

Questions & Answers

about protecting Indian Arm Brook



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Acronym List

WERAC	Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council
WER Act	Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act



Indian Arm Brook Study Area

Location: Central Newfoundland, south of Campbellton and east of Notre Dame Provincial Park.

Proposed Size: 272 km² of the Indian Arm Brook (also known as Campbellton River) watershed.

Nomination History: Caribou Adventure Tours and the Notre Dame Rod and Gun Club originally nominated the area for protection to the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC) as an ecological reserve in 2002. They submitted a formal proposal in 2009, and revised the proposed boundary in 2010 to include more of the watershed south of the TransCanada Highway.

Reason for Protection: The Indian Arm Brook Study Area is proposed to protect a representative part of an ecoregion. An ecoregion is like a neighborhood - it's a place where different kinds

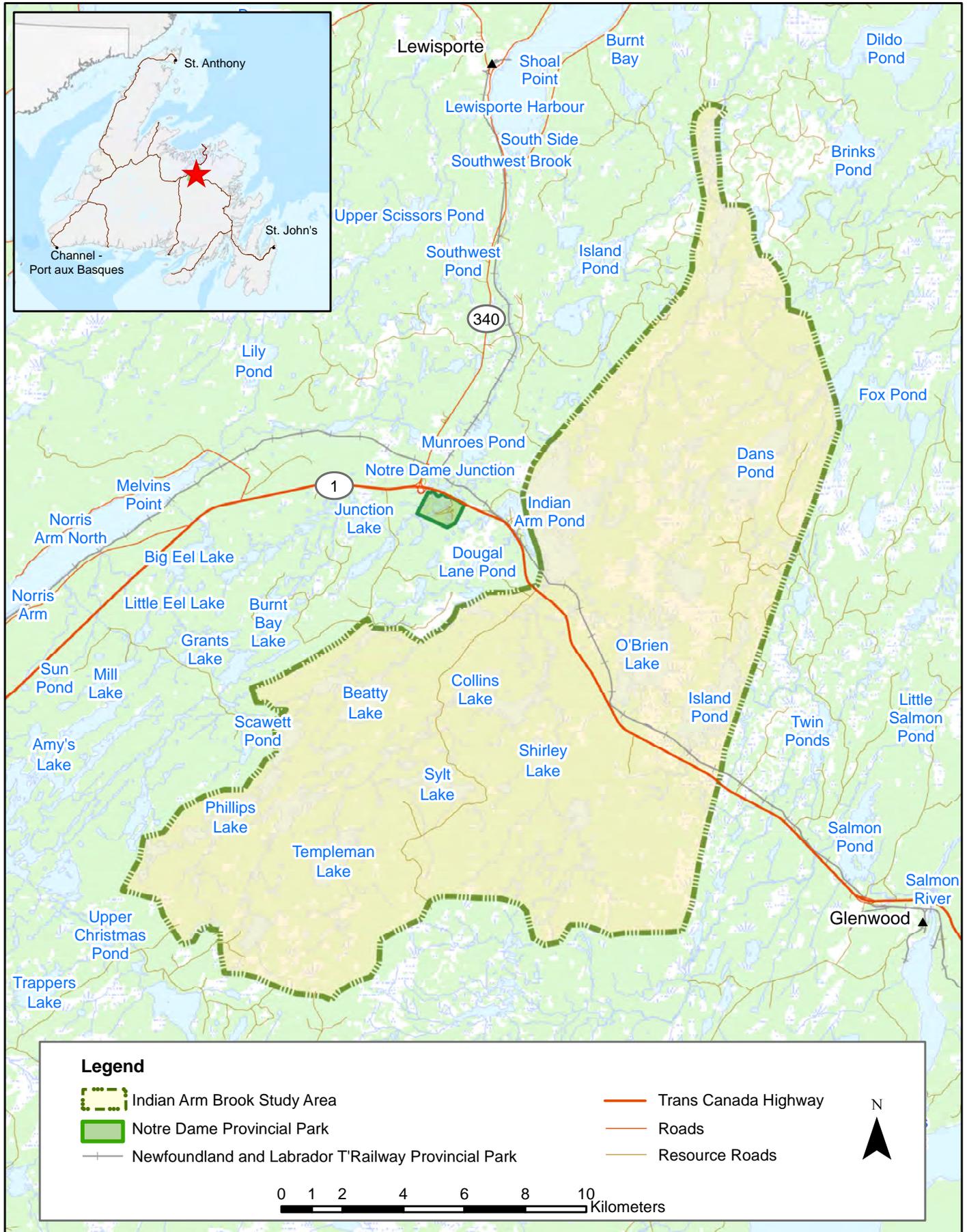
of plants and animals live together in a similar environment. Ecoregion representivity means making sure that we have protected areas in different types of habitats across a certain region (like wetlands, mountains, and coastal barrens). For Indian Arm Brook, this means protecting this relatively undisturbed example of forests in this natural region - and all the birds, plants, insects, fungi and other species that live there.



Indian Arm Brook is typical of the forests in central Newfoundland. This particular combination of forests, geology, geography, weather, and plants is known as the Central Newfoundland Natural

Region (or for the technical people among us, the Central Newfoundland Ecoregion - Northcentral Subregion). Very little of this natural region is still unroaded and relatively intact, and only 1.5% of this subregion is protected. Indian Arm Brook would add significant and much needed protection.

The Indian Arm Brook Study Area



Questions and Answers

This document was created from questions posed to WERAC by the public in communities adjacent to the proposed reserve. If you would like to

discuss these or other questions further, WERAC and the Natural Areas Program staff are available to talk. Contact information is on pages 18 and 19.

Why a Reserve?

“ Why is this area in particular being proposed for protection? ”

Indian Arm Brook was proposed for its intact and natural landscape. An intact landscape is one that has not been significantly changed or altered.

The study area includes:

- A large portion of the Campbellton River watershed's teeming freshwater system;
- A provincial Sensitive Wildlife Area for waterfowl habitat.
- A resident Woodland Caribou population.

Indian Arm Brook was also proposed to protect a representative part of the 'Central Newfoundland Forest' ecoregion. When you walk through these woods, you can see old-growth and re-growth forests that are typical of this kind of landscape. Balsam fir, Black Spruce, White Pine, White Birch, Mountain Maple, and Red Maple tower overhead. There are also bog lands, large shallow lakes,

and many scattered small ponds. For Indian Arm Brook, 'ecoregion representivity' means protecting a relatively undisturbed example of these forests and wetlands and the species that live there.

This study area is one of the few forested examples of this natural region that is not significantly roaded or impacted by developments. Protecting Indian Arm Brook would:

- Increase protection for the natural region's natural features, which has just 1.5% set aside as a park or reserve;
- Add protection for Woodland Caribou and waterfowl habitat;
- Improve safeguards for the Town of Campbellton's water supply; and
- Protect healthy forests and bog lands that help with climate change mitigation.



“ Can't forestry be restricted from going into the area and cottages be prevented from being built? Why would we need a reserve? ”



The provincial government (through the Natural Areas Program, Department of Environment and Climate Change) creates wilderness and ecological reserves as the foremost way to protect natural areas long-term. By comparison, provincial Forestry's main focus (through the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, or FFA) is to provide timber for commercial operations. Crown Lands Division's (also in FFA) primary focus is on managing and allocating land for various developments. Neither has a dedicated mandate or process for long-term protected area management.

When people propose areas as reserves, they often talk about how they want to continue to experience the land as a relatively wild place. One way this can be achieved effectively is to

use specific legislation to protect wildlife, forests, and rivers, and restrict certain developments. The **Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act** (or WER Act) was created to do just that.

The **WER Act** works as a flexible 'one-stop-shop' for long-term protection and management of natural areas. The Act also requires that the public is involved in the establishment process and management planning. A reserve cannot be created, changed, or removed without public engagement. This means that a reserve will remain protected unless there is a public consultation to discuss the issue. It means that the area will be managed in a way that holds government accountable to the public. Each reserve is required to have a plan in place that describes how the area will be managed.

“ What are the benefits of protecting the area as a reserve? Does it cost money? ”

Protected areas create sanctuaries for wildlife. They provide habitat for many different species, help maintain ecosystems, and provide ‘ecosystem services’ such as maintaining water quality and quantity. They are also one of the important ways we can buffer against the effects of climate change.

Protected areas contribute to our health and well-being. Research has shown that even 20 minutes outside in nature enhances physical and mental health and well-being. Protected areas support this by ensuring that wilderness will be there when you need it, whether it’s for a quiet hike in the woods, or a boil-up by the river.

Protected areas provide natural spaces for public enjoyment and traditional activities. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have an expectation for a high quality of outdoor life. Protected areas can maintain subsistence hunting, trapping and fishing opportunities, and provide opportunities for passing along knowledge to future generations.

Protected areas also give the public more say in how an area will be managed. Any reserve that is established goes through a local public consultation. Once protected, changes to boundaries or management also require engaging the public in the proposal.

Economically, protected areas can have positive impacts, particularly for rural communities. Recent trends show that, increasingly, people want to live in communities with a healthy environment and access to natural attractions. Protected areas also support growth in nature related tourism. Establishing a network of protected areas provides more economic certainty for resource industries and tourism operators.

It is unlikely that managing the area as a reserve would require more money than managing the area through other means. The Natural Areas Program already has the mandate to manage protected areas. The base funding, staff, regulations and expertise are already in place to manage other protected areas.



Access

“ Would establishing a reserve stop people from going into the reserve or parts of the reserve? ”

No. Protecting Indian Arm Brook as a reserve means that people will be able to continue to enjoy the area for generations to come.

Through the establishment process, anyone who would like to be involved can have input into development of the management plan. As with all wilderness and ecological reserves, the intention is not to restrict access but to protect the land and wildlife from development and damage.

Exactly how any reserve will be managed depends on the results from public consultations and the reason for which the reserve is protected.

Through that public process, we can discuss whether certain activities should potentially be restricted in sensitive areas of the proposed reserve. The public is invited to make recommendations about sensitive areas or about what limits should or should not be placed on activities or access.

“ Would I have to get a permit to go into the reserve? ”

No. Government does not intend to require an entry permit for accessing the proposed reserve.

Permits would be required for commercial operations, scientific research and educational tours. There are no costs associated with applying for these permits.



Activities in Reserves

Each reserve is managed differently depending on what values are being protected (such as a natural landscape type, or a particular species) and how the public wants to see the area managed. Activities are considered alongside the goals for the reserve: maintaining the

integrity of the reserve and the protected areas network, engaging local communities in the process, and supporting traditional activities, recreation, and research. You can find a list of activities permitted in other reserves on pages 16 and 17.

Hunting, Trapping, Fishing, and Foraging

“Could I continue to pick berries or mushrooms?”

Yes. Berry and mushroom picking can be permitted in reserves, except where there are sensitive features like rare plants. As Indian Arm Brook is proposed as a representative reserve, rather than for protection of rare plants, this activity could be permitted in the proposed reserve (subject to public consultations and government decision).

The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about management of foraging within the proposed reserve.



“Could I continue to fish, hunt and trap?”

Yes. Hunting, trapping and fishing can be permitted, where it does not conflict with the purpose for which the reserve was established (such as hunting birds in a seabird reserve). As Indian Arm Brook is proposed as a representative reserve, rather than for protection of a specific species, these activities could be permitted in the proposed reserve (subject to public consultations and government decision). Hunting, fishing, and trapping are permitted in other wilderness and ecological reserves.

The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about management of hunting, fishing and trapping in the proposed reserve.



Snowmobiling

“ There are major snowmobile trails through this area. Could I snowmobile? If so, would I be restricted to certain trails? ”

Snowmobiling can be permitted in reserves where it doesn't conflict with the purpose for which the reserve was established, and if snowmobiling took place prior to the reserve being established. For example, snowmobiling is permitted in Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve, in areas outside of the winter range of the caribou herd.

The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about management of snowmobiling. WERAC would like to hear

recommendations about whether snowmobiling should be permitted and to what extent, and if there are any sensitive areas.



ATV Use

“ Could I ATV? If so, would I be restricted to ATV on certain trails? ”

ATV use has never been permitted in wilderness or ecological reserves because of the damage these off-road vehicles can cause to wetlands and ground vegetation. However, an existing access trail could be excluded from a proposed reserve to enable continued access. If an ATV trail were excluded from the reserve, you would be able to continue to use the trail for ATV travel, but would typically not be able to drive off the trail into the reserve.

“ Could I use my ATV to get my moose? ”

The intent of reserve management is to protect the reserve while maintaining people's connection to the land. Use of ATV's to collect moose hasn't been permitted to date within reserves. There is provision to allow existing traditional uses to continue in reserves at current levels. Use of ATV's to collect moose would need to be explored with users during public consultations. During public consultations, the public can make recommendations about how (or if) this activity might be accommodated, while protecting the natural features of the proposed reserve.

Boating

“ Would I still be able to go boating ? ”

The **WER Act** can allow for the continuation of motorized boating if it took place prior to the reserve being established. Boating can be permitted in reserves where it doesn't conflict with the purpose for which the reserve was established.

The intent is to maintain traditional uses while protecting reserve integrity. Subject to public consultations and government decision, boating could be permitted on larger and accessible waterbodies in the proposed reserve.

Potential benefits of limiting boating would be to prevent disturbance to nesting shorebirds, and other pond life, and to protect the recreational experience of reserve users.

The public is invited to comment on existing use of boats and motors in the area. WERAC would also like to receive recommendations about management of boating in the reserve, including any considerations for sensitive areas, environmental impacts, or public enjoyment.

“ Would there be any restrictions on boat size or horsepower of motor? ”

It would depend on the recommendations that are made during public consultations as well as whether the environmental considerations would warrant any restrictions. For example, high-powered motors can be noisy and act as an intrusion, both to people enjoying the river, and to nesting or brooding waterfowl. Limiting the horsepower, especially on smaller waterbodies, can reduce the likelihood of environmental

damage and also keep noise disturbance at lower levels.

The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about management of boating in the reserve, including any possible restrictions for sensitive areas, environmental impact or public enjoyment.



“ Could I drive a jet ski or seadoo? ”

No. Motorized personal watercraft such as jet ski's, seadoo's, wave-runners, and similar craft are not permitted in wilderness and ecological reserves. There is significant noise, disturbances, and environmental pollution associated with these types of crafts.

“ Could I canoe or kayak? ”

Yes, canoeing and kayaking could continue in the reserve. The public is invited to make a recommendation during public consultations about whether there should be any restrictions associated with kayaking or canoeing (i.e. canoe routes could be designated with restrictions on other activities).



Camping, Camp fires and Boil-ups

“ Could I continue to go camping? ”

Yes, camping could continue in the reserve. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about whether there should be any restrictions associated with camping (i.e. time limits; only in certain zones).

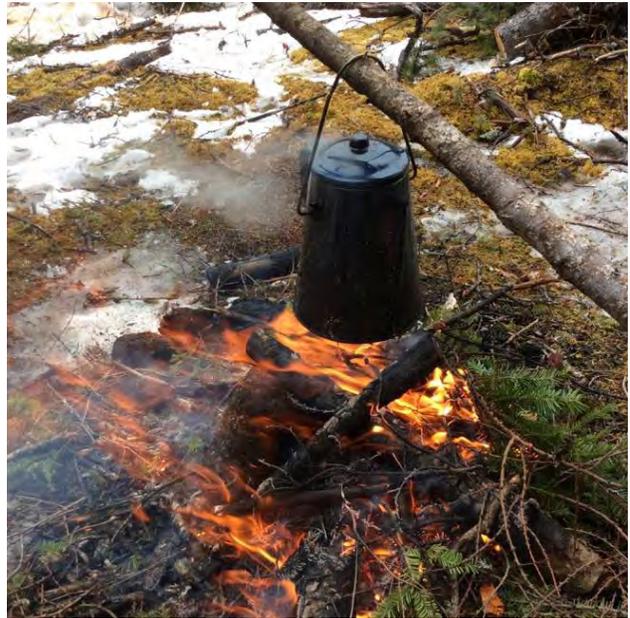
“ Could I have a boil-up? ”

Yes, you could continue to have a boil-up in the reserve. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about management of boil-ups in the proposed reserve (e.g. cut only dead wood).

“ Could I cut down a tree to build a campfire? ”

Yes, the intent is that people will be able to collect a small amount of wood for a boil-up or a campfire, and there is no plan to phase out that activity. The **WER Act** can allow for non-commercial wood cutting at current levels. Cutting would need to not be in conflict with the purpose for which the reserve was being established

The public is invited to make a recommendation during public consultations about cutting wood for campfires and how to manage the reserve to maintain and protect the forest, and support campfires and boil-ups.



Natural Resource Activities

“ Would protecting this area stop prospecting and mining from going ahead in the area? ”

Yes. The **WER Act** prohibits mining, prospecting, and claimstaking within a reserve. Geological studies could still be permitted, as long as they had limited disturbance.

“ Would protection stop commercial cutting and forestry access roads from being developed? ”

Yes. The **WER Act** prohibits commercial forestry and the construction of new roads.

“Would domestic wood harvest be allowed in the reserve?”

There are a small number of domestic harvest blocks in the proposed reserve. The **WER Act** can allow for the continuation of wood cutting in a domestic harvest block at current levels.

WERAC, with the public's input, has to consider the implications of harvesting wood within the proposed reserve. The Indian Arm Brook study area has some of the last undisturbed forest that is characteristic of this natural region (Central Newfoundland Forest Ecoregion). The

forests of this natural region are significantly under-protected, with only 2 percent of forests protected (1.7 percent of which is protected within Terra Nova National Park). It is important that, if protected, any domestic harvesting would be carefully managed in consultation with local harvesters.

The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about management of forests in the reserve.



“Would outfitters be able to operate in the reserve?”

Yes. Outfitters currently operating within the proposed reserve would be able to continue to operate. The outfitter would need to apply for a commercial operator permit (at no cost). The outfitter would not be able to increase the overall footprint of their buildings but could maintain the structure(s). Outfitter operations could also be sold. An outfitter cabin could also potentially be excluded from the reserve.

A protected area would mean that the outfitting grounds would be protected from activities incompatible with outfitting.

If you have an outfitting operation in the study area, and have questions or concerns, please contact WERAC at the contact information on page 18.

Cabin Ownership

“ Would I be able to maintain my existing cabin? ”

Yes. If established as a reserve, cabin owners with legal title to buildings and land would still be able to maintain or improve their cabin without increasing the footprint of the present dwelling. A cabin could also potentially be excluded from the reserve.

“ Could I expand the footprint of my cabin? ”

Only if the cabin is excluded from the reserve. The **WER Act** does not allow for increasing the overall footprint of a cabin within a reserve (i.e. clearing additional land, building additional buildings, building on to an existing building). Buildings being constructed or expanded at the time of establishment can be completed. A cabin could also potentially be excluded from the reserve, which would enable cabin owners to expand their building footprint.



“ Would I be able to build a new cabin in the reserve? ”

No. While the **WER Act** allows for existing cabins within a reserve, new construction is not permitted.

“ Could I sell my cabin? ”

Yes, a cabin owner would be able to sell their cabin as long as they are in possession of a valid title for the property.

“ Would my property lose value? ”

The potential change in value of a property due to it being within a protected area is unknown. However, if a cabin is protected in a reserve, or adjacent to a reserve, cabin owners would be assured that the land surrounding their cabin would not be developed.

“ Could I still access my cabin? ”

Yes, if a cabin has legal title (a grant or a valid Crown Lands lease or licence), an owner would still be able to access their cabin if the area is protected as a reserve. A cabin and an access route could potentially also be excluded from the reserve.

The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations with respect to cabin access routes and means of access. Given the sensitivity of some areas, there could potentially be restrictions on the means of access, or access routes (e.g. re-routing access around bogs). Snowmobiling and motorized boating typically cause little disturbance and are

already permitted in some reserves. ATV use has never been permitted in wilderness or ecological reserves because of the damage these off-road vehicles can cause to wetlands and ground vegetation. However, an access trail could be excluded from the proposed reserve to enable continued access to cabins.

Natural Areas Program will work with cabin owners to ensure that there is a means and route to access cabins. If you have a cabin in the study area, and have questions or concerns about access, please contact WERAC at the contact information on page 18.



How a Reserve gets Established

“ What is the reserve establishment process for Indian Arm Book Study Area? ”



Step 1. Nomination Submitted

Individuals, groups, government or non-governmental organizations can nominate an area for protection to WERAC.



Step 2. Information Gathering and Exchange

Once a nomination is received, WERAC and the Natural Areas Program (NL Department of Environment and Climate Change) assess whether the area meets initial criteria for protection. Part of this process is meeting with the public in nearby communities to inform them of the proposal and gauge interest.

Step 3. Provisional Protection

WERAC considers feedback from community meetings, letters, and information sessions and makes a recommendation to government as to whether the area should be protected as a provisional reserve. Government decides whether to move forward with provisional reserve establishment (i.e. the land is legally protected from major developments).

Step 4. Local Public Consultation

Once an area is protected as a provisional reserve, WERAC conducts a formal public consultation to hear local perspectives about whether the area should be protected, the proposed boundary, and how people would like the reserve to be managed. This is the formal public consultation process that is mentioned throughout this Question and Answer document.

Step 5. Formal Establishment

Public recommendations made during this process lead to the development of a final reserve boundary and a management plan. WERAC makes a recommendation to government as to whether the reserve should be fully established. If so, WERAC proposes a boundary and management plan. Government makes a final decision about whether to formally establish the area as a reserve under the **WER Act**. Once established, the reserve is managed by the Natural Areas Program of the Policy, Planning, and Natural Areas Division, Department of Environment and Climate Change. Any future changes to management or boundaries require a local public consultation before any changes are made.

How a Reserve is Managed

“ How are other reserves managed? What can you do in other reserves? ”

The management approach for each reserve varies based on the specific natural values being protected. It also depends upon the preferences of the public regarding the management of the site. In determining the activities allowed within the reserve, careful consideration is given to the reserve’s objectives, and involving local communities in the decision-making process.

Once a reserve is established, it is managed by the Natural Areas Program , Department of Environment and Climate Change (see page 18 for more information).

If a change is proposed to reserve management, including permitted activities or boundaries, a public consultation is required. WERAC makes its recommendations regarding the proposed change to government, and government makes the decision.

The following table highlights the diverse range of management approaches and permissible activities currently adopted within Newfoundland and Labrador’s wilderness and ecological reserves. WERAC is open to discussing additional activities not listed here.

Activity Key



Hunting



Seabird hunting only



Fishing



Trapping



Snowmobiling



Boating



Camping



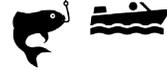
Unmaintained hiking trails



Foraging (in reserves without rare features)



Tourism infrastructure (including tour operators and outfitters)

Reserve Example	Management Approach	Select Permitted Activities*
Avalon Wilderness Reserve	Landscape and ecosystem protection, wilderness recreation	
Baccalieu Island Ecological Reserve	Protection for seabird breeding and foraging grounds, research,	
Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve	Landscape and ecosystem protection, wilderness recreation	
Burnt Cape Ecological Reserve	Protection for unique plant species and assemblages, research, tourism	
Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve	Protection for seabird breeding and foraging grounds, research, tourism	
Fortune Head Ecological Reserve	Protection of significant fossil assemblages, research, tourism	
Lawn Bay Ecological Reserve	Protection for seabird breeding and foraging grounds, research	
Little Grand Lake Provisional Ecological Reserve	Landscape and species protection	
Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve	Protection of significant fossil assemblages, research, tourism	
Redfir Lake – Kapitagas Channel Ecological Reserve	Protection for unique plant species and assemblages, research	
Table Point Ecological Reserve	Protection of significant fossil assemblages, research, tourism	
Witless Bay Ecological Reserve	Protection for seabird breeding and foraging grounds, research, tourism	

*Additional conditions may apply for specific activities and reserves. For more details, contact Natural Areas Program, or view more information on specific reserves and permitted activities at www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/natural-areas.

Contact Us



If you have any questions or comments about the proposed reserve, please contact WERAC, or Natural Areas Program (see below and next page).

Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC)

The **WER Act** guides the creation of a system of conservation areas in the province. Under the **WER Act**, an 11-member council, WERAC, is established to advise government on the creation and management of wilderness and ecological reserves.

WERAC is an independent volunteer group made up of citizens from a variety of backgrounds and all regions of the province. WERAC makes its recommendations on wilderness and ecological reserve creation to government; government itself makes the final decisions.

WERAC, with the support of the Natural Areas Program, works to ensure that all public and

private interests are fairly heard and considered when reserves are being planned and established. Once a reserve is created, the Natural Areas Program manages it with recommendations from WERAC.

Contact information:

WERAC Secretariat
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Contact Us



Natural Areas Program

Natural Areas Program, Policy, Planning and Natural Areas Division is within the provincial Department of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Natural Areas Program plans, establishes and manages Newfoundland and Labrador's:

- 20 Wilderness and Ecological Reserves
- 1 Public Reserve, and
- 2 Canadian Heritage Rivers.

The Natural Areas Program headquarters are located in Corner Brook, NL.

The Natural Areas Mission statement is:

To protect, in an unimpaired condition, large wilderness areas, representative examples of all of the province's ecoregions including their natural processes and features, and rare natural phenomena, so as to preserve the diversity and distinctiveness of the province's rich natural heritage and to support an ecologically sustainable future for the benefit of present and future generations.

Contact information:

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