca). Canadian Wildlife Federation's *Project Wild* can foster environmental ethics in youth and adults alike. Many evening programs also exist that would be great for guide and scout groups.

G) Nature and Art

Some stewardship municipalities such as Grand Falls-Windsor and Whitbourne use natural locations to bring together nature and art. Local art classes and drama groups can use an outdoor theatre for educational exercises. This could involve field trips whereby students could interpret natural beauty through various mediums (chalk, paint, etc.) or a day of sketching to the sound of nature or music. Companies like crayola.com offer resource grants to educators.

Similarly, drama classes could develop a play or series of dramatic readings based on nature. Several amphitheatres in Eastern Canada use the open-air concept to show nature-related programs outdoors in the evenings. Content can be tailored to various ages and could include nature-related craft projects as a follow up. Good starting points for nature projects for children include hookedonnature.org, planetpals.com, and hctfeducation.ca/resource-room



Interpretive "Winter wetland walk" at Gambo Bog. Staff photo

H) Engage residents of New-Wes-Valley in wildlife habitat conservation with support of the Stewardship Association of Municipalities Inc.

When the Municipality of New-Wes-Valley signed a Habitat Stewardship Agreement with the province in 2017, it was provided an opportunity to become a participating member of SAM (Stewardship Association of Municipalities, samnl.org). SAM is an incorporated, non-profit organization whose member municipalities together to secure, enhance, and restore important wildlife habitat and as a network of communities, contribute to provincial conservation of biodiversity. SAM also represents its municipal members on provincial issues related to wildlife and habitat conservation.

SAM maintains a public webpage about the Habitat Stewardship Agreement featuring maps, photos, facts, and information on local attractions. This link can be included on your Municipality's website; this will help increase residents' knowledge and understanding of the agreement and program. To view examples of these pages, please refer to samnl.org/membership.

SAM meets each spring (May or June) and fall (September or October) with host municipalities rotating among members and regions. Identify a representative of your municipality (mayor, councilor, staff, or involved resident) to attend at least one of these meetings per year. This will connect New-Wes-Valley to like-minded municipalities and link you to resources and training. You may also be interested in co-hosting another SAM meeting in the municipality of New-Wes-Valley; many municipalities enjoy this for the exposure it provides for their wildlife habitat and associated projects.

In addition to contributing to SAM membership, participating municipalities can avail of abundant environmental conservation resources on the SAM website: www.samnl.org/resources. It is the Stewardship Association's mandate to help support the conservation efforts of its membership. On an ongoing basis, SAM and its partners, in particular the Wildlife Division, actively support municipalities in engaging community residents in conservation awareness, and habitat enhancement and restoration projects.



With community engagement and the delivery of conservation programming, being a contributing member of SAM can increase environmental awareness and a build a more environmentally conscious community of stewards. We are excited to support your efforts as we broaden our existing partnership. It has been our experience that **community engagement and partnerships are the true strengths of any stewardship agreement.**

APPENDIX A:

Habitat Stewardship Agreement for the Municipality of New-Wes-Valley

THIS AGREEMENT made in the municipality of New-Wes-Valley, in the province of Newfoundland, this 21 day of February, 2023

BETWEEN: **HIS MAJESTY THE KING IN RIGHT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**, as represented by the Honourable the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (herein called the "Minister")

- of the one part -

AND: **THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NEW-WES-VALLEY**, municipal corporation pursuant to Section 15 of the *Municipalities Act, 1999* (herein called the "The Municipality")

-of the other part-

WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has entered into an Agreement with others for the implementation of the of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan through the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture;

AND WHEREAS the parties hereto recognize that the proper protection and management of coastal, wetland and upland habitats are fundamental tools in maintaining and enhancing the wildlife populations in the province;

AND WHEREAS the Minister proposed that certain important wildlife habitats within the municipality be protected and enhanced through and with the cooperation of the municipality in accordance with this Agreement and a Habitat Conservation Plan developed hereafter;

AND WHEREAS the municipality has agreed to enter into this Agreement for the purpose of protecting and enhancing those areas of important wildlife habitat within the limits of its jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS the parties have agreed to repeal the original Municipal Stewardship Agreement signed between the parties on January 20, 2017.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS AGREED BY THE PARTIES AS FOLLOWS:


1. This agreement shall replace the agreement signed by the parties on January 20th, 2017
2. The lands herein delineated and designated as Conservation Areas (being the lands outlined on a certain Schedule annexed hereto and marked "A") shall be managed in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement including any Habitat Conservation Plan developed hereunder for better protection of wildlife.
3. Within the limits of its jurisdiction, the Municipality shall use its best efforts to permit only those activities within the Conservation Areas that have no negative or adverse impact which affect the stewardship and/or conservation of the land, or of the wildlife which utilize those areas.
4. The parties may establish other Conservation Areas as may be desirable from time to time. Conservation Areas shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the Habitat Conservation Plan developed to enhance and protect the land, and the wildlife which utilize those habitats.
5. The Habitat Conservation Plan shall be developed in cooperation with the Municipality and the Minister agrees to provide such advice and expertise necessary or advisable for the development of the Habitat Conservation Plan.
6. The Municipality agrees that in the preparation of a Municipal Plan for the Municipality or any amendments to any existing Municipal Plan, the areas designated as Conservation Areas shall be recommended by the Municipality to be appropriately declared protected areas as it prescribed under subsection 13(3)(f) of the *Urban and Rural Planning Act (2000)* (or such other legislation in amendment or substitution therefore as may be brought into effect from time to time).
7. The parties to this Agreement, their consultants, servants or agents, shall have and exercise reasonable rights of access to the Conservation Areas for all purposes necessary or incidental to this Agreement and in particular, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, for the purpose of developing and managing the Habitat Conservation Plan.
8. If at any time during the term of this Stewardship Agreement the Parties mutually deem it necessary or desirable to make alterations or additions to it, they may do so by means of a written agreement between them which shall be supplemental to and form part of this agreement.
9. Each of the parties hereto agree that they will carry out the mutual intentions as expressed in this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have caused these presents to be executed in accordance with their respective rules and regulations the day and year first before written.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED


by the Honourable the Minister of Fisheries
Forestry and Agriculture in the presence of:


Witness

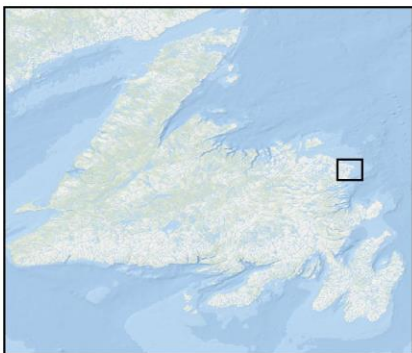
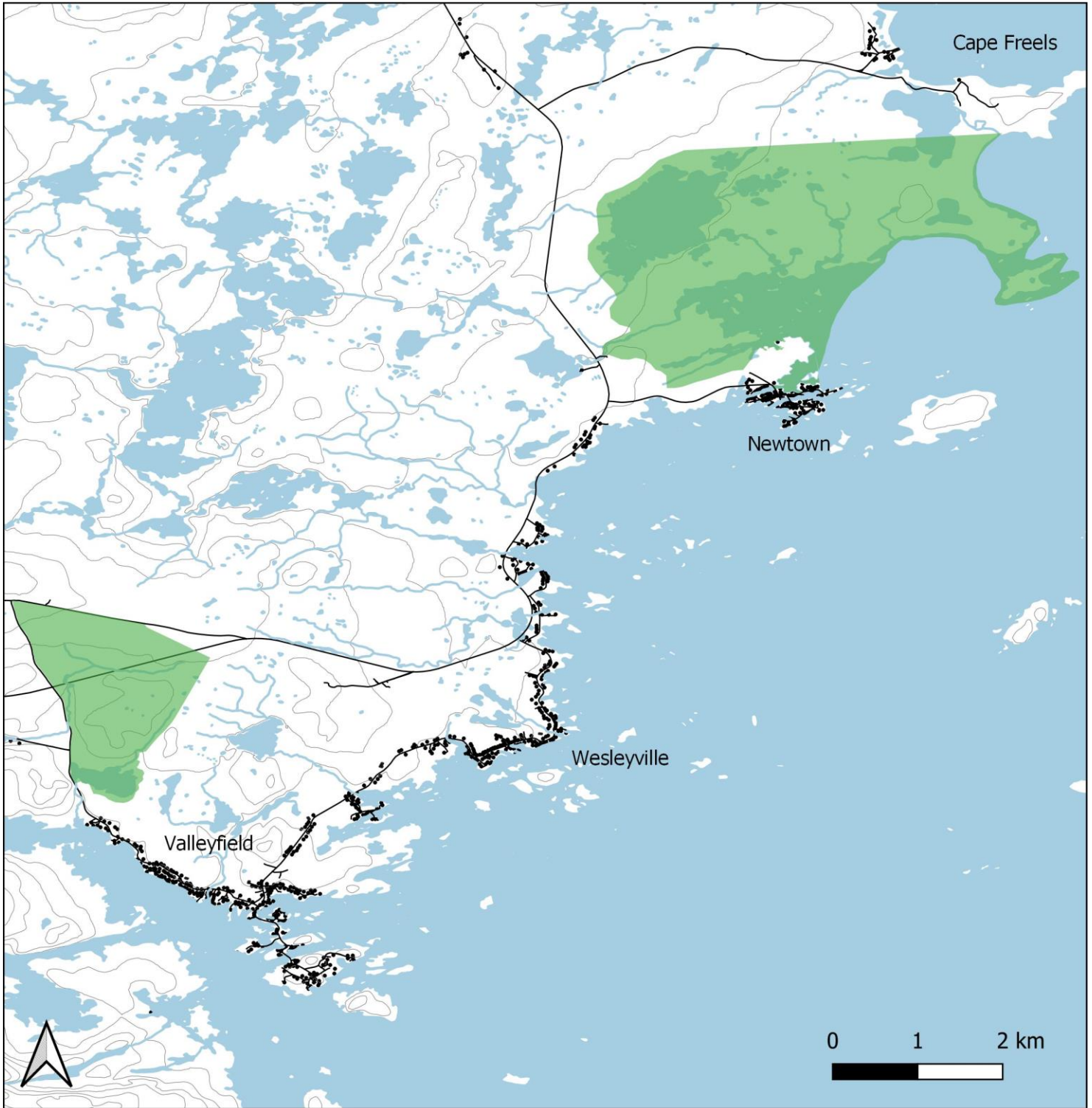

HONOURABLE DERRICK
BRAGG, MINISTER OF FISHERIES,
FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURE

THE SEAL OF the Municipal Council of the
Municipality of New-Wes-Valley hereunto
affixed in the presence of:


Witness


MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR
MUNICIPALITY OF NEW-WES-
VALLEY

Schedule A: Habitat Stewardship Agreement Areas
 Municipal Habitat Stewardship Agreement
 Municipality of New-Wes-Valley, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

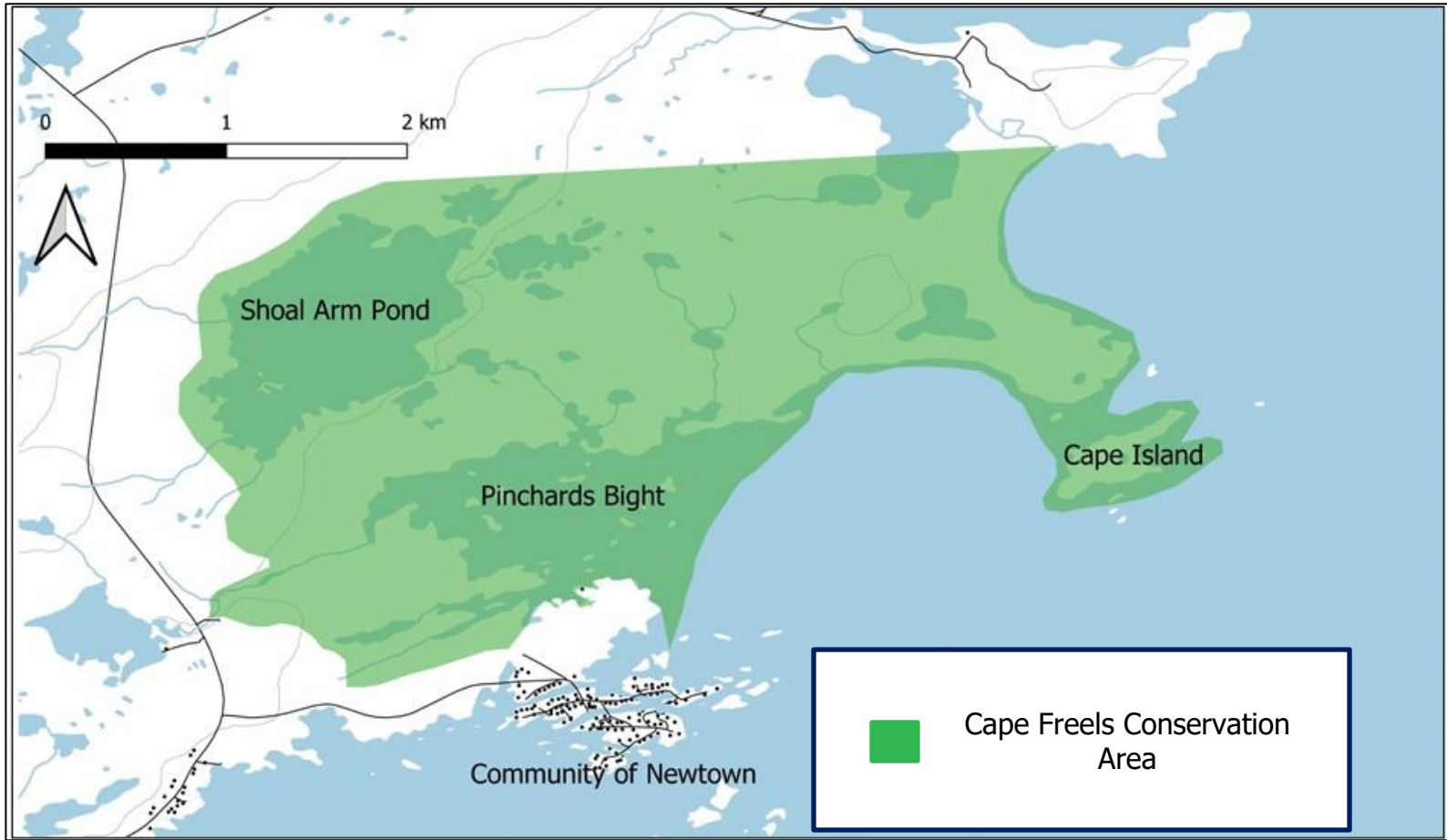


Legend	
	Conservation Area
	Municipal Boundary
	Roads
	Water
	Building

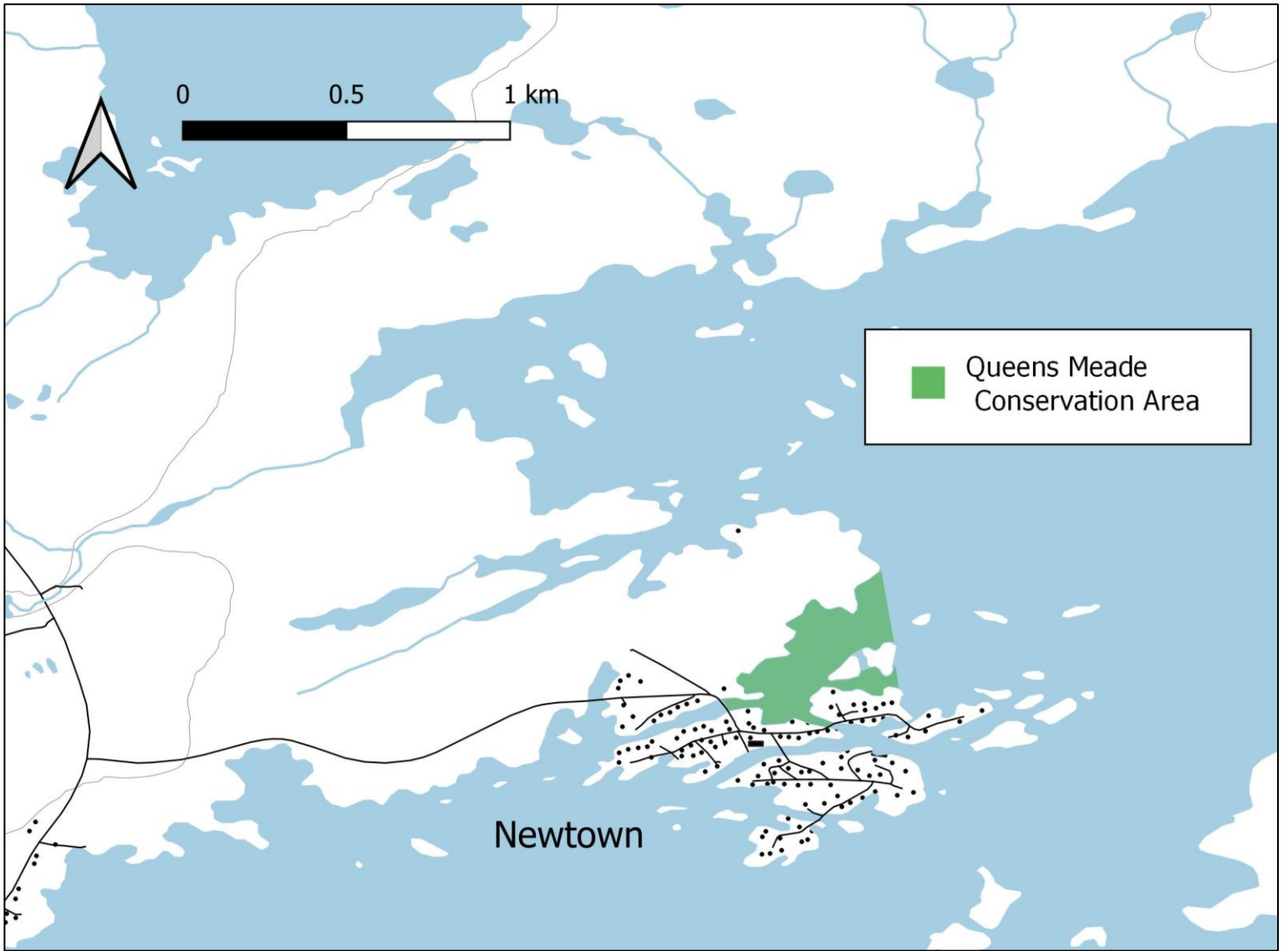


January 2023

Cape Freels Conservation Area



Queen's Meade Conservation Area



Business Pond Conservation Area

