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# ***Annual Report*** ***2021-2022***

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Annual General Meeting  
Friday, October 21, 2022  
Delta Hotel and Conference Centre,  
Dartmouth, NS  
In-Person

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*Recreation Nova Scotia acknowledges we are in Mi'kma'ki – the unceded territory and ancestral homeland of the Mi'kmaq Nation. Our relationship is based on a series of Peace and Friendship treaties between the Mi'kmaq Nation and the Crown, dating back to 1725. We acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and culture of all the Mi'kmaq Peoples of this province. In Nova Scotia we recognize that We are All Treaty People.*

### **AT A GLANCE**

Recreation Nova Scotia (RNS) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to building and sustaining active healthy lifestyles and communities in Nova Scotia. RNS exists to lead, inspire and support Nova Scotians toward healthier futures through recreational experiences. Established in 1998, RNS is a central resource agency for members and stakeholders of the recreation industry. RNS provides leadership, training, and support to help meet national, provincial and local priorities. Through a diverse network of partners and extensive programs and services, RNS actively advocates accessibility and inclusiveness to recreation. RNS has a strong membership, which includes community leaders, practitioners, students, academics, elected officials, and voluntary sector organizations across Nova Scotia who are the direct providers of recreation and related opportunities at the community level.

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

- Champion, promote and advocate for recreation as an essential element in building healthy, caring and vibrant communities;
- Facilitate the education and development of recreation professionals & volunteers;
- Promote connectivity between recreation sector professionals, influencers and beneficiaries.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Recreation Nova Scotia inspires and supports a diverse and comprehensive network of partners committed to addressing the recreation needs of all Nova Scotians, through provision of leadership and a strong provincial voice.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>President</b>	Gordon Tate, Active Living Coordinator, Municipality of Chester
<b>President Elect</b>	Vacant
<b>Vice President of Financing</b>	Chris Atwood, Executive Director, CBDC Blue Water
<b>Vice President of Monitoring</b>	Joel Dawe, Municipality of Truro
<b>Recording Officer</b>	Clare Steele, Active Communities Coordinator, Pictou County
<b>Director at Large (2 years)</b>	John Nicholas, Potlotek First Nations
<b>Director at Large (2 years)</b>	Josh Kennedy, Village of Bible Hill
<b>Director at Large (1 year)</b>	Gabrielle Riley Gallagher, Senior Analyst, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables
<b>Director at Large (1 year)</b>	Heather MacNeil, Community Facility Partnerships Coordinator, HRM
<b>Director at Large (Student Rep)</b>	Kiya McDow, Student, Acadia University
<b>Dept. Of Communities, Culture, and Heritage (non-voting)</b>	Robin Norrie, Recreation Manager
<b>Recreation Nova Scotia Staff (non-voting)</b>	Marc Seguin, Executive Director, RNS, Ex-officio

### **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*Gordon Tate and Marc Seguin*

The 2021-2022 fiscal year, saw Nova Scotians continuing to adapt to the changing COVID-19 pandemic. The year found Nova Scotians looking to remain active, while dealing with constant facility and programming restrictions. These challenges highlighted the importance of outdoor and un-programmed recreation and a need to support the recreational sector through new education and networking opportunities. RNS continued to work with the Provincial Government, our partners, and stakeholders to advise and guide safe participation in recreational activities throughout this challenging time.



During this fiscal year, RNS was excited to launch the **Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation** project in effort to respond to an escalation of racist and discriminatory behaviour in the recreation sector locally and nationally. The impacts of these incidents on the psychological health and well-

being of those affected are serious, and is made worse by the lack of supports available. In response to this, RNS, with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, has worked with Wisdom2Action (W2A) to develop an Anti-Racism Charter. The Charter will provide unifying guidelines for the recreation sector to address and combat systemic racism within the sector.

**Project Objectives Include:**

- Confronting racism within the recreation sector.
- Fostering equitable treatment and opportunities for all accessing recreation.
- Promoting and leading conversations around diversity, equity, racism, and religious discrimination on provincial, national, and international levels.
- Contributing further research and evidence that highlights the disparities and issues faced by members of marginalized communities in recreation.

In the Spring of 2022 RNS joined the Recreation Facilities Association of Nova Scotia (RFANS) and our Atlantic counterparts to host the Atlantic Recreation and Facilities Conference in St. John’s, NFLD. In partnership with RFANS we were pleased to receive a financial contribution of \$28,502.52 from the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism & Heritage for the purpose of professional development of our members within the recreation and facilities sector.

For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the Atlantic Recreation Sector held a face-to-face meeting at the fourth Atlantic Recreation and Facilities Conference and Trade Show.

In summary, conference attendance and participation were outstanding. The results were as follows:

Totals	Details
185	Total number of registered participants at the conference. <i>*Original target was 100</i>
65	Total number of registered participants from Nova Scotia
35%	Overall percentage of Nova Scotia’s representation
28	Subsidies were awarded to RFANS/RNS members

Totals	Details Continued
18	Subsidies for the conference registration fee and some incidental expenses was awarded to RFANS/RNS members
10	Full conference registrations, travel, accommodations for RFANS/RNS members who met the criteria of being from the following equity groups: youth, disabled, Indigenous persons, African Nova Scotians, or other racially visible persons, plus RNS/RFANS staff/presidents.

The RNS Board has kept staff focused on implementing the strategies of the RNS Strategic Plan which the Board endorsed to set the direction of the organization through to 2024.

**The Priority Outcomes of the Plan include:**

- Institutional Support
- Access and Individual Support
- Openness and Collaboration
- Recreation Capacity Building

**[VIEW THE 2021-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN HERE](#)**

Over the course of the last year, RNS has been working along Provincial Recreation Organizations (PROs), our Municipal partners, Members at large, and post secondary institutions to ensure support under the Recreational Capacity Building pillar. Staff have joined the Recreational Management Program Advisory Committee at Dalhousie University and have hired two youth employees through the Canadian Federal Governments Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Initiative (“YESS”) which is facilitated through the Canadian Park and Recreation Association. Students were hired directly from both Dalhousie University and the Nova Scotia Community College’s Recreation Management Programs.

Since our last AGM held in October 2021, we have had new staff members join RNS. In the fall of 2021, Jillian Anderson joined RNS as our new Financial Coordinator. Jill brings vast financial practice experience to the team and has contributed significantly with updating RNS accounting practices. Following Jill, Cassandra Manuel joined RNS as the Provincial Recreation and Sport Inclusion Manager in early 2022. Cassandra’s role focuses on support for sport and recreation organizations in becoming more inclusive and

accessible to diverse populations. In September, Robyn Morris joined the team as our Digital Media and Communications Manager after we said good bye to Jacqueline Fraser, whom left to pursue another opportunity. We wish Jacqueline all the best with her new adventure.

The next year will continue to see RNS advocate for the sector and be instrumental in continuing the fight to remove barriers to recreation. In the late fall of 2022, RNS will unveil an Anti-Racism Training E-Module for the sector. Additionally, RNS will be rolling out a new “**Equipment Loan Program**” with a secured investment of \$200,000 toward the new program.

## RECREATION NOVA SCOTIA FINANCIAL SUMMARY

*Fiscal Year April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022*

MNP was engaged to do the 2021-22 independent audit of RNS’s financials for the year ending March 31, 2022. A clean audit opinion was provided by the auditors. As detailed on the Statement of Operations, RNS ended the fiscal 2022 with a deficit of just under \$115K. The organization transferred approximately \$17K from the externally restricted RPAC funding to the operating account to support expenditures. Operationally RNS was able to capitalize on grants to continue its programming. In addition, at year end, the organization has \$260K of deferred contributions to support future programming.

RNS has a strong statement of financial position as of March 31, 2022 with total current assets of \$499K and additional cash held in a term deposit valued at \$183,936. RNS has few liabilities which include \$64,398 in accounts payable and accruals and deferred revenues of just over \$260K. RNS has \$152,956 in unrestricted net assets in addition to \$228,035 in restricted assets.

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

### ANTI-RACISM CHARTER IN RECREATION

Recreation Nova Scotia was successful in securing funding from the Government of Canada (Canadian Heritage) to create an Anti-Racism in Recreation Charter. The project aims to collect data on the experiences of racism in recreation, beyond the anecdotal, with the goal of creating unifying guidelines for the sector to address and combat racism in recreation.

Wisdom2Action (W2A), a social enterprise and consulting firm, were contracted in December 2021 to support RNS with the project. A Steering Committee and Youth Advisory Council were formed in early 2022.

The Anti-Racism Charter project consists of four main stages: survey development, focus groups, training, and a Charter development and launch.

The survey was developed in and distributed in March 2022 with promotion taking place with a range of recreation stakeholders such as municipalities, First Nations, Provincial Recreation Organizations, Community Recreation Organizations, etc. The survey aimed to understand how racism is experienced across the sector, what training needs exist for the sector, and what an Anti-Racism in Recreation Charter should include.

Focus groups, training and the Charter development would take place from April – September with the launch of the Anti-Racism Charter being held in October 2022.

Full information about the Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation project is available [here](#).

### NOVA SCOTIA OUTDOOR NETWORK

The NSON Leadership Team furthered the work guided by their *Theory of Change* model. One key area of focus has been discussion, communication, and celebration of Goal 3 of the Shared Strategy – *Connecting People and Nature*, as well as celebrating efforts to create equity and diversify participation and leadership in the outdoors.

The Outdoor Network started a *Story Sharing* blog series with the first piece launching in late summer 2021. This highlighted the ‘**Art on the Trail**’ projects taking place in the South Shore, focusing on the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg and the Municipality of Chester. A second *Story Sharing* blog article was released focusing on ‘**Project Branch Out**,’ an initiative run through Parks Canada Youth Ambassador, Fawn Logan-Young, aiming to offer unique experiences to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) in hiking, camping, kayaking, and stand-up paddle boarding.

Responding to increased interest and demand for equipment loan programs, the NSON hosted an online discussion around best practices and areas for development for equipment loan programs. The session hosted in January 2022 was attended by



approximately 30 parks and recreation stakeholders with [summary notes](#) available online.

#### Nova Scotia Outdoor Network Leadership Team:

- Janet Barlow, Hike Nova Scotia
- Sandra Fraser, Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Natural Resources and Renewables
- Britt Vegsund, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
- Jillian Griffin, Province of Nova Scotia, CCTH
- Anjeanette LeMay, Outdoor Education & Training Professional

#### *With staff support from:*

- Graham Mounsey, Recreation Nova Scotia
- Jacqueline Fraser, Recreation Nova Scotia
- Julia Stephenson, Province of Nova Scotia, CCTH
- Paul Tingley, Province of Nova Scotia, CCTH

#### NOVA SCOTIA CONNECT

Nova Scotia Connect had lots going on in the background with a **Standardization and Enhancement Project** taking place throughout 2021-2022. This project involved synthesizing data from a number of sources including users, accessibility experts, data managers, and Google Analytics with a goal of improving the quality of the data and the user experience.

A final report was issued March 2022 with a number of recommendations for improvements to be made to NS Connect going forward. Alongside this background work, the NS Connect Management Group kept up with social media campaigns highlighting options available on NS Connect and regional Connect sites such as *Equipment Loan Programs, Trails, and places to watch the sunrise and sunset.*

#### RECREATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Recreation Nova Scotia received a grant in March 2021, from the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia to review and revise the *Recreation for Mental Health* training to make it more culturally appropriate and safe for African Nova Scotians, Mi'kmaq communities, Newcomers and members of the 2sLGBTQ+ community.

Coordinators were hired to lead the work and an advisory committee was struck to guide the process and offer advice.

Seven workshops (4 virtual and 3 in-person) were organized to introduce the training and gather feedback from participants from each of the four target groups. In addition to the workshops, several consultations were held with individuals to gather additional feedback.

As a result of this project, a document for trainers entitled “**Considerations for Diverse Populations**” was created. As a final step in the project, the training materials, the Power Point and the Considerations documents were all translated into plain language by Inclusion Nova Scotia.

In addition to training associated with this project in Nova Scotia, we delivered two more virtual *Recreation for Mental Health* workshops to organizations in Alberta.

We also continued working with Dalhousie University researchers and our lawyer to complete a licensing agreement for use with other provinces who want to purchase the *Recreation for Mental Health* training for their own use.

#### HIGH FIVE IN NOVA SCOTIA

During the spring of 2021, COVID-19 continued to impact organizations and their ability to offer recreation programs and train staff. But as summer approached, some organizations began training their leaders and coaches again. There were seven in-person *Principles of Healthy Child Development* workshops and 3 virtual workshops offered during the months of June and July and a total of 184 leaders were trained. The total trained during this fiscal year in PHCD was only 252 leaders. That number is approximately one third of the leaders normally trained before the pandemic.

On a very positive note, we were able to resume training of our *Principles of Healthy Aging Trainers* with the monies received from the *Age Friendly Communities* grant in 2019. From September to March 2021, we hosted four *Principles of Healthy Aging* workshops and four *Healthy Aging Trainer* workshops. In total we certified 40 trainers across Nova Scotia. This was a goal set by the Department of Seniors in 2019 so we were excited to meet this target. Workshops were held in Halifax, Waterville, Antigonish and

Bridgewater. Trainers have until December 2023 to complete their certification by co-facilitating a Principles of Healthy Aging Workshop. Once certification is complete, they can deliver workshops independently to organizations serving older adults.

HIGH FIVE has been challenged by COVID-19 but Parks and Recreation Ontario has increased the virtual options available to learners over the last two years. Although most organizations prefer in-person training, virtual training has enabled leaders to receive a nationally recognized certification that will help them work with children and in recreation and sport settings.

### GREEN JOBS

The **CPRA Green Jobs Initiative** provides direct financial support (via wage subsidies of up to 50%) to local governments and community organizations to support jobs that focus on employing youth for park, conservation or nature projects. Over the year alone, over 700 youth were engaged in this program across Canada – and 76% of these youth reported facing barriers to employment. In Nova Scotia, grants were awarded to 11 organizations, employing 18 youth.

Communities across Nova Scotia reported that that this wage subsidy has been vitally important and has enabled them to advance important green projects that would not have otherwise have taken place. Our youth tell us that the program allowed them to build skills, grow their appreciation for the environment and connect to the green initiatives in their own communities.

The funding for the *CPRA Green Jobs program* ended on March 31, 2022 and was not renewed by the Federal Government. The status of the program is pending.

### YOUTH JOBS

RNS continued its relationship with CPRA and facilitated the **Youth Employment Experience** program.

Grants awarded for 2022 in Nova Scotia resulted in 18 positions at 16 organizations; which is an increase from 9 positions at 9 organizations in 2021. Overall, in Atlantic Canada, a total of 38 positions were awarded; an increase from 17 in 2021.

Four positions in Nova Scotia are working on accessibility. One was hosted by Millbrook and worked on the *Accessibility Framework*; two with *HRM's Inclusion and Accessibility team* (one Inclusion Coordinator and one Outdoor Inclusion Intern); one at *Sail Able* as the Club Administrator, increasing capacity for the program.

In both years, organizations have been needing to decline funding due to the inability to find youth to hire. A continued partnership with *Mentor Canada* to deliver Mentorship Training webinars is ongoing.

## STAFF

### RECREATION NOVA SCOTIA

Marc Seguin, Executive Director

Graham Mounsey, Program Manager

Heather Beaton, PRO Administrative Coordinator

Cassandra Manuel, Provincial Recreation and Sport Inclusion Project Manager

Jillian Anderson, Financial Coordinator

Robyn Morris, Digital Media and Communications Manager (*formerly Jaqualine Fraser during this reporting period*)

Debbie Bauld, Program Manager

*with student support from*

Alan MacKeigan, Events

Emma Reid, Inclusion and Access Assistant

## PARTNERS



### FUNDING PARTNERS

Special thanks to the Department of Communities, Culture Tourism and Heritage for their continued support.



### SECTOR PARTNERS

We're grateful to **Canadian Parks and Recreation Association** (CPRA) for their amazing partnership. The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) is a national organization dedicated to realizing the full potential of parks and recreation as a major contributor to community health and vibrancy. Membership includes the 13 provincial and territorial parks and recreation associations and their extensive networks of service providers in over 90% of Canadian communities.

