



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Southwest Nova  
Biosphere  
Reserve

## Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve - Annual Report 2016

This report describes the activities of the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve in 2016, including a discussion of plans for 2017.

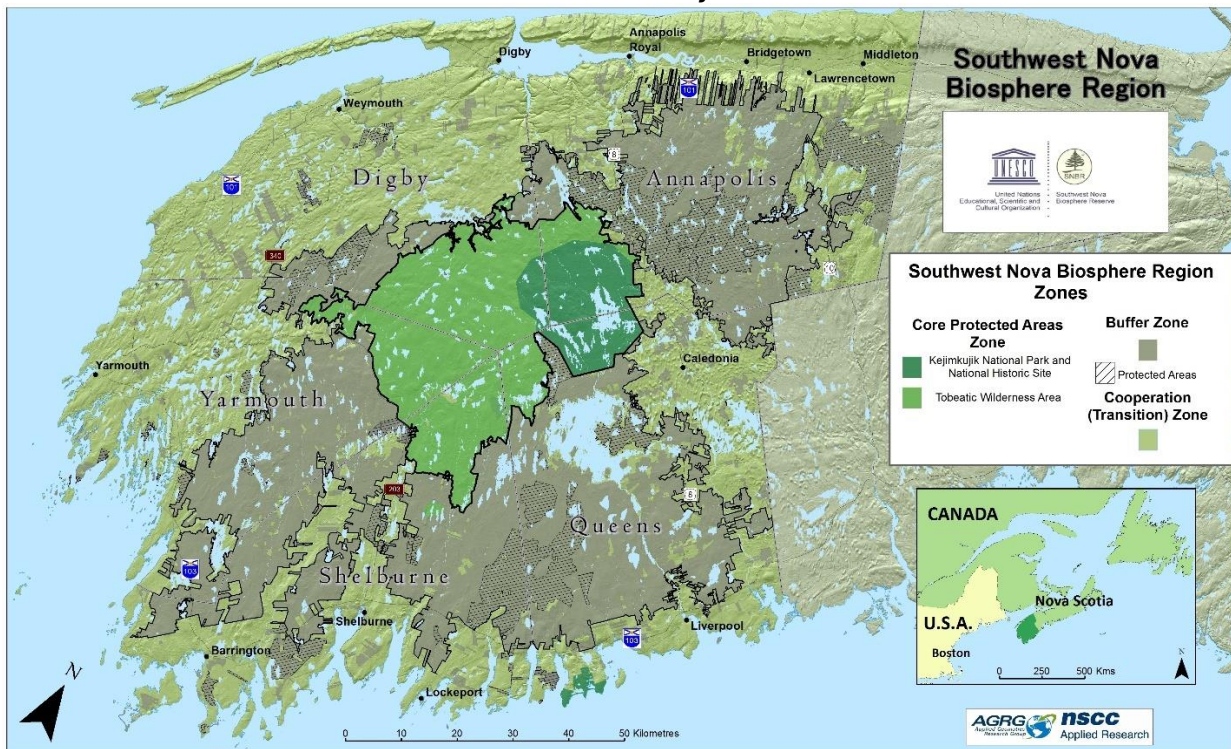
2016 was an active and productive year, and 2017 is shaping up to be the same.

The Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve continues to build its capacity to support this region as a world class example featuring a rich cultural heritage and sustainable resource management, supported by science and education.

Much of this work has been undertaken with the generous support of southwestern Nova Scotia Municipalities, the Nova Scotia Department of Communities Culture and Heritage and the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

Notable items from the last year are:

### The Southwest Nova Interactive Science Atlas Project



This is a new tool to study the biosphere region's resources, to help guide the work of scientists, planners, students and land owners. The project is being led by Nova Scotia Community College's Applied Geomatics Research Group (NSCC - AGRG) and the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve Association (SNBRA). The app will provide access to georeferenced maps and information that describes local natural resource features (e.g. weather, climate, topography, geology, soils, aquatic systems, land cover, land use, and other natural and cultural features) for the southwestern Nova Scotia region. Quality data sets based on the "Open Science" concept will be added as they become available. Information of interest would include long term climate and atmospheric monitoring findings such as acid rain levels and water chemistry. This information is of particular interest to those working on sustainable resource management and climate change.

**Development of the *SNBR Cultural Heritage and Science Interpretive Centre* in Yarmouth.**



Killam Brothers Building in Yarmouth, site of the SNBR Cultural Heritage and Science Interpretive Centre.

We have acquired a 3 storey building on the Yarmouth waterfront which we are currently developing. This centre will showcase rural development across the region that leverages cultural, social and natural capital sustainably while contributing to the prosperity of local communities. The 10-year vision for the interpretive centre is a year-round, multi-use educational, research

and recreational facility. It will eventually be self-sustaining and will promote and foster community-based initiatives across cultural, heritage and science sectors and provide a location to acknowledge best practices in resource management in the SNBR. It will also serve as a location to showcase our Touring Through Time Map App and the forthcoming Interactive Science Atlas.

### **Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve activities, 2016**

- Worked towards development of Interactive Science Atlas project in partnership with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Applied Geomatics Research Group (AGRG) and the Government of Nova Scotia.
- Coordinated science workshop with environmental NGOs to harmonize activities and support Interactive Science Atlas development
- Participated in NS Department of Communities Culture and Heritage (NSDCCH) Conference, western NS Tourism Association workshop
- Continued to participate in NS Department of Natural Resources (NSDNR) Western Crown Lands Advisory Committee
- Met with various Federal, Provincial and Municipal representatives to discuss enhancement of heritage presentation, science capacity and SNBRA's UNESCO/MAB status.
- Coordinated the acquisition and development of the Southwest Nova Biosphere Region Interpretive Centre in Yarmouth.
- Prepared action plan and mission statement for SNBR Interpretive Centre.
- Liaised with stakeholders to unify the vision for the SNBR Interpretive Centre.
- New SNBR Digby highway sign erected.
- Implemented UNESCO Biosphere Region Certificate of Achievement of Université Saint Anne students.
- Carried out Biosphere Region Rezoning review in preparation for submitting to CCU.
- Acquired and began operating SNBRA office in the Caledonia Business Hub.
- Attended a tourism best practices mission to Gros Morne.
- Secured funding for and hired a part-time short-term contracted Heritage Project Coordinator with support from NSDCCH.

### **2017 activities, underway and planned**

- Continue to participate in NSDNR Western Crown Land Advisory committee and Nova Forest Alliance to advance sustainable resource management.
- Work towards obtaining funding for permanent or long-term staff members.
- Finalize review of SNBR rezoning.
- Submit Periodic Review Report to UNESCO.
- Open SNBR Interpretive Centre in Yarmouth.
- Update and overhaul Touring Through Time Map App.
- Produce SNBR Communications Strategy.
- Review and update SNBR website.
- Implement regular communications with public and media from SNBR.
- Attend UNESCO MAB meeting in Sarlat, France and present Interactive Science Atlas.
- Update SNBR brochures/rack cards/decals.

- Collaborate with municipal governments to increase use of UNESCO/SNBR signage on relevant projects.
- Identify and develop new revenue generation tools.
- Investigate the possibility of implementing an electric car charging station loop through the biosphere region.
- Explore partnerships with Hike NS and Bicycle NS.
- Implement bilingual citizen science and interpretive centre based in Université Sainte-Anne.
- Develop education programs about UNESCO BRs, engage youth through contests, art and science projects pertaining the the BR values.