The Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve (SNBR) received official recognition under the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and Biosphere (MAB) program. This international group recognizes the unique natural environment and culture of the southwest region of Nova Scotia. Biosphere Reserves are representative environments for promoting and demonstrating a balanced relationship between people and nature. Biosphere Reserves search for and promote solutions to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with sustainable resource use. The SNBR is defined by the five Most south-western counties:

- Annapolis
- Digby
- Yarmouth
- Shelburne
- Queens

The five counties surround the ‘core’ area of the SNBR. The core includes Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic Site and the Tobeatic Wilderness Area which are protected by legislation.

Why visit a Biosphere Reserve?

In the UNESCO designated SNBR you can appreciate an extraordinarily diverse natural landscape surrounded by the sea, that has and continues to shape local culture.

The unique climate of the SNBR is home to an extremely diverse collection of species. The most amphibians and reptiles east of Ontario can be found in the Biosphere Reserve. The SNBR is a hotspot for biodiversity and is home to 75% of Nova Scotia’s species at risk. It encompasses many terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems including the Acadian Forest, rolling plains, drumlins and coastal cliffs. The core of the biosphere reserve is the largest protected wilderness area in the Maritimes. The surrounding counties are touched by the Atlantic Ocean and the Bay of Fundy which add to the distinct natural landscape.

The SNBR preserves the cultural integrity and heritage in the region. The rich cultural heritage of the region includes first nations (Mi’kmaq) land stewardship, the founding settlements of the first French and early British colonies in the new world at the historic sites of La Have, Fort Anne and Annapolis Royal. Black Settlement by people escaping southern slave trade is celebrated along the southwest shore region in Shelburne county. The SNBR includes Mi’kmaq, Acadian, English, Scottish and many other cultures. The result of this diversity is a unique mix of traditions, food, festivals and communities.

There are many opportunities for visitors to become one with nature and culture and be part of the conservation and sustainability initiatives within the region and its communities. Interaction with local communities gives visitors an appreciation and a personal connection with the people and the surrounding area. These experiences showcase the importance of the balance between nature, culture, industry and community within the SNBR.

Visit us online at www.snbra.ca and on facebook at www.facebook.com/UNESCO.SNBR

Base data derived from the Nova Scotia Topographic Database (NSTDB). Copyright Her Majesty the Queen in Right of the Province of Nova Scotia. The NSTDB is published under the Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs (DHMA), Local Information Services Division (LIS) and Nova Scotia Geomatics Centre (NSGC). Valid Applied Geomatics Research Group & Tim Daly, Parks Canada – Atlantic Service Centre.