

Annual Report 2025-2026

Recreation Nova Scotia



Healthier Futures Through Recreation



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Year in Review: 2025-26

Organization Overview

Recreation Nova Scotia (RNS) is a not-for-profit organization building active, healthy lifestyles since 1998, providing leadership, advocacy, and support to the recreation sector across Nova Scotia.

Leadership & Governance

The Board of Directors and staff team guided RNS through a year of learning. Messages from the President and Executive Director reflect on strategic priorities and sector milestones.

Financial Summary

Fiscal year April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026. Responsible stewardship of resources supported programs, services, and sector development province-wide.

Membership

194 total members representing municipalities, organizations, and individuals committed to advancing recreation in Nova Scotia.

Awards & Recognition

8 awards presented at the 2025 RNS Conference in Sydney, celebrating excellence and leadership across the sector.

Education

RNS continues to maintain and update the RecRoom, providing the sector with online training opportunities. RNS also started the development of a new sector-wide in-person training, *Recreation Foundations: Safe, Inclusive, Child-Centered Practice*.

Communications

351,000 social media impressions and 7,791 followers across platforms, reflecting significant growth in digital reach and engagement.

Anti-Racism, Inclusion & Equity

RNS continued to support the sector by advancing the Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation, bringing people together through the Anti-Racism Summit, contributing to conversations on inclusive green spaces, recognizing Access Awareness Week, and working with partners to improve accessibility across the sector.

Events & Conferences

RNS connected recreation professionals, partners, and communities through a variety of events and learning opportunities, including the 2025 Annual Conference in Sydney, the Atlantic Recreation and Facilities Conference, International Day of Play, and Recreation's Response: Climate Change Sharing Session.

Partnerships & Programs

Collaborations were strengthened across the sector through partnerships and programs that supported shared learning, increased access to resources, and advanced evidence-based approaches to recreation. This work included joining PlayFinder, collaborating with the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, participating in the Nova Scotia Women in Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation Task Team (WISPAR), and the Equipment Loan Program Research Project.

168

Conference Delegates

194

Total Members

8

Awards Presented

351K

Impressions online

7,791

Social Media Followers

58,000

Website views

9,462

Newsletter Deliveries

15

Conference Subsidies Awarded

6

New Anti-Racism Charter Signatories

11

Women Leaders Participating in the WISPAR Community of Practice

41

Trainings taken on the Rec Room

Introduction



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 recreation industry members and interested parties. 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.

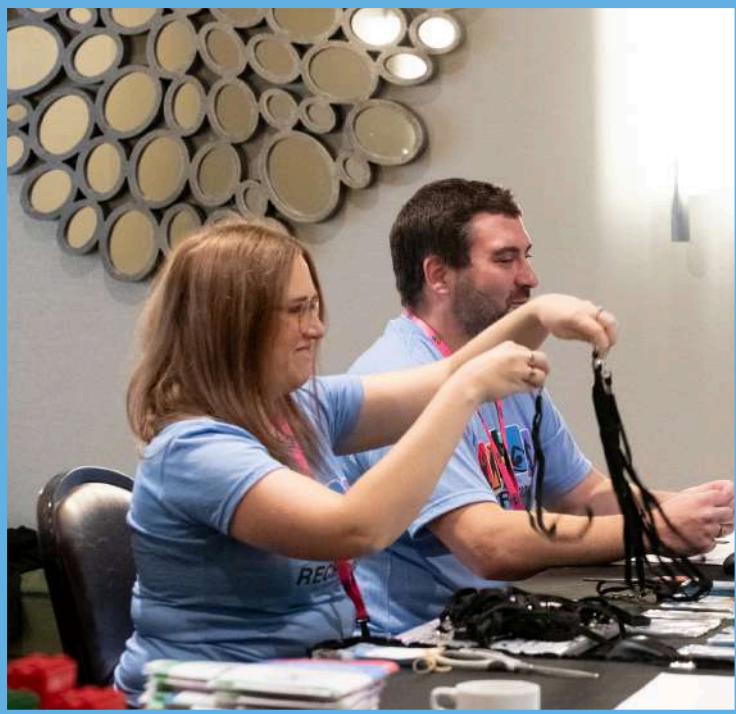
Strategic Direction

- 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

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

About Us



RNS Operations Staff 2025-2026

- **Graham Mounsey**, Executive Director
- **Alan MacKeigan**, Education Coordinator
- **Fawn Logan-Young**, Project Coordinator
- **Lisa Fedoruk**, Membership Coordinator
- **Kerri Jack**, Project Coordinator
- **Jillian Anderson**, Financial Coordinator

RNS Board 2025-2026

- **Brendon Smithson**, Director, Regional Recreation Services, Halifax Regional Municipality - President
- **Laura Jacobs**, Manager of Recreation Services, Town of Kentville - President-Elect
- **John Mitchell**, Associate, EY-Pathenon - Vice President of Finance
- **Clare Steele**, Active Communities Coordinator, Pictou County - Vice President of Monitoring
- **Jessica Allen**, Active Living Coordinator, Town of Amherst - Recording Officer
- **Agustina Cohen**, Dalhousie University - Student Director
- **Andrew Farrell**, Mi'kmaq Physical Activity Leader, L'sitkuk First Nation - Director at Large
- **Ruth-Ellen Jackson**, Northwood Volunteer Coordinator & Recreation Lead- Director at Large
- **Tissy Bolivar**, Program Coordinator, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg - Director at Large
- **Wil van Hal**, Recreation Manager, Cape Breton Regional Municipality - Director at Large
- **Jason Hansford-Smith**, Manager of Sport & Recreation, CCTH (ex-officio)
- **Graham Mounsey**, Executive Director, Recreation Nova Scotia (ex-officio)

A Note from the President

Brendon Smithson

PRESIDENT, RNS

As I reflect on this past year, and on my final year serving as President of Recreation Nova Scotia, I am filled with gratitude, pride, and optimism for the future of our sector. It has been an honour to work alongside dedicated professionals, volunteers, partners, and advocates who work tirelessly to enrich the lives of Nova Scotians through recreation.

This year was not without its challenges. Budget pressures and funding constraints created difficult realities for organizations, communities, and recreation professionals across the province. Yet, it is during times like this that the true strength of our sector shines. Recreation leaders, volunteers, and community organizations came together with a shared commitment to putting people and communities first, ensuring Nova Scotians continue to enjoy the places where they live, work, and play. Despite these challenges, we continued to grow, collaborate, and make meaningful impacts. Together, we strengthened connections across the province, advanced important conversations around equity and inclusion, expanded professional development opportunities, and championed recreation as an essential contributor to healthy, vibrant, and resilient communities.

None of this work would be possible without the exceptional Recreation Nova Scotia staff team. Their professionalism, creativity, and commitment continue to drive this organization forward. Whether supporting members, delivering programs, coordinating events, advocating for the sector, or building valuable partnerships, they consistently go above and beyond. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your outstanding work and dedication throughout the year.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to our Executive Director, Graham Mounsey. Graham's strategic leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment to recreation have been instrumental in the success and growth of Recreation Nova Scotia. His ability to bring people together, identify opportunities, and turn ideas into action has strengthened our organization and positioned us well for the future. It has been a privilege to work alongside him, and I am deeply appreciative of his leadership and many contributions.

Finally, thank you to our Board of Directors, members, volunteers, funders, and partners for your continued support, trust, and commitment. Our achievements are the result of a collective belief in the power of recreation to build healthier people, stronger communities, and a brighter future for Nova Scotia.

As I conclude my term as President, I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together and confident that Recreation Nova Scotia is well positioned for continued success. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve this remarkable organization and the recreation sector. It has been both a privilege and one of the highlights of my professional career.

Sincerely,

Brendon Smithson

President, Recreation Nova Scotia

Message from the ED

Graham Mounsey

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RNS

At Recreation Nova Scotia, we've spent much of this year learning.

Learning with the sector, with our partners, and learning through the opportunities and challenges that come with trying new things or doing things differently.

Some of those ideas have begun to take root, laying the foundation for work we hope will continue for many years to come. Others remain works in progress, requiring some reflection, adjustment, and new approaches as we move forward. That feels appropriate for RNS – as the sector constantly adapts and responds to the needs of communities, I see that reflected in our organisation.

Looking back at the past year, I'm proud of the ways we've contributed to this collective learning. Events such as our Annual Conference in Sydney, complemented by others like Anti-Racism Summit in Truro and the Building Climate Resilience event in Dartmouth have provided valuable opportunities to connect and navigate together. We've also delved into the creation of new training and online communities of practice as ways to build knowledge and understanding with the sector.

Underpinning all these events and initiatives is a deep belief in the importance and value of recreation and the work of our sector in Nova Scotia. As we shift and adapt to complex challenges, that importance only increases. The places, programs, people and opportunities recreation provide are vital components of healthy, vibrant, and resilient communities. It's a true privilege at RNS to be able to see the breadth and depth of this work across the province, and to have the opportunity to champion and advocate on behalf of this sector is something we take on with a deep sense of pride and responsibility.

I extend my gratitude to all the staff at RNS, as well as our Board of Directors and other committee volunteers, who together represent our sector so well. I'm especially grateful to our President for the past 2 years, Brendon Smithson, who has only accelerated the learning and opportunities available to me and the organisation. I also want to thank our partners at Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, who are not only our primary funders, but valued colleagues in much of our work.

Finally, thank you to our members and to all those supporting recreation across the province. The impact of recreation in Nova Scotia ultimately comes from the people who make it happen in communities every day, and we look forward to continuing to support that work together.

Graham Mounsey

Executive Director, Recreation Nova Scotia

RNS Financial Summary

Fiscal Year April 1 2025 - March 31, 2026

RNS engaged MNP to independently audit the financials for the year ending March 31, 2026. The auditors provided a clean audit opinion.

The detailed Audited Financial Statements can be found on [our website](#).

Assets	2026	2025
Current		
Cash	607,438	657,447
Accounts Receivable	61,332	45,817
Term Deposits	206,705	202,242
Prepaid Expenses & Deposits	24,768	-
	901,244	905,506
Capital Assets	233	696
	901,477	906,202
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts Payable & Accruals	47,789	82,846
Deferred Contributions	415,810	382,315
	463,599	465,161
Commitments		
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	78,097	213,955
Internally Restricted	4,590	1,895
Externally Restricted	225,191	225,191
Internally Restricted Reserve Fund	130,000	-
	437,878	441,041
	901,477	906,202

Membership



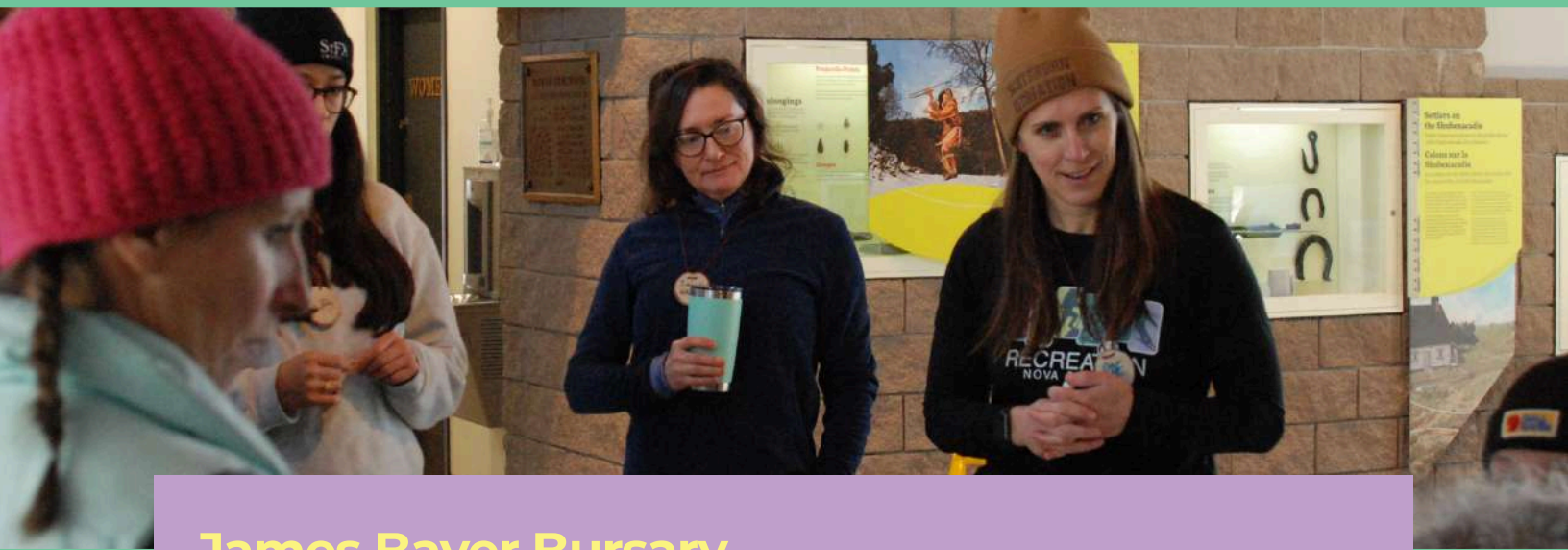
2025 Membership Stats

Recreation Nova Scotia's membership brings together professionals, volunteers, educators, students, elected officials, and commercial organizations who are passionate about strengthening recreation across the province.

Members represent a broad range of sectors, including recreation, community development, parks, fitness, sport, facilities, aquatics, therapeutic recreation, camping, arts, culture, and related fields. Together, we form a collaborative network dedicated to advancing recreation and building healthier, more connected communities.

Benefits of Membership

- Have members' voices heard through advocacy and representation with all levels of government
- Connect with a diverse network of recreation professionals, volunteers, and organizations
- Help shape the sector through voting privileges, resolutions, and committee involvement
- Save on professional development with discounted workshops, trainings, and conferences
- Stay informed with regular updates on jobs, funding, best practices, and success stories
- Access support from a knowledgeable staff team and shared resources
- Benefit nationally through the included membership with the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA)
- Membership discounts, including insurance options and select merchandise



James Bayer Bursary

In preparation for its relaunch in April 2026, RNS worked to revitalize the James Bayer Bursary, ensuring continued support for members pursuing professional development, academic opportunities, and learning experiences related to the field of recreation.

While the bursary was not offered during this fiscal year, RNS focused on fundraising and preparing the program for its return. The relaunch will provide up to \$1,500 in annual financial assistance, with individual bursaries of up to \$500 available to cover eligible expenses such as registration fees, tuition, mileage, and accommodations. This initiative reflects RNS' ongoing commitment to investing in the growth, learning, and advancement of recreation professionals.

Membership Administration

During the year, RNS partnered with PlayFinder, a Nova Scotia-based community recreation platform, to modernize its membership experience. Members now create a free PlayFinder account to register for or renew their RNS membership, establishing the foundation for future online event registration, conference participation, and access to exclusive member benefits, including discounted rates.

Developed in collaboration with communities across Nova Scotia, PlayFinder enhances access to recreation by combining community information with management tools such as registration, equipment, and facility booking. This partnership supports RNS in creating an easier member registration and renewal process whilst fostering connections within the recreation sector.



2025 Award Ceremony and Winners

The annual RNS Awards pay tribute to exceptional individuals, organizations, and communities that, through their programs, events, projects, and passion, have made outstanding contributions to building healthier communities and enhancing the quality of life for Nova Scotians through recreation.

8 awards were presented at the Awards Banquet as part of the 2025 RNS Conference in Sydney:

- Bluenose Achievement: **Christine Cutler, Rath Eastlink Centre**
- Mayflower Community Cooperation: **Valley Recreation's "June is Recreation Month" initiative**
- Connecting People with Nature: **Michelle Richards**
- EDIA: **Amber Hart, Devoted to Diversity Guysborough County**
- Event/Program Excellence: **Mahone Bay United Soccer Association**
- Heart of Recreation: **Sport and Social Club of Cape Breton**
- Professional Achievement: **Chad Haughn**
- Honourary Lifetime Member: **Mary Lou MacPherson**

Awards Adjudication Committee

Thank you to the Awards Adjudication Committee, comprised of a mix of RNS staff, Board representatives and community volunteers:

- Clare Steele (RNS Board rep)
- Michelle Richards
- Kelsey MacLennan
- Alan MacKeigan



Education & Capacity Building

Rec Room

The Rec Room continued to grow as RNS' online learning hub, providing access to high-quality professional development and training opportunities. Throughout the year, the platform supported ongoing learning by expanding access to RNS-developed courses, including *Recreation for Mental Health* and *Anti-Racism in Recreation*, alongside a range of third-party training opportunities.

During the year, 40 learners accessed online training through The Rec Room, with Anti-Racism in Recreation engaging 28 participants and additional learners completing courses in physical literacy, social and emotional learning, welcoming newcomers to sport and recreation, and WHMIS training.

The Rec Room also continued to strengthen participating organizations' capacity by providing tools to manage team training, track learning progress, and maintain training records. By offering accessible and flexible learning opportunities, the platform helped build a more knowledgeable, skilled, and connected recreation workforce across Nova Scotia.

41

TRAININGS TAKEN
ON THE REC
ROOM



Anti-Racism in Recreation

Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation

Recreation Nova Scotia continued to expand the reach and impact of the Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation through advocacy, collaboration, and sector-wide engagement. During the year, the Charter welcomed six new signatories: The Nova Scotia Trails Federation, Nova Scotia Sea School, Digby Area Recreation Commission, the Village of Port Williams, Volunteer Nova Scotia, and the Kings Volunteer Resource Centre.

RNS also continued its work with CCTH, Sport Nova Scotia, the Recreation Facility Association of Nova Scotia, and Canadian Sport Institute Atlantic through the provincial Anti-Racism Working Group, supporting organizations with resources, guidance, and opportunities to advance equity and inclusion across the recreation sector.

Anti-Racism In-Person Training

Building on the momentum of the online on-demand training, RNS expanded to offer in-person Anti-Racism Training. Facilitated by Fawn Logan-Young and Alan MacKeigan, the in-person training was delivered for the first time in July 2025. The interactive workshop brought together staff from the Nova Scotia Sea School and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic to explore practical approaches to key Anti-Racism concepts. Participants strengthened their understanding of equity-centered practices while gaining tools to recognize and address racism within their organizations.

In October, as part of the RNS Pre-Conference session, the Anti-Racism Training was delivered to over 30 participants in Sydney.

Anti-Racism Video Series

We continued our partnership with the Recreation Facility Association of Nova Scotia, Sport Nova Scotia, the Canadian Sport Institute Atlantic, and the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage to advance the Show Up to Speak Up initiative. Through a series of videos, the campaign highlighted organizations and individuals leading anti-racism efforts within Nova Scotia's recreation and sport sectors, including Nova Scotia Sea School, Volleyball Nova Scotia Board Member Shaniya Vance, and South Shore United FC Technical Lead Lindsay van Kessel. The series showcased practical examples of leadership and action while encouraging continued learning and dialogue across the sector.



6 New Signatories

- Trails Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Sea School
- Digby Area Recreation Commission
- The Village of Port Williams
- Volunteer Nova Scotia
- The Kings Volunteer Resource Centre

Anti-Racism Summit

With funding support from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF), RNS hosted its first Anti-Racism Summit at the Rath Eastlink Centre, in Truro on May 15th, 2025.

This event was a testament to our shared commitment to the Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation and further supports equitable practices in our province. It was made possible through CRRF's National Anti-Racism Fund (NARF) and numerous partnerships and relationship building.

The Summit was designed as a unique opportunity for our Charter signatories and other community members to learn approaches and best practices in anti-racism work. Our goal was to help build a network of strong, informed, and resilient leaders who are prepared to advance anti-racism efforts within their organizations - and thanks to participants, partners, funders and sponsors of the summit, we've shown the sector is on the right path.



Summit Participants

87

Sponsors

**Brokerlink
Town of Truro**

Funder

**Canadian Race
Relations
Foundation**

Planning Committee

- Fawn Logan-Young, Chair
- Kerri Jack, Vice-Chair
- Alan MacKeigan, Registration Chair
- Mike Hudson, Provincial Representative

Community Members-At-Large

- Fantanesh Attomsa
- Kim Manthorne
- Stephanie Keilhack

Recreation Nova Scotia Annual Conference



The 2025 RNS Annual Conference took place in October 2025 in Sydney, under the theme *Rooted in Relationships: Celebration, Community, & Connection Through Recreation*. Developed in collaboration with the regional host planning committee, the conference celebrated the relationships that strengthen the recreation sector while providing opportunities for learning, networking, and collaboration.

This year, our keynote speaker was Bradley Daye from Placemaking 4G who opened the conference, and RNS officially launched the development of the new Recreation Leadership Training.

By the numbers: 168 conference delegates, 122 banquet attendees, 47 pre-conference attendees, 15 individuals supported via subsidy funding, 16 unique conference sessions, 17 conference sponsors, 3 days and nights of learning and connecting!

Conference Subsidy Program

To improve access to professional development opportunities, RNS administered a conference subsidy program that supported 15 recreation professionals, students, and volunteers attending the annual conference. Funding from the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage helped offset registration, accommodation, and travel costs, making participation more accessible for individuals from across the province.



RNS provided conference subsidies for

15 people



RecreAuction

The RecreAuction continued to be a highlight of the conference, bringing delegates together in support of the organization while celebrating the generosity of our members, partners, and sponsors. Featuring donated items and experiences from across the province, the silent auction raised valuable funds to support the *James Bayer Bursary*.

This year, we made \$2,776 with over 60 items donated.

Recreation Showcase

The Rec Showcase was a key part of the conference, connecting delegates with organizations, businesses, and community partners with innovative programs, services, and resources, that fostered networking and new partnerships.

Organizations Present:

- Tessier Recreo Parc
- Brokerlink
- Bridgadoon Village
- Cobequid Consulting
- Fireworks FX
- Municipality of the County of Annapolis
- Accessibility Directorate
- Cardiac Cycle Society of Nova Scotia
- PlayFinder
- Recreation Nova Scotia
- Northstar Drones
- Volunteer NS

Conference Sponsors

Platinum & Banquet Sponsors

- Lifesaving Society
- BrokerLink Insurance

Gold

- Placemaking 4G

Silver

- Tessier Recreo Parc
- Fireworks FX
- Victoria County
- Cobequid Consulting
- Heartland Tour Nova Scotia

Bronze

- ThinkBeef.ca
- RC Strategies
- NSCC Sydney Waterfront Campus
- Wadden Physiotherapy and Sport Performance

Conference Planning Committee Members

- Paula Jacobs (co-chair)
- Wil Van Hal (co-chair)
- Larry Maxwell
- Sharla Sampson
- Colleen Whelan-Smith
- Wayne McKay
- Michelle Richards
- Chris Woodford
- Julia Stephenson
- Wally Bernard
- Fantanesh Attomsa
- Kim Halliday
- Olivia Walker
- Emma Clarke
- Jason Calder

RNS STAFF:

- Alan MacKeigan
- Kerri Jack
- Lisa Fedoruk
- Robyn Morris
- Graham Mounsey



Atlantic Recreation and Facilities Conference (ARFC)

Recreation Nova Scotia worked in partnership with the Recreation Facility Association of Nova Scotia, Recreation NB | Loisirs N.-B., Recreation PEI, and Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador to plan and host the sixth Atlantic Recreation & Facilities Conference in Halifax, 20-22 May 2026.

Under the theme of *Powering Possibility: Tools for Today's Recreation and Facility Leaders*, the event sought to provide a key opportunity to exchange ideas, strengthen regional partnerships, and explore emerging trends in the sector.

Highlights included two keynote speakers, educational sessions, an Exhibitor Showcase at the Halifax Seaport Train Station, and facility tours of Dalplex, the Emera Oval and Halifax Common, and the Halifax Waterfront.



Recreation Leadership Training

Recreation Nova Scotia began developing the *Recreation Foundations: Safe, Inclusive, Child-Centered Practices* in-person training program to support frontline recreation leaders across Nova Scotia. Designed to establish a recognized standard for leaders of programs for children and youth, this immersive, play-based training will equip recreation leaders with the skills, confidence, and judgment needed to create meaningful recreation experiences.

Funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, the training was developed in partnership with J. Griffin Consulting and Ready4 Consulting. Development launched with a conference-wide engagement session at the 2025 RNS Annual Conference in Sydney, followed by province-wide engagement through surveys, focus groups, and a steering committee of recreation professionals who helped guide the training's development. Training is planned to be available in 2026.



Recreation for Mental Health

The Recreation for Mental Health (R4MH) initiative, developed in partnership with Dalhousie University and the Nova Scotia Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association, continued to strengthen connections between the recreation and mental health sectors through training and practical resources to aid community members experiencing mental health challenges.

Although there were limited program updates during the reporting year, RNS remains committed to promoting the important role recreation plays in supporting mental health and well-being. Our online training resource and the interactive Recreation for Mental Health Game continue to provide recreation leaders with practical, evidence-informed tools to foster more attuned programs and communities.

Provincial Recreation Organization Updates

RNS continued its partnership with the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage to support and strengthen Nova Scotia's 13 Provincial Recreation Organizations. Through seasonal check-ins, knowledge sharing, and collaborative problem-solving, RNS helped foster stronger connections across the sector while providing guidance on emerging priorities, organizational needs, and opportunities to advance each organization's unique agenda.

This year, RNS supported the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters in establishing a new Accessibility Working Committee. As part of this initiative, Kerri Jack moderated a panel discussion on Accessibility in the Outdoors during the organization's 2026 Annual General Meeting, contributing to ongoing conversations about creating more inclusive outdoor recreation experiences.

Recreation's Response: Climate Change Sharing Session

RNS' Recreation's Response: Building Climate Resilience Together project connected recreation leaders, practitioners, partners, and community members to explore how the sector is responding to climate change and identify opportunities to build greater resilience moving forward.

Through an inaugural session hosted in Dartmouth, participants engaged in conversations and activities focused on local knowledge, current challenges, promising practices, and the resources needed to support climate adaptation within recreation.

A key theme emerged: recreation is already playing an important role on the front lines of climate change by supporting community wellbeing, access to nature, and social connection, yet requires stronger recognition, coordination, and resources to continue this work.

Facilitated by Outward Bound Canada and guided by an advisory committee of sector partners, the project helped strengthen connections across the recreation community while laying the foundation for continued collaboration, learning, and climate-resilient practices across Nova Scotia.

Advisory Committee

- Damion Stapledon (HRM)
- Andrea Redmond (CCTH)
- Rae Gunn (CCTH)
- Thunder Shanti (Outward Bound Canada)
- Sarah Blades (IWK)
- Alan MacKeigan (RNS)
- Graham Mounsey (RNS)



Canadian Parks & Recreation Association (CPRA)

As a provincial member of CPRA, RNS continues to contribute to national conversations that strengthen recreation and parks across Canada. Through this partnership, RNS works alongside provincial and territorial recreation organizations to advance shared priorities, influence policy, and support a strong, sustainable recreation sector.

At the 2025 CPRA AGM, RNS were delighted to celebrate the appointment of Gord Tate as President of the Canadian Parks & Recreation Association. A highly respected leader in the recreation sector, Gord's work with the Municipality of Chester has exemplified innovation and collaboration, with a keen focus on emerging trends and issues affecting the sector. In addition to being former President of RNS, Gord has served on the board of CPRA since 2019, chairing the Finance and Risk Management Committee within that time. RNS is proud to see Nova Scotia being represented so well on the national stage.

Forward Together Summit & Day on the Hill

In November 2025, Recreation Nova Scotia staff and board members participated in CPRA's Forward Together Summit in Ottawa, joining recreation leaders from across the country to explore emerging sector priorities and contribute to the renewal of the Framework for Recreation and Parks in Canada. Discussions focused on strengthening recreation systems, responding to evolving community needs, and advancing inclusive, sustainable recreation opportunities.

The Summit concluded with CPRA's *Day on the Hill* on Parliament Hill, where delegates met with federal representatives to advocate for the recreation sector and highlight its impact on communities across Canada.

Key Recommendations Brought to Parliament:

1. Renewing the national recreation framework through a collective impact model
2. Investing in infrastructure and crisis preparedness
3. Supporting youth workforce development

Canadian Inclusive Green Spaces Symposium

Recreation Nova Scotia was well represented at the Canadian Inclusive Green Spaces Symposium in Saskatoon in June 2025, hosted by CPRA and the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association. The symposium brought together leaders from across the country to explore equitable access to parks and green spaces through collaboration, reconciliation, and innovation.

Executive Director, Graham Mounsey participated in strategic discussions with national partners, while Board Member and Past President Rachel Bedingfield served as a symposium co-host. Equity and Anti-Racism Coordinator, Fawn Logan-Young, opened the event with an African Ancestral Acknowledgment, and our Student Director from Dalhousie University, Agustina Cohen, presented research exploring how diverse youth voices can help improve equitable access to nature and well-being in Nova Scotia.

Green Jobs

Recreation Nova Scotia continued to support CPRA's Green Jobs Initiative, which provides financial support for youth employment opportunities in parks and recreation. The program helps young people gain valuable work experience while contributing to healthier, more sustainable communities.

8

YOUTH EMPLOYED

3,151

HOURS WORKED

\$29,588

INVESTED IN NS

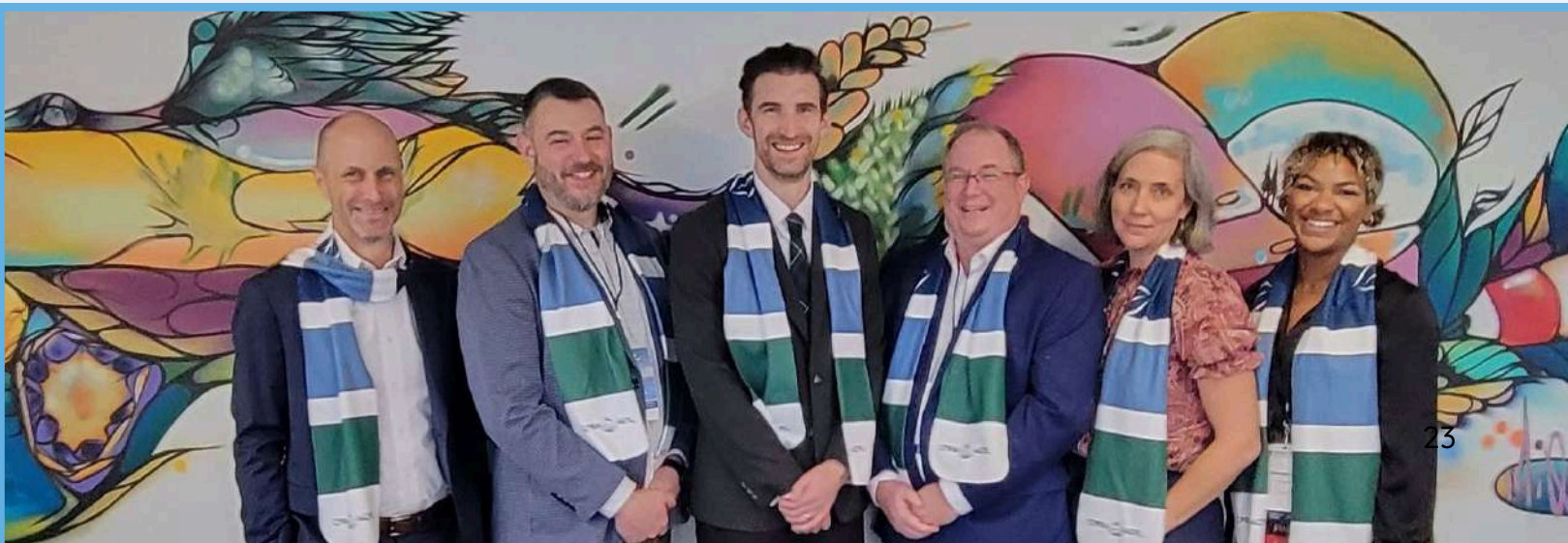
100%

PARTICIPANTS WHO
FACED BARRIERS TO
EMPLOYMENT

90%

PARTICIPANTS WERE
FROM PRIORITY
GROUPS

GREEN JOBS STATS IN NS





Reaching Each and Every One (REEO)

REEO aims to increase participation and retention among equity-deserving groups in recreational sport in Canada. In addition to funding impactful programs, the initiative strengthened organizational capacity within the recreation and sport sector, like organizations that did not previously have safe sport policies in place to develop and implement them.

405

**PARTICIPANTS
ENGAGED**

2025-26 Numbers In NS

3

**PROJECTS
FUNDED**

- Cobequid Society for Athletic Excellence
- Cape Breton Sledge Recreational Society
- Halifax Sledge Grinders

\$20,002

**INVESTED IN
NS**

Sectoral Priorities

Collaboration remains central to RNS' work. By partnering with organizations at the local, provincial, and national levels, RNS continues to strengthen the recreation sector, respond to emerging priorities, and support communities across Nova Scotia by providing a key voice on behalf of the membership.



National Bodies

- Canadian Parks & Recreation Association (CPRA)
- Active Abilities Canada (formerly Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability)

Committees/ Working Groups

- Canadian Parks & Recreation Association – Framework Leadership Team
- Canadian Parks & Recreation Association – Government Relations Committee
- Nova Scotia Women in Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation Task Team
- Nova Scotia Anti-Racism in Sport & Recreation
- Atlantic Recreation & Facilities Conference Planning Committee
- Dalhousie University - Recreation Management Program Advisory Committee
- Nova Scotia International Day of Play Committee
- Active Abilities Canada – Municipal Guidelines Working Group



International Day of Play 2025

The second annual International Day of Play was held on June 11th, 2025. To help encourage communities to celebrate, RNS, with funding support from the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, created International Day of Play promotional kits, which featured swag, marketing materials, and an introduction to Loose Parts Play. A total of 36 kits were distributed across the province.

RNS also established a resource hub for the International Day of Play on our website in partnership with a committee from the Central Region and presented at an informational webinar hosted by CCTH in May 2025.



June is Recreation Month

Recreation Nova Scotia was thrilled to see the success of recreation professionals in the Valley Region in developing a new regional approach to *June is Recreation Month*. By collaborating across municipal boundaries, communities coordinated events throughout the month, demonstrating the value of regional partnerships in promoting recreation.

To help share this successful model with communities across Nova Scotia, RNS supported the development of an online resource hub and hosted a webinar introducing the June is Recreation Month Toolkit, providing practical resources and ideas for future celebrations

Access Awareness Week Video Series

To recognize Access Awareness Week in June 2025, RNS produced a three-part video series highlighting accessible recreation initiatives across the province. The series featured Antigonish County's Equipment Loan Program, the Halifax Lancers Therapeutic Riding Program, and LEARNINGO's *Peers Working Together* program, showcasing innovative approaches to improving accessibility and inclusion in recreation. The videos were released during Access Awareness Week and generated nearly 1,000 views on YouTube, with additional engagement across social media platforms. These videos were made possible thanks to funding support from CCTH.

Women in Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation (WISPAR)

Recreation Nova Scotia continued its partnership in advancing Nova Scotia's WISPAR Action Plan. A key milestone during the year was the launch of a provincial Community of Practice, bringing together 11 women leaders from the sport, physical activity, and recreation sectors for a two-year term. Participants met throughout the year to build relationships, share experiences, and strengthen leadership in support of greater gender equity across the sector.

Equipment Loan Programs

Community of Practice

To strengthen collaboration among Equipment Loan Programs across Nova Scotia, RNS established a new Community of Practice for program managers. Meetings provided opportunities to network, exchange resources, and discuss shared challenges. Initial sessions focused on identifying priorities for the group, followed by discussions on waivers, liability, and program operations.

Research Project

Recreation Nova Scotia partnered with Dalhousie University to research how equipment loan programs were operating across Nova Scotia, with a focus on equipment loan program providers. Research concluded in early April 2025 with findings being presented at a Dalhousie Engagement Day in Guysborough and at the RNS Conference in Sydney.



Communications

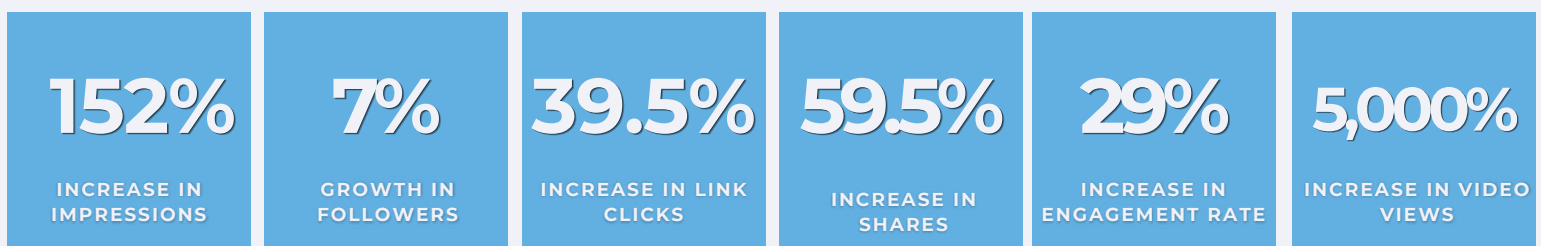
Recreation Nova Scotia continued to strengthen its communications efforts throughout 2025-26, expanding its digital reach while keeping members and the broader recreation sector informed, connected, and engaged. Through social media, newsletters, and the RNS website, the organization shared resources, celebrated community achievements, promoted professional development opportunities, and aimed to bring stories from the provincial and national recreation sector to light.

Social Media

The organization experienced significant growth across its social media platforms during the year, generating more than 351,000 impressions, a 152% increase over the previous year. The organization's online community also continued to grow, with followers increasing by nearly 7% to 7,791 across platforms.

Engagement remained strong, with reactions up 14.5%, shares up 59.3%, link clicks up 39.5%, and the average engagement rate rising to 5.5%.

These results were achieved despite publishing 35% fewer feed posts, reflecting a strategic shift toward using Facebook and Instagram Stories for timely updates, partner content, and community engagement, while reserving feed posts for key organizational announcements and sector priorities.





News- letter

The RNS monthly e-newsletter remained an important communication tool for sharing organizational updates, professional development opportunities, funding announcements, and sector news.

During the reporting period, more than 9,400 emails were successfully delivered. The newsletter achieved a 58% open rate and a 9% click rate, both increasing over the previous year and exceeding industry benchmarks, demonstrating continued engagement from members and partners.

Website

The RNS website continued to serve as a central hub for information, resources, and events, attracting more than 58,000 page views and generating over 164,000 website events throughout the year.

The most visited pages included the Annual Conference, Employment Opportunities, the Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation, and updates on Parks and Trails Restrictions, reflecting strong interest in professional development, sector resources, and current recreation information.

Funding Partners

RNS would like to thank the Province of Nova Scotia's Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage for their continued support of the organization and of the recreation sector.



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