

**Margaree Environmental Association**  
c/o Box 55, Mabou, N.S. BOE IXO

May 26, 2008

Voluntary Planning  
Suite 600, 1690 Hollis Street  
Halifax, NSB3J 3J9

RE: **Share your ideas on Nova Scotia's Natural Resources**

Dear Voluntary Planning Committee Members:

The Margaree Environmental Association (MEA) is pleased to provide you with a cd version of its newly released report, *Conserving Biodiversity in the Mabou Highlands: land-use planning as an approach to conservation* prepared by Christopher A. Miller, Ph.D. The proposed land-use model provides a timely solution to the problem of how Nova Scotia can create new protected areas on a landscape level.

The Mabou Highlands contains ecologically significant natural features of importance to conservation within a continuous forested ecosystem. Both The Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Nova Scotia Nature Trust have established protected areas there.

The MEA report, with the Mabou Highlands as a *case study*, proposes a conservation model using governance and legislative practices based on a land-use strategy to protect ecologically significant areas where there is a mixture of public and private lands. Such a conservation model could be a viable strategy in many other areas in Nova Scotia or Canada. Please find the report's electronic link at: [http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/neall/Mabou\\_Highlands.pdf](http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/neall/Mabou_Highlands.pdf)

Because of the current task assigned to Voluntary Planning we believe this proposed land-use approach to conservation is timely and strategic for the government to adopt. This conservation strategy can strengthen and enrich Nova Scotia's cultural, social and environmental assets, that are vital for creating opportunities such as tourism or recreation.

Under the Sustainable Prosperity Act there is a commitment to protect 12% of the land but so far the government has only reached slightly over 8%. The MEA's proposed land-use conservation strategy would permit this objective to be met more readily as it could encompass both public and or private lands.

Thank you in advance for your interest.

Yours truly,

Neal Livingston, Co-chair  
Margaree Environmental Association