



RECREATION

NOVA SCOTIA

Annual Report

2022-2023

Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Digby Pines Resort & Spa
Digby, Nova Scotia

Recreation Nova Scotia would like to thank the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage (CCTH) and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) for your continued support and commitment.

Thank you!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

RNS at a Glance 1
Board of Directors 1
Message from the President and Executive Director 2
Financial Summary 4
A Year in Review 4

RECREATION NOVA SCOTIA STAFF
 2022-2023

- Marc Seguin**, Executive Director
- Debbie Bauld**, Program Manager
- Graham Mounsey**, Program Manager
- Claire Steele**, Student Intern & Events
- Jillian Anderson**, Financial Coordinator
- Alan MacKeigan**, Education Coordinator
- Heather Beaton**, Recreation Development
- Emma Reid**, Inclusion and Access Assistant
- Robyn Morris**, Digital Media & Communications Manager
- Cassandra Manuel**, Provincial Recreation & Sport Inclusion Project Manager

RECREATION NOVA SCOTIA 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 the provision of leadership and a strong provincial voice.

2022/2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Rachel Bedingfield, Director of Parks and Recreation, Town of Kentville
Past President	Gord Tate, Active Living Coordinator for the Municipality of Chester
Vice President of Financing	Chris Atwood, Executive Director, CBDC Blue Water
Vice President of Monitoring	Joel Dawe, Municipality of Truro
Recording Officer	Clare Steele, Active Communities Coordinator, Pictou County
Director at Large (2 years)	Gabrielle Riley Gallagher, Senior Analyst, Nova Scotia Government
Director at Large (1 year)	Laura Jacobs, Active Living Coordinator, New Minas
Director at Large (1 year)	Christena Dykstra, Physical Active Strategic Coordinator, Millbrook First Nation
Director at Large (2 years)	Josh Nicholas, Potlotek First Nations Inclusion at McInnes Cooper Law Firm
Student Representative	Jack MacLean, NSCC
Dept. Of Communities, Culture, and Heritage (non-voting)	Michelle Aucoin, CCTH
Recreation Nova Scotia Staff (non-voting)	Marc Seguin, Executive Director, RNS, Ex-officio

Advocating recreation for Nova Scotians for 25 years

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rachel Bedingfield and Marc Seguin

The 2022-2023 fiscal year saw Nova Scotians continuing to adapt to the changing COVID-19 pandemic. The year found Nova Scotians looking to remain healthy and connected while dealing with constant facility and programming restrictions. These challenges highlighted the importance of outdoor and un-programmed recreation and the need to support the recreation sector through new education and networking opportunities. Recreation Nova Scotia (RNS) continued to work with our partners at the Provincial Government and community 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 as a response to an escalation and greater awareness of racist and discriminatory behaviour in the recreation sector locally, provincially, and nationally. The impacts of these incidents

on the psychological health and well-being of those affected are serious and made worse by the lack of support available. In response, RNS, with funding support 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.

Project objectives include:

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

The RNS board voted unanimously to sign our own Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation. The Board continues to work to address racism and discrimination through the evaluation of policies, procedures, and by-law reviews. In the late fall of 2023, RNS will unveil an Anti-Racism online training module for the sector to continue supporting this vital work. We recognize this work is ongoing, and we are committed to having uncomfortable and brave conversations that lead to growth and a greater understanding of how we can better support our members and all Nova Scotians as we work towards healthier communities.

In Spring 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 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.

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

Priority outcomes of the plan include:

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

Over the last year, RNS has worked alongside the 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 Dalhousie University Recreational Management Program Advisory Committee and hired two youth employees through the Canadian Federal Government's Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Initiative (YESS) facilitated through the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. Students were hired directly from Dalhousie University and the Nova Scotia Community College's Recreation Management Programs.

This year, we welcomed new staff members to RNS. Cassandra Manuel joined RNS as the Provincial Recreation and Sport Inclusion Manager in early 2022. Cassandra's role focuses on supporting sports 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 goodbye to Jacqueline Fraser. We wish Jacqueline all the best with her new adventure. We also said goodbye to Debbie Bauld, who retired in December. Debbie spent much of her career as a part of the Recreation Nova Scotia team. She was responsible for coordinating High Five in our province, helping to support the delivery of high-quality recreation programming for all Nova Scotians. We wish Debbie all the best and thank her for her years of dedication to our field.

RNS continues to hear from our members about the changing demands placed on our sector. Now more than ever, it is clear the role that recreation must play in times of crisis and in supporting the building of resilient communities. We are committed to working with our partners at the local, provincial and federal levels to ensure the health and well-being of communities across the province and continue to work to remove barriers to recreation. We heard from our members how important having access to free equipment is to support the recreational needs of Nova Scotians. RNS has rolled out a new "Equipment Loan Program" with a secured investment of \$200,000 to support this work.

As an organization, RNS is grateful to be able to work and play In Mi'kma'ki. We are committed to serving our members and, through strong partnerships and collaboration, to bettering the health and well-being of all Nova Scotians.

RECREATION NOVA SCOTIA FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fiscal Year April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

MNP was engaged to do the 2022-2023 independent audit of RNS's financials for the year ending March 31, 2023. A clean audit opinion was provided by the auditors.

Monita Taylor, CPA, CA and Partner at MNP provided oversight on the review. The detailed Audited Financial Statements can be found on our website.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

We kicked off 2023 with the launch of our new website in January, giving it a refreshed look. We also created brand guidelines to create a consistent brand strategy across print and digital platforms and in use with our partnerships.

ANTI-RACISM CHARTER IN RECREATION

Development of the Anti-Racism Charter ramped up in March 2022 with the distribution of a survey to understand the experiences of racism in recreation in Nova Scotia, as well as the training needs for the sector and the potential of an Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation.

Survey and focus groups continued from March to July, including open focus groups for the recreation sector and closed focus groups for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) participants. This included presentations to various groups, including at the Atlantic Recreation & Facilities Conference (ARFC) in St John's, Newfoundland.

We developed three in-person training sessions from the information gathered, held in May in Halifax, Shelburne, and Sydney, with approximately 70 attendees across the three sessions.

After a robust draft review process during the summer, the Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation was launched in October 2022 as a pre-conference session at the RNS Annual Conference, with over 110 people attending to hear from RNS and Wisdom 2 Action on the development, the first organizations to publicly sign on, as well as keynotes and panel discussions throughout the day.

Communication and promotion continued throughout 22'-23', including six regional presentations as part of the inaugural Nova Scotia Anti-Racism in Sport & Recreation Week in November 2022, with approximately 100 attendees across the six sessions in Kentville, Dartmouth, Truro, New Glasgow, Sydney, and Yarmouth.

By the end of March 2022, 17 organizations in recreation and sport had formally adopted the Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation, demonstrating their commitment to addressing and combating racism within recreation.

We're grateful to the Government of Canada - Canadian Heritage for funding to support this important initiative.

Project Steering Committee:

- Colleen Belle
- Crystal Watson
- Fawn Logan-Young
- Heather MacNeil
- Joshua Nicholas
- Nick Lenehan

Youth Advisory Council:

- Ali Koperqualuk
- Fawn Logan-Young
- Nick Williams
- Vanessa Hartley

Anti-Racism Training

Following the in-person training sessions in May, RNS began working with a consultant to develop an Anti-Racism in Recreation online module geared towards recreation professionals and volunteers. The module incorporates data collected via the development of the Anti-Racism Charter, including recreation-specific scenarios. The training will be hosted on the RNS online training campus and available in the 2023-2024 year.

NOVA SCOTIA CONNECT

Following the completion of the Standardization & Enhancement Project at the end of March 2022, the NS Connect Management Committee convened to consider how best to service the vast amount of community recreation information housed on NS Connect. Work continues with the NS Connect Management Group and partners in the 2023-24 year.

RECREATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

In collaboration with a licensee currently offering R4MH trainings in the Northwest Territories, the R4MH training will be reviewed to identify areas for content improvement.

HIGH FIVE IN NOVA SCOTIA

The 2022/2023 workshop breakdown is as follows:

PHCD Train the Trainer: 1 workshop, 13 new PHCD trainers

High Five Sport: 1 workshop, 13 learners

Principles of Healthy Aging: 2 workshops, 35 learners, 2 newly certified trainers

Strengthening Children's Mental Health: 1 workshop, 29 learners

Intro to Conflict Resolution: 1 workshop, 27 learners.

Principles of Healthy Child Development: 40 workshops, 604 learners.

As of March 2023, High Five pivoted to a paperless approach for all training workshops. While learners no longer have access to hard copies of workbooks, High Five will release online toolkits related to each training soon.

Using the \$5,000 of grant funding provided by Community Links, RNS will continue to offer PHA training at a reduced rate. The overall goal is to have facilitated two workshops and certify two new PHA trainers for each region of the province by April 2024.

With 604 learners receiving PHCD training this year, we have seen a significant increase since last year's total of 254.

EVENTS

June is Parks and Recreation Month

June is Parks & Recreation Month(JPRM) in Nova Scotia – a time to recognize and celebrate recreation's tremendous contributions to our health, well-being and quality of life. JPRM ran from June 1 to June 30, 2022, and collaborated with the Healthy Tomorrow Foundation's Make Your Move and the Nova Scotia Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA).

Each week, we had a new theme consisting of accessible recreation, parks and trails, recreation and mental health, and nature. We highlighted organizations or individuals doing great things related to the week's theme each week. We encouraged followers to comment and share on posts for a chance to win a weekly gift card of \$50.00. To qualify, they had to also follow both RNS and Make Your Move on social media.

We also used this campaign to help promote the CMHA Ride Don't Hide event/fundraiser that promoted moving for your mental health, whether walking, cycling, or doing yoga. This event also helps to build awareness, inclusion, and acceptance and encourages and supports everyone to speak openly about their mental health.

Take the Roof Off Winter

Take the Roof Off Winter (TTROW) is our annual winter active campaign to inspire Nova Scotians to make regular physical activity part of their daily lives during the dark, colder months.

We again partnered with Healthy Tomorrow Foundation's Make Your Move and ran the campaign from January 9 to February 20, 2023, with the theme "Be Prepared." We ran a winter bingo photo contest each month for prizes, shared historical Canadian storms, weekly tidbits and blogs written by the esteemed Janice Landry, who also worked for the Healthy Tomorrow Foundation as part of this campaign, showed how the RNS team takes the roof off winter, and had Frankie MacDonald give a video shout-out to kick off the campaign. There was also a planned winter walk day at the Salt Marsh Trails to end the campaign and contribute to the winter walk series hosted by Hike Nova Scotia. Unfortunately, due to the weather, it was cancelled.

After a tough winter of little snow, we had few participants in the contest because many activities in the bingo required some snow. However, the campaign drove over 900 new users to our website, with the TTROW page being the most viewed page for both months.

Explore Recreation Day

In March 2023, RNS launched the first annual Explore Recreation Day led by our student intern, Claire Steele. We invited students in recreation programs from across the province to learn more about the recreation sector and employment and volunteer opportunities. Over 40 students from NSCC Truro Campus, Dalhousie University, and Acadia University attended this event. They got to engage in detailed presentations around crisis management in the recreation sector, facility management and operations, events, careers in therapeutic recreation, a resume-building workshop, and more.

This event is vital for our future recreation professionals to connect with other students with similar interests and network with recreation professionals. We have seen first-hand how this event has positively impacted students. Students found themselves in volunteer roles and employed based on opportunities presented at this event. One great example is the North American Indigenous Games, which capture many students' interests. This event received great feedback, and the hope is that it continues as an annual networking event for recreation students and professionals.

PROVINCIAL RECREATION ORGANIZATION

As we move into the new four-year cycle, we will continue with some of the key resources and supports that were provided over the last four years.

They include:

- Annual Fall check-ins with RNS and CCTH staff
- Support for the PRO Administrative Coordinator for tier 4 PROs
- Access to the RNS Google Drive (as an archive and shared working space)
- RNS website/social media
- Aligning the annual outcome reporting
- And continuation of the Provincial Organization Professional Development monthly sessions

Provincial Recreation Organization Assessment Tool (PROAT)

RNS supported CCTH through the PROAT process from April to June 2022, serving as pillar leads for Goal 2 - Inclusion & Access and Goal 5 - Recreation Capacity.

PROAT leads:

Active Living: Ryan Francis, Manager, Provincial Outreach & Coordination, with CCTH

Inclusion & Access: Cassie Manuel, Provincial Recreation & Sport Inclusion Project Manager with Recreation Nova Scotia

Connecting People with Nature: Misty James, Recreation Director with the Municipality of Barrington

Supportive Environments: Jillian Griffin, Before & After Program Manager with the Chignecto Central Regional Center for Education

Recreation Capacity: Graham Mounsey, Program Manager with Recreation Nova Scotia

FUNDING

Equipment Loan Program

In support of the Thriving Communities Program, Recreation Nova Scotia launched its first Equipment Loan Program Grant in early 2023. This grant (for a total of \$200,00) will allow Nova Scotian organizations, groups, communities, towns, and municipalities to start or maintain their community Equipment Loan Program (ELP) initiatives. RNS, with community input, created two documents that would help enhance the knowledge of equipment loan program start-up and maintenance and guide applicants through the grant process.

The application closed on February 3, 2023, with over 60 applications with a provincial ask of over \$300,000.00, showing a need for further work around equipment loan programs, inclusion, and accessibility. Thirty-six recipients received funds, and Recreation Nova Scotia remains committed to advocating for future funding opportunities for the sector in recognition of this need.

CPRA 's Reaching Each and Everyone Grant Program

RNS supported the administration of CPRA's Reaching Each & Every One grant program through Sports Canada's Community Sport For All initiative. The funding aimed to rebuild and increase sport participation rates, particularly amongst Black, Indigenous, racially diverse, 2SLGBTQIA+, low-income and newcomer populations, and people living with disabilities.

Almost \$500,000 was distributed to 24 organizations in Nova Scotia as part of the grant program.

Youth Employment Experience Program

The CPRA Youth Employment Experience, provides direct financial support (via 100% wage subsidies) to local governments, allowing them to offer placements that will focus on youth gaining a broad range of skills, knowledge and experience in the community parks and recreation sector. Not only will this program provide hands-on training, but each youth will be paired with a mentor at their place of employment to provide an immersive experience. Via this program, local governments will be able to hire additional youth to advance their parks and recreation priorities.

This year RNS and CPRA we were able to work together in funding 27 positions in communities across Atlantic Canada.



Celebrating 25 years



Stay Connected With Us!



@RecreationNovaScotia



@recreationns



@RecreationNovaScotia