

Statement on Provincial Government Funding Cuts

A Message from Our President and Executive Director

Colleagues in Recreation,

In what has been a difficult week for Recreation Nova Scotia, the recreation sector, and many others focused on individual and community wellbeing, we wanted to share a short update on behalf of the organization.

With the tabling of the provincial budget, RNS were informed that our core funding from Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage would be reduced by 20%. This is in line with all provincial recreation and sport organizations funded through CCTH. In addition, there has also been substantial cuts to departmental grants including Active Communities Fund, Connect 2, Recreation Community Development Grant, and many more that deliver funding to local governments and groups across the province.

For close to 30 years, RNS has been supporting the recreation sector by working with members to provide a high-quality education and networking opportunities, resources, and importantly a unified voice to promote the values and benefits of recreation and leisure.

As an organization, the reduction in funding presents a new challenge but will not change our commitment to the sector and mission of RNS. We're grateful for the continued partnership with the province and commitment to recreation in Nova Scotia.

As a sector, however, the reduction and elimination of grants will be far-reaching and cascading. These decisions present an unfortunate reminder that the vital role of recreation remains underappreciated and misunderstood. When we scale back support for communities, we erode some of very experiences, places and resources that matter most to people. We lose the community events, the local sports tournaments, the groups who activate our outdoor spaces and parks, or maintain our favourite trails. When we invest in communities, we invest in the wellbeing of our province in quality of life, health, and the economy.

It's hard to fathom the true impact of these cuts at a community level. But as a sector, we have emerged from a series of crises in the past few years and continued to deliver. We were reminded by colleagues this week that we are "the fixers" and often hear the phrase "do more with less". Recreation, arts, and culture have consistently over-delivered with less and provide the good-news stories in our communities.

We are working with colleagues in CCTH to understand the changes as information becomes available. At the same time, we're engaging board and staff, our Government Relations Committee and key partners to coordinate a strategic advocacy response. We thank our membership and the broader sector for their continued commitment as we navigate this issue and welcome your input moving forward.

Whilst there is no clear path, we know we will find a way.

As always, thank you for all you do in your communities to enhance recreation and improve the lives of Nova Scotians.



Brendon Smithson
President
Recreation Nova Scotia



Graham Mounsey
Executive Director
Recreation Nova Scotia