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MAYOR SCOTT "Complete Work on Chignecto Isthmus"

Cumberland County's mayor is calling on the provincial and federal governments to move forward on repairing the dikes along the Isthmus of Chignecto between Amherst, N.S. and Sackville, N.B.

In a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs and Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston, Murray Scott said his council is thankful for the Chignecto Isthmus Climate Change Adaptation Comprehensive Engineering and Feasibility Study that was released last spring, but feels the proposed 10-year timeline for the work to be completed to be "totally unacceptable."

"We believe it is time for the Canadian, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick governments to take action now. We believe enough studies have been conducted that clearly show the peril we face," Scott said in his letter. "We call on our governments to take the necessary measures, as recommended in the study, to preserve and protect the Isthmus of Chignecto. We urge you to begin this work no later than the end of 2023."

Scott said the cost of completing the protective measures would be much less than the cost of fixing the transportation links and the communities should their fears be realized the dikes breached either through a severe storm, or sea level rise.

"To us, it would be a lot easier to do something now before it breaks," the mayor said.

The study recommended three options to preserve the Chignecto Isthmus trade corridor between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia amid climate change challenges.

The options outlined in the \$700,000 study include raising the dikes, building new dikes or raising the existing dikes and installing steel sheet pile walls at select locations.

The cost of the three options range from about \$190 million to more than \$300 million each.

The mayor's letter comes in the wake of post-tropical storm Fiona devastated the Atlantic region and caused millions in damages to areas of northern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, including Cumberland County.

"Here in Cumberland County we fared better than our fellow Nova Scotians in Pictou County and Cape Breton, and still experienced more destruction from a storm than we have in decades. We firmly believe it could've been much worse," Scott said. "We were quite fortunate Fiona struck at low tide. We shudder to think what destruction would have occurred if the storm had hit during high tide."

The mayor said the Saxby Gale, in October 1869, was an example of what can happen again. It occurred at high tide, breached the dikes, sank ships, caused deaths and massive destruction to communities in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

"If Fiona had hit at a similar high tide, we are confident in saying insurers would have been paying out much more than \$660 million," the mayor said in the letter.

The mayor said similar studies have shown the isthmus would almost disappear during an extreme weather event if the dikes were breached. The flooding would be so extensive

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Regulations Require More Renewable Electricity

Nova Scotia Power will be using more sustainably harvested biomass over the next three years under a new renewable electricity standard. The new standard, in the Renewable Electricity Regulations under the Electricity Act, requires the utility to purchase 135,000 megawatt hours of readily available renewable energy in 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Biomass is likely to be the only readily available option during that time. It is available due to the closure of the Northern Pulp mill and damage from hurricane Fiona. "Biomass is renewable, readily available and burns cleaner than coal," said Tory Rushton, Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables. "Adding more sustainably harvested biomass

for a few years is a small thing we can do in the short term to bring more renewables onto the grid while longer term solutions are built."

The regulations prohibit cutting whole trees to generate electricity. They only allow biomass in the form of low-quality residual wood and chips that are leftover from sustainable timber harvesting

and primary processing.

Suppliers will have increased costs for fuel or to restart operations. Therefore, the utility will be required to pay suppliers an additional \$30 per megawatt hour beyond existing contracts. However, the utility has a limit of \$4.05-million per year from 2023 to 2025 to avoid creating

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The horses at Spirit Ranch, Parrsboro out for a trot in the snow.
 Photo by Lawrence R Nicoll.

FORCE Appoints New Executive Director

Canada's efforts to responsibly harness the power of the Bay of Fundy took another step forward with the promotion of Lindsay Bennett to executive director and the addition of new board director Melissa Nevin to the Fundy Ocean Research Center for Energy (FORCE).

"As we build on this year's achievements - including three new tidal technologies built in Nova Scotia and a Fundy-wide science program to track fish movement - we are ready to move into the next stage of demonstration and learning," said Doug Keefe, chair of FORCE. "With that in mind, we're delighted that Ms. Bennett has accepted the new position of executive director, advancing from her previous role as operations director where she has been a tremendous asset. Lindsay excels as a solutions-focused leader, and talented, hard-working project manager and we're fortunate to have those skills directing all activities at FORCE."

Ms. Bennett has worked at FORCE since 2016 in steadily increasing positions of leadership, most recently as operations director. She previously held senior executive positions in sport administration. "We're delighted to add Ms. Nevin, a strong advocate for Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqiyik, and Peskotomuhkati fisheries, who arrives with a deep understanding of the renewable energy sector, and tidal energy in particular, to our board" added Mr. Keefe.

Ms. Nevin is the director of fisheries and integrated resources for the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs. She previously worked

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Left: Lindsay Bennett, Executive Director, Right: Melissa Nevin, Director of Fisheries and Integrated Resources, Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs. (Submitted)

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