



WERAC

*Wilderness and Ecological
Reserves Advisory Council*

*Advising government on the creation and management
of wilderness and ecological reserves*

Annual Report 2010-11

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Message From Co-Chairs

As Co-Chairs for the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC) and in accordance with Government's commitment to accountability, we hereby submit our 2010 – 2011 **Annual Performance Report** detailing the activities of the Advisory Council from April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011. As Co-chairs of WERAC we sign this report on behalf of the entire council. The council is responsible and accountable for the results contained within this report.

Under the authority of the **Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act**, our Council advises Government on the establishment, management and termination of wilderness and ecological reserves within the province. Our duties generally involve consultations with interested government departments, industry stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, other civic bodies and the general public, and the reporting to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council through the responsible Minister. Using the best scientific information available and the most comprehensive understanding of social and economic impacts of conservation areas, we advise Government on matters related to wilderness and ecological reserves.

In accordance with the Minister's strategic direction on the establishment of a Natural Areas Systems Plan (NASP), WERAC is committed to identifying and examining areas of the province for reserve designation and to ensuring that all public and private interests are considered when reserves are being planned and established.

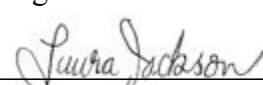
WERAC met two times for meetings during the 2010-2011 fiscal year, in St. Anthony, and St. John's. In addition, subcommittees met twice during the fiscal year, for public consultations in St. Lawrence and Lamaline, and for a planning session in Deer Lake. WERAC made one reserve recommendation to government regarding the establishment of Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve. Past recommendations on two potential reserves including Sandy Cove (Great Northern Peninsula) and Little Grand Lake (western Newfoundland) await decisions from government. We continue to work closely with government on the development of the NASP and await updates on its progress from the Minister.

WERAC has been without full membership since 2007 and we continue to await government decision on this important matter. Repeated requests by WERAC for the completion of the appointment process have not yet been addressed. This fiscal has been particularly challenging as two members have left the council this year as a result of lack of direction and movement toward re-appointments. The council membership is now reduced to eight members, each of whose membership has expired. This situation has effectively minimized WERAC's ability to assume its legislated mandate.

In conclusion, we acknowledge WERAC members for their interest in and generous commitment to the protection of our province's natural heritage. Furthermore, we thank the staff of the Parks and Natural Areas Division for their constant support and wise guidance.



Len Zedel, Co-Chair



Laura Jackson, Co-Chair

1. Overview

The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC) advises Government through the Minister of Environment and Conservation on the establishment, management and termination of wilderness and ecological reserves within the province. The Council consists of 11 members appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council for a three-year term. Presently, all council member appointments have long expired.

Council members serve as volunteers; however, travel, accommodations and related costs are covered by the current account budget of Parks and Natural Areas Division, Department of Environment and Conservation. Expenses incurred by WERAC are included in the financial statement of the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Typically, the council meets four times a year, for one to two days each time at various locations around the province. The Secretariat is provided by the Parks and Natural Areas Division in the person of:

Natural Areas Planner
Natural Areas Program, Parks and Natural Areas Division
Department of Environment and Conservation
33 Reid's Lane, Deer Lake, NL, A8A 2A3
werac@gov.nl.ca

Together, WERAC and the Division work together to ensure that all public and private interests are considered when reserves are being planned, established and terminated. WERAC makes its recommendation on reserve creation/termination to Government with Government itself making the final decision.

Current Membership*

Name	Role	Residence
Dr. Bill Montevecchi	Member	Portugal Cove
Dr. Len Zedel	Member	St. John's
Mr. Bill Kelly	Member	Goose Bay
Ms. Laura Jackson	Member	St. John's
Mr. Bruce Porter	Member	Lewisporte
Mr. Tony Ryan	Member	Port Saunders
Dr. Luise Hermanutz	Member	Portugal Cove
Ms. Phyllis Baird	Member	St. Andrew's

*** The term of appointment for all eleven members has expired (three expired in October 2005, seven expired in July 2007, and one expired in December 2007). Three former members have left the council.**

2. Mandate

The *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*, 1980, under Section 7, provides for an Advisory Council to advise government on the establishment, management and termination of wilderness and ecological reserves within the province. The Council's duties include consultation proceedings with interested government departments, municipal councils, industry stakeholders, the general public, and other bodies on the establishment of a reserve, and preparation of a report to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on the advisability of the establishment of a reserve. Please refer to Appendix B for fuller details of the legislated mandate of the WERAC.

3. Lines of Business

The WERAC provides the following line of business:

1. Advises government on the establishment, management and termination of wilderness and ecological reserves in the province:

- Examines areas of the province in order to determine which areas are suitable for the establishment of a reserve (i.e. three criteria guide reserve creation; large wilderness areas, ecosystem representation and rare natural phenomena)
- Accepts recommendations from the public in relation to the establishment of or a change in a reserve (i.e. through presentations, letters of nomination, etc.)
- Holds consultations with stakeholders and public hearings to consider submissions, representations and objections respecting the establishment of a reserve
- Within 120 days of the public hearings, reports to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council through the Minister, on the advisability of the establishment of a reserve. WERAC Recommendation Reports include a review of the benefits and disadvantages of reserve establishment, and a review on public hearing proceedings, including its assessment of objections or reservations raised at the hearing.

4. Values

WERAC will consider all public submissions on the identification, establishment, management and decommissioning of wilderness and ecological reserves. The council is guided by the values of transparency, accountability and responsibility. WERAC's considerations incorporate the best scientific information available, the most comprehensive understanding of social and economic impacts on protected areas and an open, transparent and consultative process.

Values	Action Statements
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Transparency	The Council will exercise due diligence when considering the opinions and points of view of different parties for the purpose of advising the Minister on
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matters related to ecological and wilderness reserves

Accountability The Council is dedicated to providing accurate and timely information to stakeholders and to working within legislated timeframes

Responsibility The Council will work to ensure that the interests and concerns of the public are considered and accurately represented when advising the Minister on the establishment of reserves

5. Primary Clients

The WERAC's primary clients include the following:

- Lieutenant Governor in Council
- Minister of Environment and Conservation
- Select members of the public (including private citizens, environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGO's), and industry representatives)
- Federal and Provincial Government departments
- Local service districts, town councils and local governments

6. Vision

The vision of WERAC is the conservation and preservation of wild landscapes in Newfoundland and Labrador for current and future generations through the timely establishment of a functional network of protected areas throughout the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

7. Mission Statement

Creating and maintaining a network of properly designed and legally designated protected areas is one of the key ways WERAC intends to do its part to ensure the preservation of Newfoundland and Labrador's natural heritage. By 2011, WERAC will focus on supporting the development of a Natural Areas Systems Plan (NASP). To facilitate this mission WERAC will hold Council meetings at least twice annually, in various parts of the province, review and identify priority areas and review public submissions and consult various stakeholders.

Mission: By 2011, WERAC will have supported the development of a protected areas plan in accordance with government direction.

Measure: Supported the development of a protected areas plan

Indicators:

- Points of view of the stakeholders are considered in the development of recommendations
- Recommendations are brought forward to the minister for the promotion of candidate areas for reserve status

8. Shared Commitments

In accordance with the Minister's strategic direction on the establishment of a NASP, during the 2008-2011 planning period, WERAC focused on supporting development of a network of protected areas by holding Council meetings at least twice annually, in various parts of the province, reviewing and identifying priority areas, reviewing public submissions and consulting various stakeholders. However, the government NASP decision-making process, which informs and provides direction for activities of the council regarding the NASP, has taken longer than anticipated.

WERAC continued to work closely with Parks and Natural Areas Division, within the Department of Environment and Conservation. Through the WERAC Executive Secretary, Parks and Natural Areas Division provided administrative, planning and mapping support to the council.

9. Report on the Mission

Each year Council carries out and reports on the objectives of the 2008-2011 Activity Plan, thereby providing a reference for the final year. This is the final report for the 2008-2011 planning period, and as such, includes a report on the mission. WERAC has made considerable efforts to support the development of a protected areas plan throughout the planning period. The following table outlines indicators and accomplishments supporting the 2008-2011 mission statement.

Mission: By 2011, WERAC will have supported the development of a protected areas plan in accordance with government direction.

Measure: Supported the development of a protected areas plan

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Points of view of the stakeholders are considered in the development of recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Advisory Council hosted public hearings on September 15-16, 2010 in Lamaline and St. Lawrence to discuss the benefits and concerns regarding formal establishment of Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve as Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve. A public document entitled <i>Lawn Islands: What We Heard</i> was produced and distributed. On September 24 and 25, 2009 WERAC met with the Notre Dame Rod and Gun Club to discuss benefits, concerns and various options for protection of the Indian Arm area. On June 19, 2009 WERAC met with the Northern Peninsula East Heritage Corridor, involving representatives from the Town of Conche, Town of Englee, Department of Natural Resources, Nordic Economic Development Corporation, Rural Secretariat, Industry, Trade and Rural Development, French Shore Historical Society, Englee Heritage Committee, GNP Forest Network and the Ashton House Historical Society. The meeting was organized to discuss the benefits and local concerns regarding protection of the Mare Cove area. On June 17 and 18, 2009 WERAC met with the Committee for Preservation of the Tickle Estuaries to discuss the benefits and local concerns regarding protection. On June 11, 2008, WERAC hosted a public hearing in Sandy Cove to discuss the benefits and local concerns about establishing Sandy Cove Ecological Reserve. A public document entitled <i>Sandy Cove: What We Heard</i> was produced and distributed. On April 12, 2008, WERAC hosted a

	<p>public hearing in Portugal Cove South to discuss the benefits and local concerns about establishing an expanded Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A public document entitled <i>Mistaken Point: What We Heard</i> was produced and distributed. • On May 22, 2008, WERAC met with the Committee for Preservation of the Tickles Estuary regarding options for protection.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations are brought forward to the minister for the promotion of candidate areas for reserve status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On January 14, 2011, WERAC submitted its report recommending permanent establishment of Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. • Through on-going discussions in 2010, WERAC reported to the Minister regarding the inclusion of the Indian Arm area of interest as part of the NASP. • On October 9, 2008, WERAC recommended establishment of Sandy Cove Ecological Reserve to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. • On September 14, 2008, WERAC recommended the addition of the Tickles estuary area and a surrounding buffer area to the Cloud River Study Area. • On August 8, 2008, WERAC submitted its report recommending permanent establishment of an expanded Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve to the Minister of Environment and Conservation.

10. Highlights and Accomplishments

Meetings

The Advisory Council met twice during the 2010-2011 fiscal year. The first meeting was held in St. Anthony on June 16-17, 2010. The second meeting was held in St. John's on December 6, 2010. Meeting proceedings normally include, among other agenda items, a review of incoming/outgoing correspondence, an update and discussion on the status of candidate areas, and formal presentations by government departments, industry stakeholders, the general public, and other bodies. Business minutes are recorded and placed on file with WERAC's Secretariat.

In addition to the two council meetings this fiscal, WERAC subcommittees met twice during the year, for public consultations in St. Lawrence and Lamaline on September 15-16, 2010 and for a Transparency and Accountability 3 year Planning Session in Deer Lake on March 21, 2011.

At WERAC's June meeting in St. Anthony, members met with representatives from the Cook's Harbour Town Council, the Wildlife Division and the Limestone Barrens Habitat Stewardship Program to discuss protection of the Cape Norman study area as an ecological reserve. WERAC and the meeting participants took a guided field trip to the study area to view the rare plants, survey the study area boundary and land-use. At this meeting, the council also discussed the establishment of Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve as a formal reserve and prepared for the upcoming public consultations.

Although WERAC did not organize a meeting during the public consultations for Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve, activities undertaken at this time are worthy of note. The subcommittee held two public consultations in the communities of St. Lawrence and Lamaline on September 15-16, 2010. The subcommittee also visited the proposed Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve by boat to consider land-use issues associated with various boundary options provided by WERAC. As a result of this, the group also got the opportunity to discuss some of the issues associated with reserve establishment with local fishers.

The December meeting included a presentation from Canadian Wildlife Service on federal activities pertaining to the Cape Norman site. The council reviewed and approved the Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve *What We Heard* Document and discussed the draft recommendation report, including all land-use issues associated with the proposed area and boundary options. The council also reviewed a revised study area proposal from the Notre Dame Rod and Gun Club for protection of the Indian Arm watershed area. Ongoing issues for WERAC were also discussed, including the NASP, expired WERAC membership, steps for moving forward on other proposed protected areas and management issues in existing protected areas.

Candidate Areas

Throughout this reporting period, WERAC has continued to review and examine areas of interest. Active files for the fiscal include Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological

Reserve, Cape Norman Study Area and the Indian Arm Area of Interest. Outstanding files which continue to be tracked by Council but which have not been concluded this fiscal include Sandy Cove Provisional Ecological Reserve and Little Grand Lake Provisional Ecological Reserve. Each of these files is at a different stage of the reserve establishment process. The following outlines WERAC's status of the progress of the provisional ecological reserves:

(i) Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve

On November 30, 2007, the Advisory Council, as per Section 12c of the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*, recommended the establishment of the Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve. The proposed reserve is located near Lord's Cove on the Burin Peninsula and is the only known North American colony of Manx Shearwaters. On July 15, 2009, government approved Lawn Islands Archipelago as a provisional ecological reserve. In accordance with Section 16 of the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*, the Advisory Council hosted public hearings on September 15-16, 2010 in Lamaline and St. Lawrence to discuss the formal establishment of Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve as Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve. A public *What We Heard* document was developed as a result of the hearings. The Advisory Council then submitted its recommendations to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on January 14, 2011. Government has yet to make a decision on reserve establishment.

(ii) Sandy Cove Provisional Ecological Reserve

Sandy Cove Provisional Ecological Reserve, located on the Great Northern Peninsula, protects the endangered endemic plant, Long's braya. On April 5, 2007, government approved Sandy Cove as a provisional ecological reserve. On June 11, 2008, in accordance with Section 16 of the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*, the Advisory Council hosted a public hearing in Sandy Cove to discuss the proposed reserve. A public document entitled *Sandy Cove: What We Heard* was developed as a result of the hearing. The Advisory Council then submitted its recommendations to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on October 9, 2008. To date Government has not made a decision on reserve establishment.

(iii) Little Grand Lake Provisional Ecological Reserve

Little Grand Lake Provisional Ecological Reserve (731 km²) protects extensive bogs and barren, as well as mature boreal forest that is prime habitat for the threatened Newfoundland marten. On February 11, 2004, a public discussion was held on the proposed management plan and on January 25, 2005, a report detailing WERAC's recommendations on establishing the area as an ecological reserve was submitted to Government for review. Government has yet to make a decision on reserve establishment.

Study Areas and Areas of Interest

Creating and maintaining a network of properly designed and legally designated protected areas is one of the key ways WERAC works to ensure the preservation of Newfoundland and Labrador's natural heritage. WERAC continues to support the development of a NASP, a key strategic direction of Government. To accomplish this, WERAC reviews priority issues for candidate areas on a regular basis and helps promote the benefits of protected areas by consulting with interested stakeholders, responding to correspondence and conducting presentations for stakeholders. During the transition from the 2007-08 to the 2008-09 fiscal year, the Deputy Minister-appointed Working Committee, of which WERAC was a part, concluded its deliberations on outstanding conflict areas. Review of study areas was elevated to the Ministerial level for conflict resolution. To date Government has still not completed its deliberations on the NASP.

In the case of both NASP study areas and areas of interest brought forward outside of the NASP, WERAC has been assisting where it can as per the council's mandate. In response to requests from community groups, WERAC has provided information regarding the establishment process and has supported and facilitated the establishment process with preliminary site assessments and discussions on the benefits and concerns of legislated protection. At the request of local community groups, WERAC has also supported and facilitated the establishment of the Indian Arm Area of Interest, an area which was proposed outside the NASP but which has received much local support and attention.

11. Activities

This Annual Report marks the final year for the 2008-2011 Activity Plan. The following table outlines objectives, measures, and indicators identified in WERAC's 2008-2011 Activity Plan and highlights accomplishments achieved for the fiscal year 2010-2011. The objectives reflect WERAC's vision and mission statement and are based on the advancement of proposed protected areas through the government system, and increased public awareness and participation in the activities associated with the establishment and management of protected areas in Newfoundland and Labrador. These activities help government achieve its strategic direction related to development of a NASP. Likewise, the extent to which WERAC is able to achieve these objectives, measures and indicators is connected to the larger process of development of a NASP. The 2011-2014 Activity Plan and future Annual Reports should reflect goals and objectives that more accurately reflect the current progress of the NASP.

Objective 1: WERAC will complete assessments and make recommendations to the LGC on selected candidate areas.

Measure: Completed assessments

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports provided to the LGC via the responsible Minister of the results of the assessment and recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator Achieved: On January 14, 2011, WERAC submitted its report recommending permanent

	establishment of Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve to the Minister of Environment and Conservation
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Objective 2: WERAC will review priority issues associated with the Natural Areas Systems Plan.

Measure: Recommendations to the Minister

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports provided to the Minister outlining WERAC’s review of issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NASP Deputy Minister-appointed Working Committee concluded its deliberations on outstanding conflict areas. Review of study areas was elevated to the Ministerial level for conflict resolution. WERAC’s involvement in this working committee has concluded.

Objective 3: WERAC will have promoted the benefits of protected areas.

Measure: Promoted the benefits of protected areas.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of protected areas are communicated to government committees during consultation processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator Achieved: Following the 2010 Fall report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainability Oil Spill Preparedness, WERAC initiated discussions with provincial departments regarding the need to consider protection of coastal seabird ecological reserves within any Oil Spill Preparedness Plan. • Through a meeting with Canadian Wildlife Service, WERAC communicated the ecological benefits of establishing protected areas to enhance protection of Long’s Braya and Fernald’s Braya as part of the draft recovery strategy for these species. • The NASP Deputy Minister-appointed Working Committee, of which

	WERAC was a part, concluded its deliberations on outstanding conflict areas. Review of study areas was elevated to the Ministerial level for conflict resolution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information regarding benefits of protected areas is provided through correspondence with stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator achieved: On June 16, 2010 WERAC met with the Cook's Harbour Town Council, Wildlife Division and Limestone Barrens Habitat Stewardship Program to discuss the benefits of protection of the Cape Norman study area as an ecological reserve. The Advisory Council hosted public hearings on September 15-16, 2010 in Lamaline and St. Lawrence to discuss the benefits and concerns regarding formal establishment of Lawn Islands Archipelago Provisional Ecological Reserve as Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve. Public document entitled <i>Lawn Islands: What We Heard</i> was produced and distributed. Multiple letters issued under WERAC letterhead promoting benefits of protected areas.

Objective 4: WERAC will make recommendations to the Minister with respect to development of a strategy to ensure connectivity among protected areas to ensure their long term viability.

Measure: Recommendation to the Minister

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports provided to the Minister outlining a strategy to address connectivity among protected areas in Newfoundland and Labrador. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A recommendation outlining a strategy to address connectivity among protected areas has not yet been provided to the Minister. A strategy for connectivity of protected areas would be based on agreement on establishment of individual protected areas, which are then functionally 'connected' via close proximity to other protected areas and sustainable land use

	<p>planning. The NASP Deputy Minister-appointed Working Committee, of which WERAC was a part, concluded its deliberations on outstanding conflict areas. Review of study areas was elevated to the Ministerial level for further conflict resolution. WERAC does not feel it can appropriately proceed with development of a connectivity strategy while deliberations on individual NASP areas are on-going.</p>
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12. Challenges and Opportunities

In WERAC's 2007-2008, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 Annual Reports, a number of challenges to the promotion of protected areas in the province were identified. These concerns continue to challenge the efficacy of the councils work:

- 1. Lack of progress in the implementation of the NASP.** Despite past commitments to protected areas and sustainable development, little progress in the actual designation of protected areas has been made. Release of the NASP for public review and discussion was recommended in 1996 by a NASP Committee established in 1995. To date, this has not happened. The absence of public consultations on a draft NASP and the release of a final NASP are the most significant obstacles faced by WERAC in the execution of its mandate.
- 2. Failure to resolve outstanding NASP conflicts.** The last meeting of the NASP Working Committee was on January 31, 2007 after which discussions of outstanding conflict areas were elevated to the executive level. While some study area conflicts have been resolved by the committee members and efforts at the executive level, the council is concerned that there has not yet been successful resolution of the remaining conflicts.
- 3. WERAC recommendations are considered by government only after a considerable length of time.** For example, the June 16, 2005 Sandy Cove Provisional Ecological Reserve recommendation was not officially addressed until almost two years after it was submitted. The Little Grand Lake Ecological Reserve recommendation was submitted January 25, 2005 and has yet to be officially addressed.
- 5. WERAC has no official members.** The 3-year terms for all members have expired and most memberships have been expired for over two 3-year terms. WERAC appointments have not been considered for at least six years, despite repeated requests from WERAC.
- 6. There is limited communication with and direction from the Minister.** WERAC has been unable to meet with the Minister of Environment and Conservation, despite repeated requests in recent years. In 2009, the Minister informed WERAC that no meetings will be held until the appointment process for WERAC has been finalized.
- 7. Support for WERAC is provided through Parks and Natural Areas Division.** The lack of sufficient staff within the Division means that WERAC must carefully assess the number of issues/candidate areas that can be dealt with at any one time. This results in additional delays in the consultation and establishment processes.
- 8. With the recent resignation of two members of WERAC, there are only eight active members on the council.** This has made it much more challenging to coordinate meetings with a quorum as well as less efficient in coordinating meetings and public consultations.

Despite these challenges, WERAC continues to recognize many opportunities associated with its mandate.

We look forward to the public release of the NASP. The plan will provide an excellent opportunity to engage the public, industry and governments on the establishment and management of a protected areas network for Newfoundland and Labrador. Such a network is crucial for sustainable development and provides a measure of certainty for industry with respect to planning and is the foundation for sustainable development.

The release of the NASP will herald an intensified role for WERAC. The committee looks forward to discussing the establishment of a system of protected areas, both the benefits and the associated constraints, with the public at large.

The appointment of a full eleven-member council will provide WERAC with a renewed sense of commitment to our mandate and provide opportunity for new members to contribute to protected areas planning and establishment in the province.

WERAC recognizes many opportunities that arise as a result of individuals submitting candidate areas for consideration by WERAC. Over the last several years, many individuals have asked WERAC to consider a local area for designation as an ecological reserve. These areas are special to the local population who wish to see the areas set aside for their children and grandchildren. To date, WERAC has been able to address a very limited number of the proposals but the public interest, dedication and persistence of individuals is an inspiration to WERAC members.

Significant opportunities exist for collaboration with various public bodies, in particular municipalities and economic development boards, who wish to consider the establishment of protected areas in their region.

WERAC looks forward to the development of a comprehensive land-use planning process that will incorporate the NASP discussions within a much broader ecological and social context.

For those WERAC meetings including stakeholders there is an opportunity to increase stakeholder awareness of provincial protected areas. Such meetings are particularly valuable when WERAC meets with stakeholders who often have not previously been involved in the reserve establishment process or do not understand the important role of protected areas.

Appendix A: Strategic Directions

In accordance with the Minister's strategic direction on the establishment of a Natural Areas Systems Plan (NASP), WERAC is committed to identifying and examining areas of the province for reserve designation and ensuring that all public and private interests are fairly heard and considered when reserves are being planned and established.

1. **Title:** Natural Area Systems Plan
Strategic Direction: A Natural Areas System Plan (NASP) which identifies areas of the Province that, following appropriate consultations, may be designated as protected natural areas and reserves.
Outcome: Protection of representative areas of the Province's ecoregions.
Areas of Focus: Public Consultations; Finalized Natural Areas System Plan; Implementation strategy.

Appendix B: Legislated Mandate

Mandate (Source: *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*)

Advisory council

6. The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council is continued for the purpose of advising the Lieutenant-Governor in Council through the minister on matters in relation to the establishment, management and termination of reserves and for the better administration of this Act.

Powers of council

11. (1) The advisory council may examine an area of the province in order to determine which areas are suitable for the establishment of a reserve.
(2) The advisory council may accept recommendations from the public in relation to the establishment of or a change in a reserve.

Duties of council

12. (1) The advisory council shall give information on the areas determined as suitable for the establishment of a reserve under section 11 to interested departments of the governments of the province and Canada and to interested Councils, commissions or other bodies, whether incorporated or unincorporated, members of which or the members of the Council of management or Council of directors of which, are appointed by an Act or by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(2) Where, in the opinion of the advisory council, the comments received under subsection (1) from the interested departments and bodies do not change the opinion as to the

suitability of the area for the establishment of a provisional reserve, the advisory council shall give a report to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

Information on reserves

15. Within one year from the date of the establishment of a provisional reserve, the minister shall prepare and publish, in a newspaper in circulation in the area of the provisional reserve, a notice that contains

- (a) a boundary description of the area of the proposed reserve;
- (b) an outline of the management plan of the proposed reserve; and
- (c) a statement indicating that the minister requires written notice within the next 30 days where a member of the public intends to participate in a public hearing on the establishment of the reserve.

Public hearing

16. (1) The minister shall set a time and place for the holding of a public hearing by the advisory council to consider submissions, representations and objections respecting the establishment of a reserve including the boundary description and management plan of the proposed area.

(2) The time of the holding of a public hearing shall be within 90 days of the date of publication of the notice referred to in Section 15 but after 30 days notice has been given to the public of the time and place of the hearing.

Report to Lieutenant-Governor in Council

17. (1) The advisory council shall report in writing to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, through the minister, on the advisability of the establishment of a reserve including a review of the benefits and disadvantages of the establishment, and with a review on public hearing proceedings held under section 16, including its assessment of objections or reservations raised at the hearing.

(2) A report under subsection (1) shall be made within 120 days of the public hearing.

(3) Where the advisory council in its report made under subsection (1) recommends the establishment of a reserve, it shall include in that report

- (a) the boundary description, management plan and proposed regulations in relation to that proposed reserve as revised in consideration of the public hearing; and
- (b) comments on the rights and interests affected by the establishment of a reserve and an estimate of the compensation for those rights and interests.

Appendix C: Fiscal Statement

The Council is not required to provide an audited financial statement.

Statement of Expenditures 2010-2011	
Two WERAC meetings, public consultations and planning session expenditures for Council members (travel, accommodations and per diems)	17,651.12
Meeting Room Rental/Catering	\$1227.07
Field trip: Lawn Bay boat rental	\$475.00
Total	\$19,353.19

The above stated Expenditures are certified as correct.