

Conservation Strategy update

Last spring P.E.I. became the first province to officially adopt a Provincial Conservation Strategy. Since its adoption the government has moved along a broad front to put the strategy into effect.

One of the first steps under the strategy was to help non-profit organizations to carry out worthy conservation projects. Securing funds, training workers and purchasing supplies were some of the areas in which the strategy assisted. The projects were valuable as demonstration projects and in increasing community awareness of environmental problems.

The projects supported by the strategy last summer fell into three general areas: Environmental enhancement, environmental research and environmental/recreational programs.

The environmental enhancement programs involved 21 students in seven projects developed to enhance our Island rivers. Projects were located in Prince, Queens and Kings counties.

Two environmental research projects employing 6 students were supported in order to provide data necessary for improved management in the future. The projects included a province wide survey of colonial and shore birds, as well as a vegetation survey of environmentally important sites.

Two projects promoted increased recreational use of outdoors. One consisted of re-establishing the Bonshaw Hills Trail and the other program identified scenic roads in the western part of P.E.I.

Other efforts included:

- negotiation of agreements between the province and federal government to support conservation and development
- revision of environmental legislation to provide a sound framework for the strategy
- assessment of departmental initiatives to implement strategy recommendations
- establishment of an Environmental Advisory Council to provide public input into governmental decision making
- providing staff support to ensure that the strategy is a continuing process
- assessment of environmental education with a view to its improvement

The strategy staff are looking forward to a very active up coming season in support of an expanded program to implement many of the strategy recommendations.