

Wetland Conservation Through Policy

An Atlantic Canada Approach

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Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands



**75 YEARS OF
CONSERVATION
EXCELLENCE**

Presentation

- **Ducks Unlimited Canada.**
- **DUC and Wetland Policies**
- **Atlantic Wetland Conservation Policies.**
- **Policy Implementation**
- **Summary**

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Ducks Unlimited is a private, non-profit charitable organization. DUC conserves, restores and manages wetlands and associated habitat for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.



Ducks Unlimited Canada

National:

1938 – 2013

- 6.2 million hectares secured and protected.
- 8,800 habitat projects
- 145,000 supporters
- Offices in every province
- 330 employees



Ducks Unlimited Canada

Atlantic Canada:

1965 – 2013

- 1,800 Projects
- 82,000 acres of wetlands
- 32,000 acres of uplands



DUC Conservation Programs

Wetland Restoration / Enhancement

- With-in Conservation Priority Areas
- Targeted at Agricultural Landscape.
- Support of Wetland Conservation Policies.

Habitat Assessment Management

- Management of 82,000 acres of wetland projects.

Land Acquisition and Securement

- Fee simple acquisition
- Land donations.

DUC and Wetland Policy

Wetland loss in Canada is continuing at an alarming rate.

DUC traditional conservation programs is NOT enough to offset wetland loss.

DUC Corporate goal is to have effective wetland conservation policies in every province.



Atlantic Wetland Policy

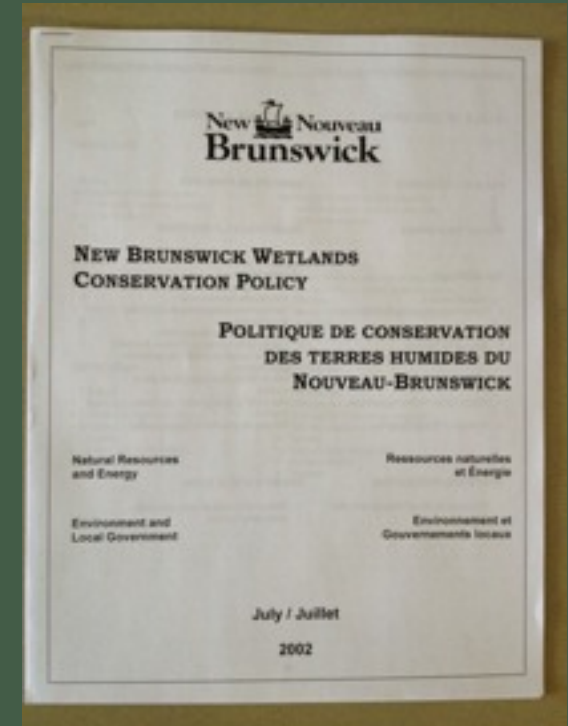
New Brunswick

Wetlands Conservation Policy

- Signed by the Minister in 2002
- Prevent the loss of Provincially Significant Wetland habitat and achieve the goal of **No Net Loss** of wetland function for all other wetlands.

Regulatory Mechanism:

- Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation
 - Clean Environment Act.
- Wetland and Watercourse Alteration Regulation
 - Clean Water Act.



Atlantic Wetland Policy

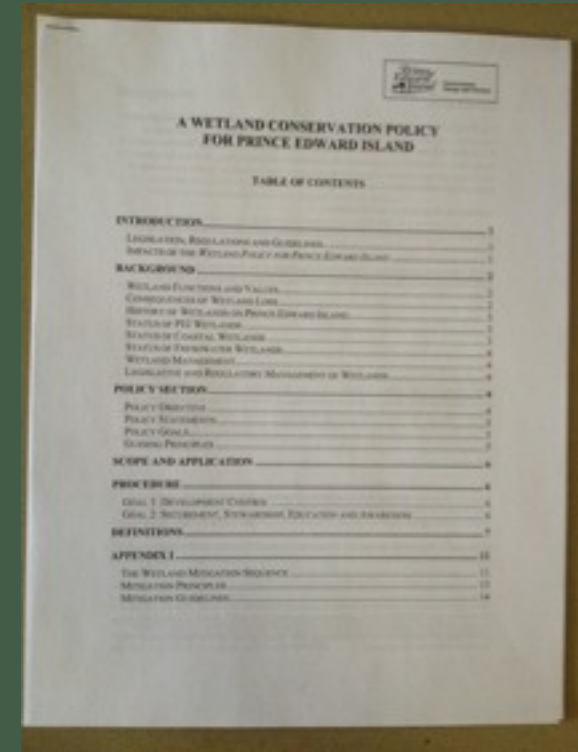
Prince Edward Island

Wetlands Conservation Policy

- Signed by the Minister in 2003
- Maintain wetland functions and values and recommend appropriate mitigation measures to insure **No Net Loss** of wetlands and wetland function.

Regulatory Mechanism:

- Wetland and Watercourse Alteration Regulation
 - Environmental Protection Act.



Atlantic Wetland Policy

Nova Scotia

Wetlands Conservation Policy

- Signed by the Minister in 2011
- Prevent the net loss of wetland area and function with a goal of **No Loss** in Wetlands of Special Significance.

Regulatory Mechanism:

- Activities Designation Regulation
- Environmental Assessment Regulation
 - Environment Act.



Atlantic Wetland Policy

Newfoundland and Labrador Wetland Policy.

- Guides development in and around wetlands and water bodies – focused on water quality.
- There is no mitigation hierarchy referenced in the current policy directive and wetlands can be altered through the permitting process without the need to compensate.

Regulatory Mechanism:

- Policy directive – guides development in wetlands
 - Water Resource Act SNL 2002, c W4.01 s. 1

Policy Similarities

NB, NS and PEI:

- **No Net Loss of wetland function and or area.**
- **Mitigation Sequence in place**
 - **Avoidance**
 - **Minimization**
 - **Compensation**
 - **only when all other practical and reasonable alternatives have been exhausted.**

Policy Implementation

New Brunswick:

Wetland And Watercourse Alteration Regulation

- Proponent must apply to alter a wetland. (WAWA)
- If WAWA is approved, mitigation sequence is initiated
- If compensation is required – what happens???

In 2002 – 2008 – minimal approvals for wetland alterations.

- Compensation requirements
 - Like for like
 - 3:1 ratio (minimum - depending on wetland type)
 - On site, in same watershed or same eco region.

New Brunswick Cont'd

The learning experience:

- To deal with this pressure in 2011 NB DOE/DNR proposed a new “predictive wetland” mapping layer.
- 2011 – Minister conducted a listening tour in NB.
- February 2012 – long term wetland management strategy.
 - 13 different strategies – overall weekend the protection of wetlands in NB.
 - 2:1 ratio – if a permit is required to alter a wetland.

DUC has a Memorandum of Understanding with NB DOE.

Policy Implementation

Prince Edward Island:

Wetland And Watercourse Alteration Regulation.

- Proponent must apply to alter a wetland. (WAWA)
- If WAWA is approved, mitigation sequence is initiated
- If compensation is required – what happens???

Compensation requirements.

- 3:1 Compensation ratio
- Delivery area is very flexible – island wide.
- PEI government handles all \$\$ transactions for compensation. (less than 2 hectares/ year)

DUC has a Memorandum of Understanding with PEI Environment.

Policy Implementation

Nova Scotia:

- **W**etland **A**nd **W**atercourse **A**lteration.
 - Proponent must apply to alter a wetland. (WAWA)
 - If WAWA is approved, mitigation sequence is initiated
 - If compensation is required – what happens???
- Compensation requirements
 - 2:1 compensation ratio.
 - 1:1 compensation only as part of a package.
 - As close to alteration as possible – flexible.
 - Implementation process CLEARLY defined.

DUC has a Memorandum of Understanding with NSE.

Summary

What have we learned in 11 years?

Wetland Conservation Policies will provide effective wetland protection **IF**:

A hierarchy mitigation sequence is a component and is adhered to:

- 1 - AVOIDANCE: proponents are required to avoid the wetland if at all possible.
- 2 - MINIMIZATION: if all opportunities for avoidance have been exhausted than proponents are required to minimize their impact on the wetland.

Summary

Wetland Conservation Policies will provide effective wetland protection **IF**:

- **3 - COMPENSATION**: is a last resort, there is a clearly defined, efficient process for proponents.
- Example: NB Wetland Conservation Policy evolution.
 - Developers / Municipalities.
 - Mapping



Summary

Wetland Conservation Policies will provide effective wetland protection **IF**:

There are qualified wetland compensation *delivery agents*.

- Private, non- profit NGO's, watershed groups.
- Manage and maintain projects as required
- Monitor projects
- Cost effective.
- Acceptable sites identified.



In Conclusion

Wetland Conservation Policies will provide effective wetland protection **IF**:

Wetland compensation process has to be effective and efficient!!

- Proponents need to be aware of the regulatory requirements
 - Compensation ratio's, acceptable projects and monitoring.
 - Clear direction on types of acceptable compensation.
 - Wetland restoration / enhancement / protection.
- Regulatory process needs to be efficient.
 - Permitting to approval to follow up.
 - Nova Scotia example. (permits for a comp project)

Thank you.

Questions????

