

April 22, 2106

To: Law Amendments Committee, NS Legislature

From: Chris Field

I'm writing as a concerned Nova Scotia resident about the Mineral Resources Act, Bill C149 currently under consideration by the Law Amendments Committee. About 10 years ago, along with my 6 brothers, we donated 33 acres of wilderness land in Purcell's Cove to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust. This land had been in our family since our grandfather, Captain Arnell had bought it in about 1920. Our land rises up over Purcell's Cove and has wonderful views overlooking Point Pleasant Park and Halifax Harbour. As a result of our donation, the Napier family donated their adjacent land to the Nature Trust so that Nova Scotians now have about 70 acres of protected wilderness very close to the urban core. This land contains Purcell's Pond which is widely used by many residents for swimming. The seven of us along with our extended family felt that by making this donation, we could ensure this beautiful ecologically important property is free from any future development above or below the ground.

Knowing that the lands we donated are not truly protected, that they could be expropriated for mineral development, is discouraging. While we trust and hope that such a scenario would never happen, this risk is no doubt a barrier for many landowners to protect their land as we have. Yet with over 70% of the province is privately owned, encouraging private land conservation is essential if we want to truly protect the rich diversity and beauty of Nova Scotia.

I understand the Nova Scotia Nature Trust and the Nature Conservancy of Canada have proposed an amendment to Bill C149 which puts in place the same safeguards that provincially protected Nature Reserves and Wilderness Areas currently enjoy. I have read their amendment and to me it seems to provide the sort of thoughtful approach we need in Nova Scotia to balance the need to develop economically and the need to protect our beautiful environment for future generations. As I age, I get immense pleasure watching my grandchildren enjoy the Captain Arnell Conservation Lands and to hear the pride they express that their family through the Nature Trust made this conservation possible.

In summary, I urge you to give serious consideration to the amendment to Bill C145 submitted by the Nature Trust and the Nature Conservancy. As other Nova Scotians and outsiders consider donating their land to the Nature Trust or Nature Conservancy, this amendment provides them with the safeguards that their land will be preserved in perpetuity. Such safeguards would allow landowners and land trusts to do even more to protect the unique natural legacy of Nova Scotia for generations to come.

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