

The Shoreline Journal

Tid-Bits

Short reads of important stories.

Lawyers Appointed to the King's Counsel

Fourteen Nova Scotia lawyers are being recognized for their outstanding contributions to the legal community through the King's counsel designation. Attorney General and Minister of Justice Scott Armstrong announced the appointments on March 4.

The appointees are: Ryan Troy Brothers, Nova Scotia Department of Justice; Donald Fraser MacFadyen and Level Yau Yan Chan, Stewart McKelvey; Peter James Dostal, Nova Scotia Public Prosecution Service; Elaine Nicole Gibney, Elaine Gibney Law; David G. Hutt, Burchell Wickwire Bryson LLP; Lyndsay C. Jardine, Wagner's Law Firm; Cheryl Knockwood, Membertou First Nation; Amy Elizabeth MacGregor and W. Harry Thurlow, Cox & Palmer; James (Jim) O'Neil, O'Neil Law Offices; Kelly Rowlett, Nova Scotia Legal Aid; Jennifer Hamilton Upham, Patterson Law and Daniel Wallace, McInnes Cooper.

The King's counsel designation is awarded annually to members of the legal profession to recognize exceptional merit and outstanding contributions to the legal community. A formal ceremony to honour the appointees will be held this spring.

Eligibility for Order of Nova Scotia Expands

More people are now eligible to be nominated for the prestigious Order of Nova Scotia, and the maximum number of appointments each year has increased to 10 from six. New regulations broaden eligibility for the order to residents of Nova Scotia and those with a connection to Nova Scotia, and nominees are no longer required to be a Canadian citizen. Previously, the eligibility criteria said, "Canadian citizens who are current or former long-term residents of the province."

"This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Order of Nova Scotia, the highest honour in the province," said Premier Tim Houston. "I'm pleased to make improvements to the program that align with best practices in other jurisdictions and allow more deserving nominees from all backgrounds to be recognized."

The regulations also include a formal process to terminate membership in the order if a member is convicted of a crime or professional misconduct. Nominations for the Order of Nova Scotia, which can be made by anyone, are reviewed by an advisory council. The council recommends appointments to the lieutenant-governor who, as chancellor of the order, appoints and invests new members.

Salmon River Truss Bridge, Truro

The Salmon River Truss Bridge connecting Walker and Main streets will have alternating lane closures for roadwork from Friday, March 6, until Wednesday, September 30. Work takes place daily from sunrise to sunset; signs and traffic lights are in place.

Direct-to-Consumer Alcohol Sales Deal

Premier Tim Houston and Ontario Premier Doug Ford have signed a direct-to-consumer agreement that will allow Nova Scotia producers to sell their wine, beer and spirits directly to Ontarians. Nova Scotians will also be able to order alcoholic beverages directly from Ontario producers. Consumers must be 19 or older to order alcohol, and the beverages must be for personal use.

"Nova Scotia is committed to dismantling internal trade barriers, piece by piece, but my goal is to have free trade, nationwide," said Premier Houston. "This agreement is a stepping stone that will give our local producers more access to Ontario markets and open a broader customer base. We will continue to work with other provinces and territories to reach agreements so that our companies have more opportunities and customers have more choice."

The agreement was signed on March 2, while Premier Houston is in Toronto attending the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada conference; it takes effect immediately. Nova Scotia is one of Canada's leading winemaking regions and produces a variety of beer, coolers, cider and distilled products.

continued on page 7

Notes from our Federal Capital - Alana Hirtle, MP

Continued from page 5

veterans deserve straight answers, not bad-faith mis-information. As I write this, I'm already looking ahead to April with a full calendar and a full heart. There is so much work to do across these 8,000 square kilometres we call home — in agriculture, in tourism, in supporting our veterans, in building an economy where women aren't just participants — but leaders. Things are far from perfect. But we have momentum, and momentum matters. Every conversation, every handshake, every hard question you ask me at a coffee shop or a community hall — that's how we build real-time solutions to real-world problems — by WORKING TOGETHER.



Alana Hirtle is the Member of Parliament for Cumberland-Colchester and serves on the Veterans Affairs Committee and the Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations. Alana has two offices for face-to-face services:

AMHERST:
33 Prince Arthur Street
Mon - Thurs, 10am-3pm
1-888-752-0552
alana.hirtle@parl.gc.ca

TRURO:
40 Inglis Place
Mon - Thurs, 10am-3pm
1-888-752-0552
alana.hirtle@parl.gc.ca

OP-ED

Premier Houston's Natural Resources Agenda: At what cost and on whose authority?

Nova Scotia's PC-led super-majority government tabled its budget on February 23, 2026, and, to put it mildly, Nova Scotians are not "super" enthusiastic about Premier Houston's vision for the province. The budget projects a whopping \$1.24 billion deficit that includes the gutting of provincially sponsored arts and culture programs, cuts to tourism, the environment and climate change, climate science, as well as the complete elimination of the Wildlife Division within the Department of Natural Resources.

The Financial Measures (2026) Act, the omnibus bill that includes the government's budget, as well as an assortment of other proposed government initiatives and laws, is unambiguous about where the government's focus will be and where it will not. It is notable that for the second straight year the government appears to be maintaining its laser-like focus on natural resource extraction.

This theme first emerged alongside the 2025 budget that saw the removal of bans on fracking for liquefied natural gas (LNG) and uranium exploration, a deeply concerning and radical shift in the government's policy. Both fracking and uranium exploration were banned over a decade ago due to overwhelming evidence of the health and environmental catastrophes that are direct consequences of these practices. But the Premier is undeterred, as he brands this shift in policy as evidence of his government's action to remove red tape and spur investment in the province. The industry-friendly, and environmentally harmful, posture of this government has invited corporations seeking access to Nova Scotia's lands and resources to invest in the province as Premier Houston makes commitments to turn Nova Scotia into an energy superpower. It is a radical new vision for the province. It is also sorely misguided.

The harms of this vision are wide-ranging and tragic in that they will result in the clear cutting of forests, noise and air pollution and the long-term poisoning of soil and water - including drinking water - with heavy metals and radioactive materials. There is very good reason why both fracking and uranium mining have been banned in the province, as both are linked to respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular disease, various cancers (especially in children), reproductive harms, birth defects and increased infant mortality. Yet this is the path the government has chosen and continues to choose with the latest budget. The question is why and how in the world did we end up here?

One might reasonably assume that the current situation is the result of the PC party's re-election win and the government's subsequent action to deliver on campaign promises. This is typically the pattern of how elections and government work, as parties campaign on policies and then, once elected, work to deliver them. But Nova Scotia's 2024 election was not typical in this sense and the process described is not what is taking place within the Nova Scotian government.

Despite the PC's intense focus on natural resources extraction since the election, the party never actually campaigned on the controversial practices of fracking and uranium mining. They didn't even seriously campaign on natural resources development or making Nova Scotia an energy superpower. Rather, the PC's 2024 "Make it Happen" platform touted "lower taxes," "more doctors" and "higher wages," but did not include the mention of its plan for the province's natural resources. In fact, the closest the party came to campaigning on the topic was the statement that, if elected, a PC government would: "Focus on the smart development of [Nova Scotia's] energy and natural resources sectors through the "Nova Scotia Clean Energy Plan..."

So, if following the 2024 election, you found yourself caught off guard by the government's shift in focus from healthcare and affordability to include the pursuit of the dangerous and toxic extraction of natural resources, you're not alone. It certainly was not advertised by the Premier or his party members. I suppose "cancer for children" doesn't quite have the same voter appeal as "lower taxes," "higher wages" and, ironically, "more doctors," which may explain the absence of this policy objective from the PC party's platform.

This has nothing to say of the PC government's delivery of stated policy objectives. The issue is with the failure to disclose the policies that saw the removal of the ban on fracking and uranium mining. The absence of these extremely controversial policies from the PC's election platform suggests the intention was to mislead Nova Scotians into believing that the primary focuses of the government would be healthcare and affordability, which is not untrue. However, the inclusion of an aggressive strategy for natural resources extraction, particularly, one that includes fracking and uranium exploration, makes for a very different election platform. I have written on the "bait and switch" tactic employed by the PC party in the past, particularly as it related to the government's handling of West Mabou Beach Provincial Park. This is yet another example of the party's use of this deceptive tactic.

The reality is Premier Houston did not campaign on fracking and uranium mining, which, had he done so, would have resulted in staunch opposition and risked his chance at securing a majority government. He also did not campaign to dismantle environmental protections and independent regulatory oversight, which have been tools used to facilitate his push to see Nova Scotia become an energy superpower.

Thus, as a result of the Premier's intentional withholding of this major and highly controversial policy ambition, voters could not and, consequently, did not consent to this ill-advised change to the province's natural resources strategy. The PC party also quite likely received support that they otherwise would not have and should not have received. To be clear, Nova Scotians did not vote in favour of the Premier's hidden agenda, which has since become a primary focus of the Nova Scotian government.

Had this deeply flawed and harmful vision for the province been one the Premier expected to receive broad support, you can be assured that it would have been highlighted in his party's election platform. It was not. The reason being is that the only way to unleash a plan of such destruction and devastation on the public was to deceive the electorate and keep them ignorant of the true intentions and ambitions of the Premier and his party. Power first had to be seized and secured before a policy of this nature could be made public and pursued and that is exactly what has taken place.

Having secured the protection of a super-majority in the legislature, the PC government is now moving at alarming speeds in its unabated pursuit to exploit the provinces natural resources without meaningful concern for the collateral damage that it will inflict on Nova Scotian communities. The resulting collateral damage will see the province polluted and Nova Scotians made sick. The pitiful justification for these policies is jobs and economic growth and, while these are indeed needed in the province, at what cost and on whose authority?

Are we, as Nova Scotians, willing to sacrifice our air, soil and water - the very foundation of our health, wellbeing and survival - to the ideological ambition of becoming an energy superpower, as the Premier - without the electorate's consent - has unilaterally decided for all Nova Scotians?

Doug Lowry
West Mabou, NS

Guardian

Masstown Pharmacy

10655 Highway #2, Masstown

Call or text us at **902-603-1010**

We offer a wide range of health and wellness services including:

- Pharmacist Prescribing
- Immunization and Injection Services
- Easy Prescription Transfers
- Blister Packaging
- Medication Reviews

"We carry a wide variety of over-the-counter items!"

HOURS OF OPERATION:
Monday to Friday
from 9:30am to 5:00pm

Masstown Hardware



Your Trusted Building Supply Dealer

Highway 2, Masstown
902-662-3262
www.masstownhardware.ca

