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Item No. 12.1.3
Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee
January 19, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director, GREA

DATE: December 21, 2016

SUBJECT: Request from DEANS – STEP Program

ORIGIN

May 19, 2016 – Destination Eastern & Northumberland Shore (DEANS) presented an update on its Strategic Tourism Expansion Program (STEP) Project to CPED members.

May 26, 2016 - DEANS sent a follow up letter to the Chair of the Standing Committee. (Attachment A)

June 16, 2016 – MOVED by Councillor Watts and Seconded by Councillor Nicoll: That the correspondence be referred to staff for report. Motion passed unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter CHAPTER 39 OF THE ACTS OF 2008

Business and industrial development

71 (1) The Municipality may (a) solicit and encourage the establishment and development of new, and the establishment, development and expansion of existing institutions, industries and businesses in and around the Municipality;

(b) publicize the advantages of the Municipality or any part of the Municipality and the surrounding areas as a location for the establishment and expansion of institutions, industries and businesses;

(c) pay grants to a body corporate for the purpose of promoting the Municipality or any part of the Municipality and the surrounding areas as a location for institutions, industries and businesses;

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that CPED recommend to Regional Council that the Municipality

1. support the STEP Phase 2 project, as requested in the May 26, 2016 submission from DEANS, with a package of in-kind and financial support amounting to \$33,700, as described in the Financial Implications section, and
2. direct the CAO to nominate a staff member to sit on the project Phase 2 Working Committee.

BACKGROUND

Strategic Tourism Expansion Program (STEP)

The Eastern Shore part of the Municipality currently faces economic and demographic challenges. Residents have recognized these challenges and are taking steps to deal with them.

Innovative projects, like the Memory Lane Heritage Village, and some enterprising small businesses have sprung up. Organizations, like the Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce or Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS) have focussed on challenges and opportunities along the shore.

In 2015, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) through STEP identified the area between Musquodoboit Harbour and Sherbrooke as a candidate area for tourism development.

Funded by ACOA, the Province of Nova Scotia, Halifax, the District of St. Mary's and local businesses, a locally based Working Group developed a Strategic Plan and presented it to a meeting of community and funding partners in April 2016. (Attachment B)

The Working Group has developed a proposal for the next phase in the process of improving tourism along the Eastern Shore (Attachment C), DEANS shared the highlights of that proposal with CPED in May and submitted a formal request for support on May 26, 2016.

Nova Scotia Nature Trust (NSNT)

NSNT is active in the area. Through its "100 Wild Islands Legacy campaign" it is raising money to purchase some privately owned land in the area. (See <http://www.100wildislands.ca/#welcome>) NSNT has a target of \$7million in its fundraising campaign. It has raised most of that money already. On August 2, 2016, Regional Council approved a recommendation to direct staff to include \$150,000 funding in each of the 2017/18 and 2018/19 proposed operating budgets for a total grant of \$300,000 to the NSNT. (See the Report at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/160802ca1418.pdf>.)

Rural Halifax

CPED has discussed the future of rural parts of the municipality. The committee received an information report on "Rural Benchmarks & Service Levels" in December 2015. In June 2016, CPED passed a motion to create and maintain a "Halifax Rural Index" to complement the annual Halifax Index produced by the Halifax Partnership.

The information report noted the need to build on the assets of the Eastern Shore to increase economic opportunities in the area. The report included a document entitled "A Portrait of Rural Halifax." The presentation to Regional Council of the Information Report and the Portrait noted that there would be value in identifying some immediate action steps like advancing "projects like the 100 Wild Islands".

DISCUSSION

Attachments B and C outline a project that, in its current form, is a result of work by several organizations and individuals seeking to use the assets of the Eastern Shore – especially the "100 Wild Islands" – as a base for economic development that could be compatible with the needs of the area.

ACOA, through STEP, has been a major financier of the work. Both the province and the municipality contributed funds to Phase 1. Several small local businesses also supported Phase 1. DEANS acted as Project Manager.

Phase 1 had several important outcomes. First, local organizations and individuals developed a successful model for working together. In an area that has seen several unsuccessful attempts to move things forward, working together is a significant achievement. Second, Phase 1 produced an overall

strategy for the area between Musquodoboit Harbour and Sherbrooke. Third, the work done in Phase 1 had led to a project focused around the 100 Wild Islands. (Attachment C)

Phase 2 work will include:

- additional research on the cultural and archaeological situations of the Islands
- an inventory of the ecological and recreational assets of the area
- training for local tourism operators
- identification of island-viewing and look-off sites
- preparation of a route guide concept plan
- development of an essential visitor services strategy, built on the private sector
- development of profiles of the target market for the islands and a website.

DEANS will continue to act as manager of the project in Phase 2. The project working group has developed a financial plan for the project and is in the process of acquiring the funds necessary.

Why should Halifax support this project? Supporting this project aligns with Council's Economic Development outcome statement, "positioning the Region as a business destination that encourages entrepreneurial spirit and responds to the needs of the business community." New jobs along the Eastern Shore will be the foundation for maintaining and increasing the population. Jobs will attract or keep people in the area. For sustainability, prospective jobs should use the assets of the Eastern Shore. The 100 Wild Islands constitute one of the main assets of the area. Investing in the kinds of tourism which use the asset of the islands well is one way to contribute to economic development. It is not the only way but through the STEP project work that has begun, municipal support will be channeled to a potentially useful project.

Municipal support, not to individual businesses but to an organization that is working to make the situation for individual business better, is a prudent way to move ahead. Individual business will still be the drivers of economic development.

Planning & Development is able to provide the in-kind services sought. Both the on-going Halifax Green Networks Priorities Plan (HGNP) and Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan (CHPP) are gathering information that is expected to provide important background information for the STEP project. In addition to sharing this information, planning staff anticipate participating on the project steering committee, coordinating project work with HRM plans and programs and, as needed, liaising with other HRM departments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budget for Phase 2 of the project totals \$299,975. ACOA has been asked to provide 59% of the funds. (See Attachment C for details.)

DEANS seeks 11% (\$33,700) from Halifax in a combination of cash (\$7,900) and in-kind (\$25,800) support. The source of the (cash) funding requested is Planning & Development cost centre D001.

This request is only for Phase 2 of the project. To make this project a support to small scale economic development along the Eastern Shore, there will be additional project phases to come. At this point, it is not clear how much succeeding phases will cost, how costs will be distributed among funders, or how long the project might require public sector support. As the project grows, the private sector should be able to increase its support for project activities. Going forward, the Municipality will have to review additional requests for support on their specific merits.

RISK CONSIDERATION

This is an initial request only. As noted above, to bring this project to completion will take several years and more dollars. It is not clear now what the future requests to the municipality will be or how big they will be. Additional requests for support will have to be evaluated on their merits, if and when they arise. In the early phases of the project, the risks are small.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The municipality itself did not conduct any community engagement for this project. The essence of Phase 1, however, was engagement of community representatives to build a plan for Eastern Shore economic development. Success of Phase 2, and any subsequent phases, will depend on continued engagement of people along the Eastern Shore in meaningful ways.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

This project is at heart an environmental one. Its foundation is the unique ecological asset of the “100 Wild Islands” of the Eastern Shore. The work of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust to purchase and protect privately held land in the area is designed to make sure that the islands are preserved for the future enjoyment of residents and visitors while still being available for their use.

ALTERNATIVES

CPED could choose to change the mix of cash and in-kind services provided. It could also choose to change the timing of the provision of funds and in-kind services.

ATTACHMENTS

- A – Correspondence from the Managing Director, DEANS
- B - Musquodoboit Harbour – Sherbrooke STEP Strategic Plan
- C – Proposal for Phase 2 of the Musquodoboit Harbour – Sherbrooke STEP Project

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Chris Bryant, Senior Advisor, GREA, 902.490.3729

Attachment A



**DESTINATION EASTERN &
NORTHUMBERLAND SHORES**
NOVA SCOTIA

Mr. Waye Mason,
Chair, Community Planning and Economic Development Committee
Halifax, NS
May 26, 2016

Dear Mr. Mason:

On behalf of Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores and our STEP working committee thank you for allowing us to present to your committee last week. It is an exciting time for tourism along the Eastern Shore and we are pleased with the progress that has been made to date. We are now entering into phase 2 and have confirmed provincial funding along with the community contribution. We will be applying for ACOA funding in the coming weeks.

As follow up to our presentation we would like to formally request that Halifax contribute to our next phase of this project as outlined below.

1. In-kind resources from the Planning department for research, planning, inventory and design services - we have estimated this to be about \$25,800
2. Cash contribution of \$7,900 to be used towards DEANS hiring a contract worker for an essential visitor services strategy
3. Staff person who will sit on our phase 2 working committee

If you have questions please let me know and I would be happy to answer any concerns you or Council may have.

Sincerely,

Cindy MacKinnon
Managing Director, DEANS
Project Coordinator, STEP

Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP Strategic Plan



Source: Proptonic



Source: Proptonic



Source: Proptonic

Final plan April 2016

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The coastal area between Musquodoboit Harbour and Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia was identified as a suitable candidate community for the ACOA Strategic Tourism Expansion Program (STEP) in 2014. The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke region features hundreds of coastal islands that have been largely undisturbed for more than 10,000 years. This archipelago offers pristine white sand beaches, sheltered coves, dramatic windswept headlands and unique boreal forests, bogs and barrens, as well as a rich diversity of seabirds, songbirds and shorebirds. This grouping of uninhabited islands and associated headlands has been identified as the last remaining intact and ecologically rich island group of its size in North America, and is being protected through a combination of provincial legislation and private land conservation efforts.

These coastal conservation lands include:

- Eastern Shore Islands Wilderness Area
- Eastern Shore Islands Wildlife Management Area
- Clam Harbour, Owls Head, Taylor Head and Liscombe Point provincial parks
- and a collection of private islands protected by the Nova Scotia Nature Trust through their highly successful 100 Wild Islands campaign.

Through the coordination of DEANS, and the funding support of ACOA, seventeen local businesses and organizations, and two municipal units, STEP was initiated in early 2015. The STEP process has focused the community at large as well as the municipality, business owners, and organizations on strategic planning, building tourism capacity and experiential product development.

The STEP working group consulted with community members, which has led to the development of four strategic priorities. These priorities will guide the community toward the following vision:

Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke is internationally recognized as a sustainable one-of-a-kind Canadian coastal nature-based destination offering outstanding touring, outdoor, cultural and culinary experiences.

The Four Strategic Priorities

- **Capitalize on the Nature-based Opportunity** - Define and build the destination area based on its unique selling proposition (USP) and positioning that focuses on the wild islands and outstanding nature-based tourism opportunities.
- **Build Success Through Engagement** - Engage community members, key influencers, and partners to broaden support for developing the area as a world-class tourism destination.
- **Advance Experiential Tourism Development** - Enhance and generate tourism products and experiences that align with the USP, brand positioning of the region, and the Nova Scotia brand.
- **Enrich Quality of Life** - Enrich the quality of life for residents of the destination area.

Twenty-two outcomes have been identified, with each outcome linked to one of the four strategic priorities. The Working Group will continue working to achieve these outcomes in the next phase of this tourism initiative.

The Working Group recognized that a set of guiding principles would help ensure alignment of decisions, and therefore used community input to develop eight guiding principles, which will be applied to all future actions and decisions.

The Eight Guiding Principles

1. **Community Driven** - build success through a community-driven and focused approach, taking advantage of professional expertise and creative partnerships
2. **Responsible** – ensure that development does not compromise the natural or cultural integrity of the conservation lands, surrounding region, and communities
3. **Sustainable** – focus on initiatives that support long-term benefits and are self-sustaining
4. **Research based** - use tourism market research to drive product development and marketing
5. **Experiential Focus** - develop tourism opportunities using the travel demand generator model & focus on experiential product development
6. **Build on success** - apply existing tourism product development tools (e.g. Tourism NS, Destination Canada, ACOA, etc.), and leverage best practices from other jurisdictions to accelerate product development
7. **Inclusive tourism development** - ensure the approach and destination achieves a balance between tangible (physical infrastructure) and intangible (e.g. learning opportunities, hands-on experiences, etc.) tourism development
8. **Clear communication** - ensure that process documentation and communications are simple, clear, and widely available

The overall management of the Musquodoboit Harbour to Sherbrooke STEP project was undertaken through the efforts of the STEP Working Group with Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS) leading as the project manager. DEANS has received approval from their board to continue managing this project and the Working Group has agreed to support this arrangement. The representatives who comprised of the STEP Working Group need not remain the same moving forward. New representatives will be sought through a community engagement process to serve alongside those members of the first group who wish to continue on an active and participatory basis. As the project manager, DEANS will ensure that the Working Group representatives continue to accurately represent the community and consist of a variety of individuals, businesses and organizations.

The STEP process ends on April 7th, 2016 with the Funder's Presentation, whereby this report and its findings are presented to ACOA, local funders and the public. However, this tourism initiative is still in its early stages. Along with the community's input and support, the working group will continue to position and advance Musquodoboit Harbour to Sherbrooke as a dynamic new in-demand destination offering the best-designed touring, outdoor and nature infrastructure and experiences in Nova Scotia.

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2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The coastal area between Musquodoboit Harbour and Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia was identified as a suitable candidate community for the ACOA Strategic Tourism Expansion Program. STEP is an innovative, comprehensive process that guides communities through a series of well-tested strategic 'steps' aimed at creating a sustainable strategic tourism plan that incorporates products, services and experiences.

The Strategic Tourism Expansion Program (STEP), offered by Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) – Tourism Atlantic provides communities (and entrepreneurs) with an understanding of destination development, industry trends, and experiential tourism development. It engages community leaders and other stakeholders in the design and execution of actionable, sustainable tourism development plans.



Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS) is a not-for-profit destination marketing organization with 16 Directors representing the Northumberland and Eastern Shore regions of Nova Scotia. DEANS represents the tourism industry in Antigonish, Guysborough, Eastern HRM and Pictou County. Through the coordination of DEANS, and the funding support of ACOA, seventeen local businesses and organizations, and two municipal units, STEP was initiated. It has been introduced to assist stakeholder communities in becoming a sustainable tourism destination by exposing local entrepreneurs and influencers to varied techniques and formulas required for sustainability. The STEP process has focused the community at large as well as the municipality, business owners, and organizations on strategic planning, building tourism capacity and experiential product development.

The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP region features hundreds of coastal islands that have been largely undisturbed for more than 10,000 years. This archipelago offers pristine white sand beaches, sheltered coves, dramatic windswept headlands and unique boreal forests, bogs and barrens, as well as a rich diversity of seabirds, songbirds and shorebirds. This grouping of uninhabited islands and associated headlands has been identified as the last remaining intact and ecologically-rich island group of its size in North America, and is being protected through a combination of provincial legislation and private land conservation efforts.”

These coastal conservation lands include:

- Eastern Shore Islands Wilderness Area (Wilderness Areas Protection Act – Nova Scotia Environment);
- Eastern Shore Islands Wildlife Management Area (Wildlife Act – NS Department of Natural Resources);
- Clam Harbour, Owls Head, Taylor Head and Liscomb Point provincial parks (Provincial Parks Act - NS Department of Natural Resources);
- And a collection of private islands protected by the Nova Scotia Nature Trust through their highly successful 100 Wild Islands campaign.

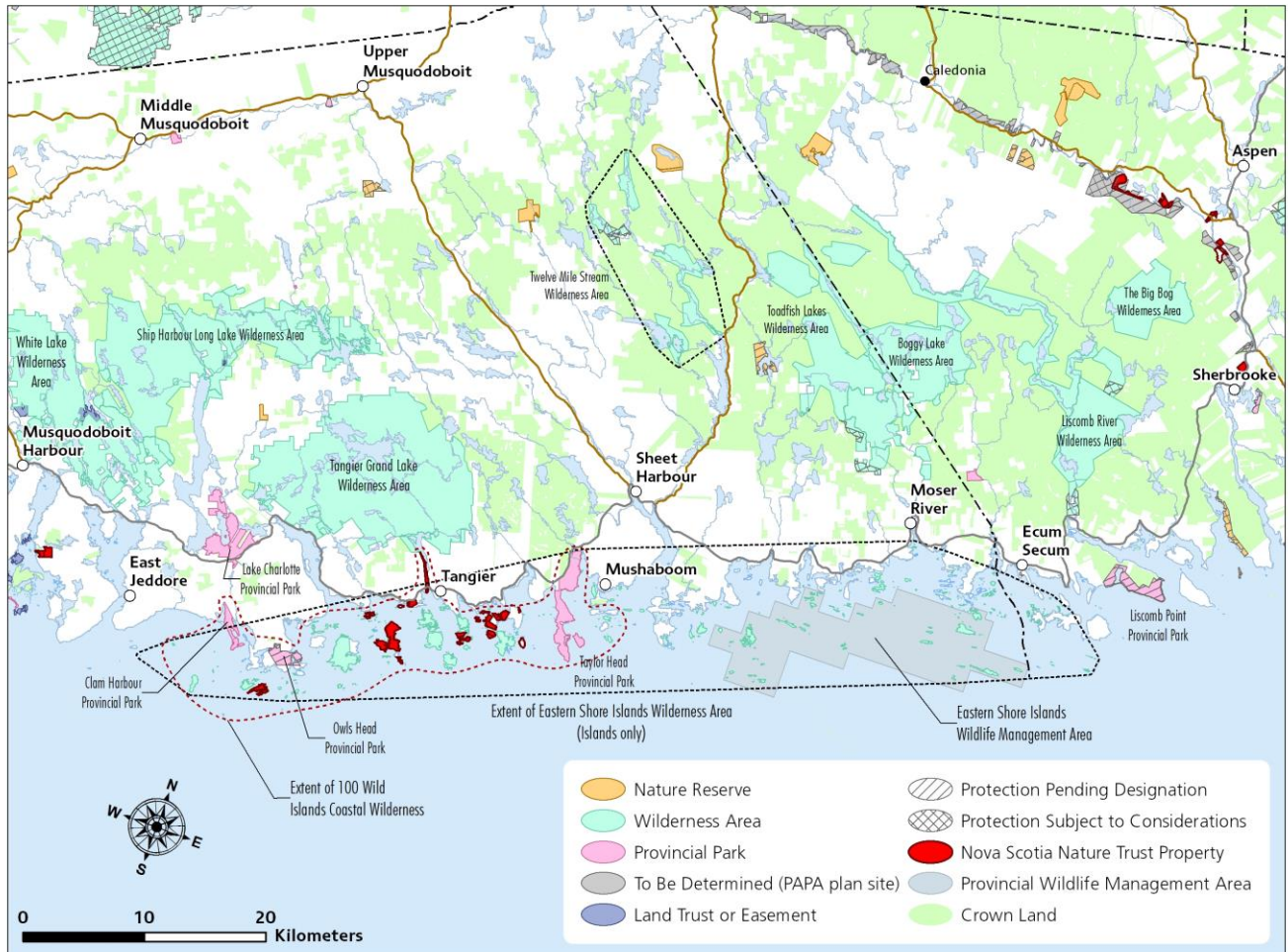


Source: Ariel of Borgles/ Bob Guscott

The coastal conservation lands are complimented by a variety of inland conservation properties north of Highway 7 that provide access to interior lakes and rivers with outdoor recreational and nature tourism potential.

The region already offers a number of iconic natural, outdoor, cultural and historic assets and experiences, including: surfing and swimming at Martinique Beach, swimming at Clam Harbour Beach Provincial Park; beachcombing and birding at Martinique Beach Provincial Park (the longest sandy beach in Nova Scotia); the coastal trail systems of Taylor Head Provincial Park; cycling along the Musquodoboit Harbour Trailway; hiking at Gibraltar Rock; paddling on the Musquodoboit River; hiking the Liscombe River Trail; venturing the suspension bridge overlooking a waterfall at Liscombe Lodge Resort; endless opportunities for independent or guided coastal kayaking; charter scenic boat touring; Nova Scotia's largest living history museum, the 1800s-themed Sherbrooke Village; the Fisherman's Life Museum; a 1940's restored village at Memory Lane Heritage Village; MacPhee House Museum, the Atlantic Salmon at the St. Mary's River Salmon Museum and more.

2.2 MAP OF THE STEP PROJECT AREA



Source: Eastern Shore Islands Step Report Graphic/ Nova Scotia Environment

2.3 MUSQUODOBOIT HARBOUR-SHERBROOKE STEP PROJECT GOAL AND OPPORTUNITY

The goal of the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP initiative is to provide a proven *Step-by-Step* process to help guide stakeholders and communities in building and executing a successful Sustainable Tourism Community Plan.

2.3.1 An Ecologically-Driven Brand Opportunity

To capitalize on the product and experiential development ideas presented in this plan, the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area needs to be seen and appreciated in a fresh new product-supporting light. This can only come from creating new product and experiences that support the brand and are able to

compete with other tourism products and experiences currently found in Nova Scotia, in Atlantic Canada, in Canada, in North American and overseas.

The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area must identify its Unique Selling Proposition (USP), that is, what sets the area "apart as a travel destination". Destination Canada has five USPs:

1. Vibrant cities on the edge of nature
2. Personal journeys by land water and air
3. Active adventure among awe-inspiring natural wonders
4. Award-winning Canadian local cuisine
5. Connecting with Canadians

(Source: <http://en.destinationcanada.com/resources-industry/canada%E2%80%99s-tourism-brand#uniqueSellingPoints> March 16, 2016)

Nova Scotia positions itself as "The spirit of the perfect road trip", as per the *2015 Tourism Brand Guidelines*, and states, "an effective positioning is one that occupies a place in the mind of our potential traveller, that is not offered by competitive destinations".

The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area needs to find ways to align with Canada's USPs and Tourism Nova Scotia's Positioning, and evolve with them. In addition, the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area should seek to identify its own Unique Selling Proposition (USP) or Positioning, and use it to guide product development and marketing efforts.



Source: Proptonics

Recognizing the value of the unique geography, ecology, and natural attributes of the destination area (including cultural attributes that can be substantiated as part of an overall tourism sell) will help to identify the destination area's USP, or positioning. It points primarily to the phenomenon of the scores of uninhabited islands massing the destination area's shoreline and forming a dynamic archipelago, the likes of which are rare in Canada or North America. Added to the uniqueness of the coast is the fact that scenic viewing of the islands and coastline are both outstanding and accessible.

In Canadian and North American touristic terminology, the ideas of positioning the destination area as an archipelago or as 'wild islands', is unusual. It is generally unfamiliar tourism language. This poses at once both a brand, marketing and communications complexity as well as a brand, marketing and communications opportunity worth exploring. By example, when Gros Morne National Park earned its



Source: Camping on Ship Rock islands/NSNT

UNESCO standing and began bragging about its 'Tablelands', there was a troubling unfamiliarity to the terminology and many questions about what the Tablelands meant to a touristic value or experience.

Today, Gros Morne's reputation is staked on the Tablelands as a place representing half a billion years in the making – the result of a brilliant coming together of two ancient continents -- the Earth's inner soul: the mantle - exposed to you the way few have seen it. The power of the Tablelands message overcame the unfamiliarity of language and of the threat of science entering the tourism fray. Another nearby example is the Bay of Fundy. For decades, the place has been marketed as home to the world's highest tides. When science intervened, however, new ideas and descriptors came into play. Consumers were introduced to a Bay of Fundy narrative that positions it in scientific terms as a 'marine wonder of the world' where people can 'walk on the ocean floor'.

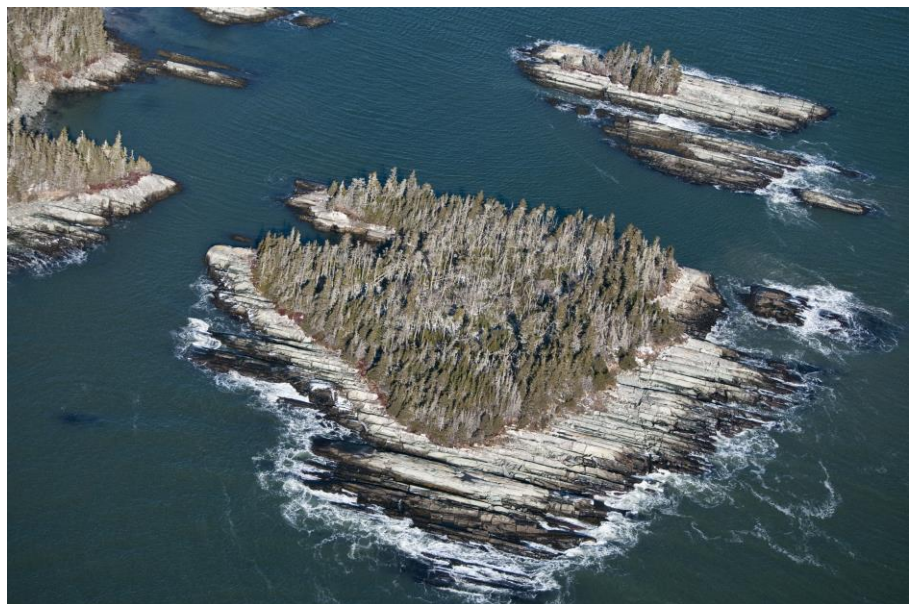
So similarly, the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area needs to take on and not shy away from this challenge of changing the predictability of tourism language....to not shy away from allowing the science and unfamiliar terminology to take the helm of the touristic message and product development direction. If the destination area is legitimately predicated on being a rare archipelago or as a series of 'wild islands', then the world needs to know. A best practice in destination branding emerges in the form of Western Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way. Analysis concerning this best practice and how it relates to the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area can be found in this plan's Appendix E.

2.3.2 Thematic and Brand Directions

The following phrases represent a mere sampling of thematic / brand directions which deserve to be considered (in addition to other concepts provided through public consultations) by the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP Working Group in collaboration with their partners in the development of the destination area's Brand Positioning or Unique Selling Proposition (USP):

- Canada's Wild Islands
- Atlantic Canada Archipelago
- Nova Scotia Archipelago
- Canadian Archipelago
- Canada's Wild Archipelago
- The Wild Island Coast
- Nova Scotia's Wild Islands
- The Sanctuary Islands
- Eastern Shore Archipelago

NOTE: The STEP working Group is committed to ensuring that these and other positioning, thematic and brand concepts, together with imagery and artistic renderings be subjected to a fully separate



Source: Ariel Shelter Cove/NSNT

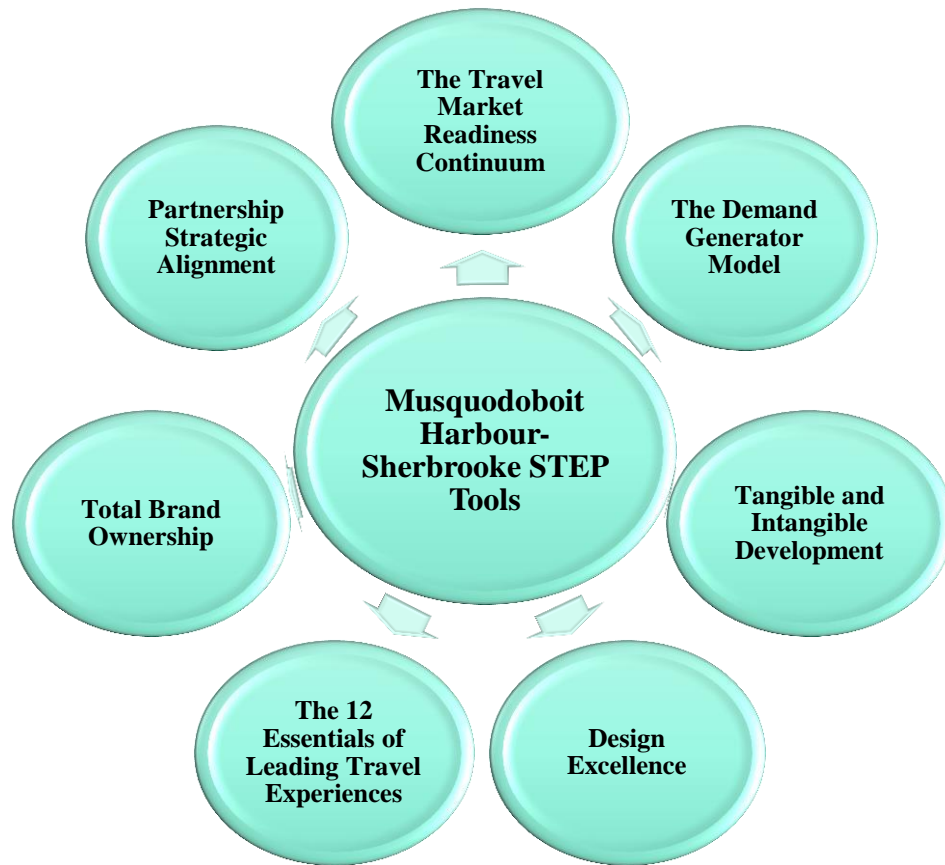
comprehensive independent consumer research initiative (not merely melded into other research initiatives) as part of the effort to arrive at a competitive brand conclusion for the destination area. Information

gathered from this work will also be critical to develop an array of products and experiences for entrepreneurs to consider building.

Building on the resulting brand conclusion, the destination will be supported by a comprehensive brand and communication package, which enhances the destination and its extraordinary values

2.4 TOOLS OF TOURISM PRODUCT/EXPERIENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

There are several key tools of tourism product and experiential development that the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP initiative will recognize and practice.



2.4.1 The Tourism Market Readiness Continuum

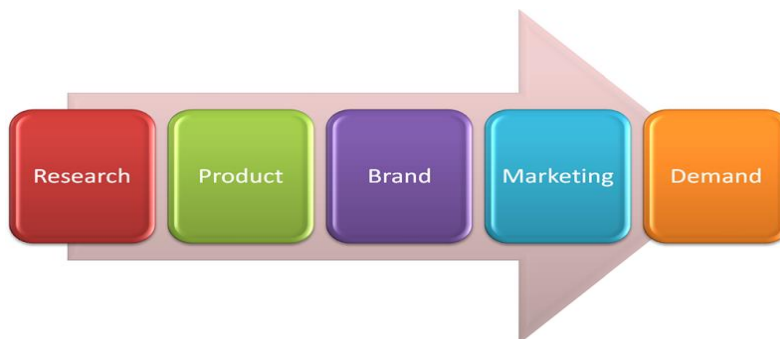
In-demand products and experiences to be developed for Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke will be the result of strong research, spending quality time in the 'laboratory' for product and experience building and ultimately the creation of a brand, which rewards the destination area with total ownership.



Source: ilmagine/Harvey Sawler

2.4.2 The Travel Demand Generator Model

Research drives the Product, which drives the Brand, which drives the Marketing which, Drives Demand.



Source: ilmagine/Harvey Sawler

2.4.3 Product Development Types

The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP Working Group strategy will pursue both essential streams of product/experiential development – the Tangible and the Intangible.

| Tangible Development | Intangible Development |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation infrastructure • Destination community infrastructure • Fixed roof accommodations • Foodservice facilities • Alternative accommodations • Retail facilities • Heritage and cultural facilities • Outdoor adventure infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resource education and training • Best Practices missions • Operator mentorship • Experiential enhancement • Creation of themed organized activities • Cultural performance development • Story and interpretation development • Package theming and construction |

Source: ilmanage/Harvey Sawler

2.4.4 Design Excellence

Every physical element involving the business plan has been predicated on the philosophy of engaging skilled accredited design professionals in such areas as graphic design, spatial design, signage, etc.

The 12 Essentials of Leading Travel Experiences



Source: ilmanage/Harvey Sawler

2.4.5 The 12 Essentials of Successful Travel Products

The 12 Essentials experiential development model will be instrumental in helping to build new tourism products and experiences for the destination area. *The 12 Essentials* include:

- Well-Themed – the destination area’s theme and brand will guide the product development direction linked to the *100 Wild Islands* initiative and Tourism Nova Scotia’s strategic segments as described in section 2.5 Understanding the Travel Customer.
- The Essence of the destination – the destination area will strongly evoke the finest natural and cultural attributes of Nova Scotia.
- Authentic – the most authentic experiences will rise to the top of the destination area’s promotional inventory.
- Accessible – the destination area’s experience will be more accessible to more customers.
- The Emotional Trigger – the destination area will offer experiences which captivate and capture the customer.
- Sense of Place – the destination area’s culture and history will drive consumer interest.
- Educational – the destination area will set new standards in Nova Scotia for educational tourism products and experiences.
- Entertaining – the destination area will evoke joy and laughter through the cultural and nature experiences.
- Enriching/Accomplishment – nature and outdoor experiences will drive the destination area’s personally enriching products and experiences.
- Hands-on – visitors to the destination area will directly experience nature and cultural products and experiences.
- Value-Added – the destination area will become known for providing value-added products and experiences to visitors.
- Exceed Expectations – the STEP Working Group will challenge destination area operators and communities to exceed the competitive norm in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada.

2.4.6 Total Brand Ownership

The plan will pursue total brand ownership for the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area. Total Brand Ownership is a concept based upon exclusivity or a Unique Selling Proposition (USP). As illustrated in the following model, ownership, exclusivity and establishing of one or more USP’s (essentially these mean the same thing) derive from uniquely strategic partnerships, uniquely strategic positioning, uniquely strong products and experiences and a unique sense of place. The reverse can be considered as ‘me-too’ propositions that have little or no value; these are brand propositions, which can be easily adopted by competitors or pretenders (the more generic the concept, the lesser the value). Once established, ownership, exclusivity and the USP are intended to overwhelm competitors by attracting customers to the most dynamic, exclusive and

appealing choices for travel experiences. One of STEP facilitator ilMagine's mantras is – 'if you can't own the brand, you don't want it'.



USP Model



2.5 UNDERSTANDING THE TRAVEL CUSTOMER

Prior to mid-2015, Tourism Nova Scotia primarily segmented its target market based on results from the 2010 Nova Scotia Visitor Exit Survey:

(https://tourismns.ca/sites/default/files/2010_nova_scotia_visitor_exit_survey_final_report-revised_june_22-2015.pdf).

By analyzing the results of this survey, Tourism Nova Scotia was able to gain new insights on visitors to Nova Scotia. A series of Market Profile Bulletins were created which segmented the market based on either their demographics or activities. Initially using this segmentation approach, 'The Outdoor Enthusiast' was identified by the STEP Working Group as a key target market for the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area. More details can be found in Appendix C: Tourism Nova Scotia Visitor Statistics on the Outdoor Enthusiast and at: http://tourismns.ca/sites/default/files/page_documents/outdoor_enthusiasts.pdf.



In the second half of 2015, Tourism Nova Scotia evolved organizationally and in terms of its target market tactics. While the activity-based segmentation is useful in describing Nova Scotia's target markets, Tourism Nova Scotia wanted to go further, to define target markets based on the motivations that drive travel decisions. Employing Destination Canada's Explorer Quotient (EQ) segmentation tool has highlighted this evolution:

(<http://en.destinationcanada.com/resources-industry/explorer-quotient>).

Tourism Nova Scotia is currently focusing on three EQ types: Authentic Experiencers, Cultural Explorers and Free Spirits. According to the Research, Planning and Support division of Tourism Nova Scotia, the Explorer Quotient *"replace the activities-based segments that were developed from 2010 Visitor Exit Survey (Cultural Enthusiasts, Outdoor Enthusiasts, Culinary Enthusiasts), however, the Explorer Quotient segments align very well with the activities-based segments, and most development work that has been completed against the activities-based segments will transition well to the Explorer Quotient segmentation model... all three segments have a great appreciation for natural landscapes and coastal sightseeing, and enjoy activities that allow them to engage in nature observation. Authentic Experiencers are less likely to be attracted to more rugged or active activities, while Cultural Explorers and Free Spirits would enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities. Free Spirits are more likely than the other two segments to be attracted to more extreme outdoor adventure activities."*

The three EQ types now aligned with Tourism Nova Scotia are detailed as:

Authentic Experiencers (Marketing priority for Tourism Nova Scotia)

- More learned, understated travelers – they appreciate travel
- Prefer to do their own thing at a destination
- Have a keen interest in historical travel
- Actively seek the most authentic cultural experiences
- Have lower interest in more active, adventurous experiences
- Love trips that: teach them about history; take them away from the crowds of tourists; aren't a whirlwind tour of the "must-sees"

Cultural Explorers (Marketing priority for Tourism Nova Scotia)

- Avid travelers who value learning and discovery
- Don't want to feel like a tourist, want to "blend in"
- Prefer a free and spontaneous approach to seeing the sights
- Love to share their experiences – it is part of the fun of travel
- Love trips that: take them "off the beaten track"; allow them to connect with the locals and fellow travelers
- Are fun but teach them something as well

Free Spirits (Development priority for Tourism Nova Scotia. Will become a marketing priority in the mid-term)

- Free spirits are the traveler's traveler
- Enjoy authentic local experiences – look for the highlights

- Travel is a time to escape their lives back home
- Love luxury and high-end experiences
- Love to share
- Love trips that: offer fun, exciting experiences with some learning on the side; make them feel pampered through luxuries; allow them to see all the main attractions

The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP initiative is focused on alignment with the primary attributes which guide tourism planning and development through ACOA (defined as Primary Travel Motivators) and identifying, developing and enhancing tourism product and experiences which will align with Tourism Nova Scotia's priority EQ types. An analysis of the current and potential alignment is illustrated in the following table:

| Travel Motivator/Traveler Segments | Destination Area Status Quo | Destination Area Potential |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Coastal Experiences | Medium | High |
| Sightseeing and Tours | Medium | High |
| Culture, Recreation and Heritage | Medium | High |
| Outdoor Experiences | Low-Medium | High |
| Culinary Experiences | Low | High |
| Experiential Accommodations | Low | Medium-High |
| Major and International Events | Low | High |
| Products/Destination Attributes Appealing to Authentic Experiencers (EQ) | Low | Medium |
| Products/Destination Attributes Appealing to Cultural Explorers (EQ) | Low | Medium |
| Products/Destination Attributes Appealing to Free Spirits (EQ) | Low | Medium |

Source: ilmanage/Harvey Sawler

3 STRATEGIC APPROACH

3.1 THE 2015-16 STEP INITIATIVE

3.1.1 STEP Working Group Tourism Mission

To position and advance Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke as a dynamic new in-demand destination offering the best-designed touring, outdoor and nature infrastructure and experiences in Nova Scotia.

3.1.2 Partnership Strategic Alignment

The plan will ensure strategic alignment with key partners:

- The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
- The Province of Nova Scotia
- Halifax Regional Municipality
- Municipality of the District of St. Mary's
- Tourism Nova Scotia
- Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores
- Nova Scotia Nature Trust

3.1.3 Research and Related Activities

There were a number of activities completed by the STEP working group to ensure a complete final report and action plan. The purpose of these activities was to better educate ourselves with the STEP process, learn from past experiences and develop a vision for the future. The following is a comprehensive list of research and related activities which have enabled us to produce a comprehensive final report for the STEP process and will be the anchor of our future action plan. The following was completed between January 2015 and March 2016.

Summary of STEP Process:

(Please see appendix D for a detailed list of activities in chronological order)

- Public Meeting to Launch STEP Process
- 8 Working Group Meetings
- Best Practices Mission to Alma, NB
- 2 Drive Abouts (preliminary asset assessment)
- 2 Public Consultations
- 3 Town Hall Meetings
- Experiential Tourism Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST) Workshop
- Presentations from Community Members
- One-on-one Business Consultations
- Final Public Presentation to Community Members and Funding Partners

Literature Research:

- STEP process information
- Eastern Shore Nature Tour Report (1997)
- Roger Brooks Assessment (2013)
- Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland (2013)

3.1.4 Community Involvement

The STEP process is routed first and foremost in community involvement. Seventeen businesses and organizations, and two municipal units (Municipality of the District of St Mary's and Halifax Municipality) provided community funding needed to secure ACOA's financial support of the project. The STEP working group is made up of 16 community leaders and organizations who aim to propel the initiative and area forward. In order to ensure complete transparency and maximum community involvement, the working group has lead multiple public consultations (which ensured the community had direct impact on the final report and process), town hall meetings, one on one business consultations, training and skill development workshops and public meetings. Going forward, this will continue to be one of the guiding principles as we develop a community driven action plan grounded in collaboration.



Source: Cindy Mackinnon

3.2 MOVING THE STEP INITIATIVE FORWARD

The STEP process ends on April 7th, 2016 with the Funder's Presentation, whereby this report and its findings are presented to ACOA, local funders and the public. However, this tourism initiative is still in its early stages. Plans for future project leadership and funding have been developed and are described in the sub-sections below. All future efforts of this tourism initiative must align with the Unique Selling Proposition (USP), Vision Statement, and Positioning statement listed below. Guiding principles have been developed which shall help further clarify future decisions.

3.2.1 Leadership

The overall management of the Musquodoboit Harbour to Sherbrooke STEP project was undertaken through the efforts of the STEP Working Group with Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS) leading as the project manager. DEANS has received approval from their board to continue managing this

project and the Working Group has agreed to support this arrangement. The representatives who comprised of the STEP Working Group need not remain the same moving forward. STEP Working Group representatives wishing to continue their role must express their interest. New representatives will be sought through a community engagement process to serve alongside those members of the first group who wish to continue on an active and participatory basis. As the project manager, DEANS will ensure that the Working Group representatives continue to accurately represent the community and consist of a variety of individuals, businesses and organizations.



Source: Sandbar Borgles/ NSNT

3.2.2 Funding

- AquaPrime Mussel Ranch
- DEANS
- Halifax Regional Municipality
- Henley House
- Hook Me Up - Rug Supplies
- Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society
- MacDonald, Chisholm, Trask Insurance
- Municipality of District of St. Mary's
- Murphy's Campground
- Northern Fibre
- Salmon River Country Inn
- Seaside Tourism and Business Development Association
- Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce
- Tangier Lobster
- Spry Bay Campground and Cabins
- Sober Island Oysters
- Upper Lakeville Campground

3.2.3 Guiding Principles

9. **Community Driven** - build success through a community-driven and focused approach, taking advantage of professional expertise and creative partnerships
10. **Responsible** – ensure that development does not compromise the natural or cultural integrity of the conservation lands, surrounding region, and communities
11. **Sustainable** – focus on initiatives that support long-term benefits and are self-sustaining
12. **Research based** - use tourism market research to drive product development and marketing
13. **Experiential Focus** - develop tourism opportunities using the travel demand generator model & focus on experiential product development
14. **Build on success** - apply existing tourism product development tools (e.g. Tourism NS, Destination Canada, ACOA, etc.), and leverage best practices from other jurisdictions to accelerate product development
15. **Inclusive tourism development** - ensure the approach and destination achieves a balance between tangible (physical infrastructure) and intangible (e.g. learning opportunities, hands-on experiences, etc.) tourism development
16. **Clear communication** - ensure that process documentation and communications are simple, clear, and widely available

3.2.4 Tourism Vision

Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke is internationally recognized as a sustainable one-of-a-kind Canadian coastal nature-based destination offering outstanding touring, outdoor, cultural and culinary experiences.

3.2.5 Tourism Positioning

Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke will be competitively positioned for the domestic and international tourism markets as a unique network of 'wild islands' forming a one-of-a-kind Canadian coastal touring and activity-engaging experience.

3.2.6 Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

While the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area seeks to position itself in the minds of the visitor as "a one-of-a-kind Canadian coastal touring and activity-engaging experience", the Unique Selling Proposition may be that the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area is "A unique network of 'wild islands' and coastal headlands". The ultimate positioning and USP will be finalized through a branding exercise, to be carried out in a future phase of the initiative (see plan section 1.4.6 Total Brand Ownership).

4 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

4.1 THE FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. **Capitalize on the Nature-based Opportunity** - Define and build the destination area based on its unique selling proposition (USP) and positioning that focuses on the wild islands and outstanding nature-based tourism opportunities.
2. **Build Success Through Engagement** - Engage community members, key influencers, and partners to broaden support for developing the area as a world-class tourism destination.
3. **Advance Experiential Tourism Development** - Enhance and generate tourism products and experiences that align with the USP, brand positioning of the region, and the Nova Scotia brand.
4. **Enrich Quality of Life** - Enrich the quality of life for residents of the destination area.

4.2 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OUTCOMES

4.2.1 Priority 1: Capitalize on the Nature-based Opportunity

Define and build the destination area based on its unique selling proposition (USP) and positioning that focuses on the coastal islands and headlands, complimented by regional nature-based tourism opportunities.



Source: Proptonics



Source: Cove at Wolfes Island/NSNT

Outcomes

- 1) There is a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the natural and cultural heritage values and assets associated with the conservation lands that: a) informs use of protected lands (i.e. what needs to be protected/what is available for use); and b) identifies natural and cultural attributes that contribute to product development
- 2) There is an up-to-date and well organized inventory and assessment of recreation opportunities and tourism assets (tangible and intangible) for the region.
- 3) A clearly understood and coordinated management approach for the conservation lands administered by NSE, DNR, and NSNT is in place to guide the appropriate protection and use of these lands.

- 4) The area is characterized by a professionally developed and market-tested brand and concept.
- 5) A sustainable tourism development plan is in place that identifies opportunities and gaps, and prioritizes actions for strategic tourism development, using a structured and transparent evaluation criteria.
- 6) Tourism infrastructure is in place that supports increased visitation to the area.
- 7) Visitor-focused information about the nature-based opportunity is readily available and accessible.

4.2.2 Priority 2: Build Success through Engagement

Continually engage community members, key influencers, and partners to advance the area as a world-class tourism destination.

Outcomes

- 8) Well-linked and cohesive collateral materials are available to help promote the region, attract investment, and advance the tourism development process.
- 9) There is an ongoing process in place to track, monitor, and evaluate performance.
- 10) Best practices from within and beyond the destination area are considered and integrated as a means of continuous improvement.
- 11) Key influencers, communities, residents, and investors are participating in a range of ways to support tourism development in the region.
- 12) Effective communication tools and processes are in place to ensure ongoing awareness of the region and progress on strategic tourism development.
- 13) Tourism operators and organizations are communicating and collaborating with conservation land managers including Nova Scotia Nature Trust, Nova Scotia departments of Environment and Natural Resources, to advance experiential nature-based tourism opportunities.

4.2.3 Priority 3: Advance Experiential Tourism Development

Enhance and generate experiential tourism products that align with the unique selling proposition (USP), brand positioning of the region, and the Nova Scotia brand.



Source: West Beach Shelter Cove/ NSNT

Outcomes

- 14) Tourism operators have the knowledge and capacity to offer high-quality experiential tourism opportunities.
- 15) There are an increased number of monetized experiential tourism products available in the region.
- 16) Workshops and training opportunities are in place to help build capacity, entrepreneurial skills, and financial success of local tourism businesses and organizations.

4.2.4 Priority 4: Enrich Quality of Life

Enrich the quality of life for residents of the destination area.

Outcomes

- 17) Local business are benefiting from increased tourism visitation and spending.
- 18) There are more local employment opportunities connected to tourism and supporting industries.
- 19) An enhanced range and number of quality outdoor recreational opportunities and related facilities and services are available for local residents and communities.
- 20) Tangible (capital/infrastructure) tourism developments are benefitting local residents in their daily lives.
- 21) Local residents feel connected to the tourism initiative and feel that it is an authentic reflection of their lives and sense of place.
- 22) Processes and structures are in place to help encourage and support cooperation across the region.



Source: Robert Moser

5 APPENDICES

5.1 APPENDIX A – THE MUSQUODOBOIT HARBOUR-SHERBROOKE STEP WORKING GROUP

A Results-Driven STEP Working Group

Since the earliest point in its mandate, the members of the Working Group has acted professionally and inclusively in an effort to produce tangible results for the communities and interests they represent.

The Working Group is comprised of the following individuals:

Cindy MacKinnon, DEANS, STEP Project Manager

Sandy Moser, Sheer Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce and Civic Affairs Board Member, Co-Chair

Ryan Murphy, Bread and Better Small Business Solutions, Co-Chair

Meryl Atkinson, Henley House Pub and Restaurant

Shannon Chambers, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Jane Churchill-Smith, Dalhousie University Intern

Molly Connor, Halifax Partnership

Carrie Drake, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

Debbie Findlay, Municipality of the District of St Mary's

Erin Hume / Jennifer McKeane, Tourism Nova Scotia

Peter Labor, Nova Scotia Department of Environment

Karen Mitchell, Musquodoboit Harbour Chamber of Commerce

Dale Smith, Nova Scotia Nature Trust

Karen Traversy/Dolores Wilmhurst, Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society (Memory Lane Heritage Village)

Karen Wenaus, Liscombe Lodge

Gayle Wilson, Coastal Adventures.

Harvey Sawler, ilmagine.ca, STEP Consultant.

5.2 APPENDIX B – SWOT ANALYSIS

Following are the results of the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP Working Group's SWOT analysis process:

Strengths

- The existence of the vast network of coastal islands.
- Beaches.
- Scenic, rugged headlands.
- Significant emphasis placed on the destination area by the Nova Scotia departments of environment and natural resources, the Nova Scotia Nature Trust, etc.
- Proximity to Halifax and Robert Stanfield Halifax International Airport.
- Ready access via Highway 7 and other local roads.
- Fresh air.
- Sense of wilderness.
- Heritage attractions and venues.
- Provincial parks.
- Nature Trust initiative.
- Pure and pristine.
- Few if any fast food operations

Weaknesses

- Road conditions.
- Lack of critical mass of tourism services.
- GPS gap.
- Lack of scenic pull-offs.
- Lack of public WiFi and cellular telephone services
- Lack of experiences.
- Lack of awareness and recognition.
- Lack of facilities and services

Opportunities

- Several good parallel initiatives are in order (e.g. 100 Wild Islands initiative, Nova Scotia Nature Trust, etc.).
- Capitalize on the Eastern Shore Islands Wilderness and associated coastal provincial lands.
- Capitalize on the Eastern Shore Islands Wildlife Management Area.
- Unencumbered fresh start on defining the product and the brand.
- Strong chance to compete within Nova Scotia Tourism's Outdoor Enthusiasts value segment.
- Strong chance to compete against tired Nova Scotia products and travel patterns.
- Outstanding freshwater and tidal coastal paddling.
- Recognize and fulfill premise that the Archipelago (apart from the north) is the last undeveloped, wild coastline in North America.
- 'See' the coastline *through Champlain's eyes*.

- Rainforest context.
- The territory is secured due to parks, protected areas, abundance of crown land, etc.
- River systems leading to the coast are important factors in what Outdoor Enthusiasts are looking for.
- Chance to create new loops and in-out access points to the coast.
- Chance to emulate the 'best-of' the Fundy Trail Parkway.

Threats

- A general lack of capacity.
- A tendency for some stakeholders to be parochial rather than thinking big and building on what is truly unique.
- Nova Scotia is focused on other shinier coins.
- Highly competitive environment.
- Potential for the loss of quality opportunities for public recreation and nature-based tourism due to unplanned and/or incompatible development.

5.3 APPENDIX C – TOURISM NOVA SCOTIA VISITOR STATISTICS

The highest potential travel customers are characterized as the classic touring vacationer of Atlantic Canada who by far represent the largest volume of visitors to the region, including, of course, Nova Scotia. The classic touring vacationer can be considered as visitors in the mainstream (not fixated on one particular niche (e.g. birding, surfing, genealogy) who are travelling via rubber tire (e.g. private automobile, escorted motor coach, private touring vehicles). The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area has never truly enjoyed the benefit of volumes of classic touring vacationers at levels experienced historically by destination areas such as the City of Halifax, the South Shore, the Annapolis Valley, the Bay of Fundy region and the Cabot Trail. Source: ilmagine/Harvey Sawler according to historical visitor travel patterns provided by Nova Scotia Tourism.

The classic touring vacationer, in one form or another, exemplified here through the following attributes (combined with their points of origin – all figures provided by Tourism Nova Scotia’s 2010 Visitor Exit Survey):

| What Most Attracted All Visitors to Nova Scotia | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| Natural Beauty and scenery | 26.9% |
| Beach and Seacoast | 25.9% |
| Outdoor Activities | 6.1% |
| Golf | 5% |
| Culinary | 3.4% |

| What Did Visitors Do While in Nova Scotia | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| Sightseeing and driving tours | 67% |
| Visited a beach * | 61.4 |
| Shopping for crafts, etc. | 50.3 |
| Visiting friends and relatives | 49.9% |
| Visited national or provincial parks* | 48.4% |
| Experienced historical or culture | 42.6% |
| Enjoyed lobster dinner or a meal | 28.5% |

Note: * Several of the destination area’s most popular beaches are situated in park jurisdictions.

| Point of Origin | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|
| New Brunswick | 17.3% |
| Nova Scotia | 31.6% |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 1% |
| Quebec | 11.8% |
| Ontario | 18% |
| Other Canada | 6% |
| New England | 5% |
| Other U.S. | 7.4% |
| International | 1.9% |

Travel Motivators/Traveler Segments

The Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP Strategic Plan was originally formulated based on Nova Scotia's established and publicized targeted Highest Value Visitor Segments which pointed to particular emphasis on the 'outdoor enthusiast' as one of the four top segment contenders, which included:

- Cultural Enthusiasts
(http://tourismns.ca/sites/default/files/page_documents/cultural_enthusiasts.pdf)
- Culinary Enthusiasts
(http://tourismns.ca/sites/default/files/page_documents/culinary_enthusiasts.pdf)
- Outdoor Enthusiasts
(http://tourismns.ca/sites/default/files/page_documents/outdoor_enthusiasts.pdf)
- Big Spenders
(http://tourismns.ca/sites/default/files/page_documents/big_spenders.pdf)



Outdoor Experiences/Outdoor Enthusiasts

This direction was further supported by the strong evidence that visitors seeking outdoor experiences already have or are likely to have an interest in the existing and potential products and experiences of the destination area. This evidence is illustrated through the following statistics from Tourism Nova Scotia's 2010 Visitor Exit Survey:

- 39% of visitors to all of NS enjoyed outdoor activities versus 63% for the destination area.
- Outdoor enthusiasts are defined as pleasure visitors who are highly motivated by outdoor experiences and are engaged in outdoor activities, including visitors who participated in at least 3 outdoor activities, and ranked natural landscapes and wildlife at least an 8 out of 10 in importance in their decision to visit Nova Scotia. However there are nuances to be addressed in understanding the outdoor enthusiast within the context of the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP strategy. For example, the beach explorer who participates in a half-day guided kayak tour and enjoys talking to a local fisher when buying lobster off the wharf is a candidate as an outdoor enthusiast for the current experiential offering for the destination area; however there exists the opportunity, linked to the dramatic natural attributes of the area and the potential for greater entrepreneurial leadership to create exciting and enriching experiences which can compete and generate demand from more determined outdoor enthusiasts (e.g. elite marine excursions, nature and culinary experiences, island-visiting experiences, etc.).
- Outdoor Enthusiasts as described in Tourism Nova Scotia's visitor profile are primarily comprised of:
 - Couples (46%) and families (22%).
 - Higher levels of education and higher incomes.
 - Typically come from farther away.
 - 14% of from the Atlantic Region
 - One-third of from Ontario (34%)
 - 12% from Western Canada.
 - 21% are American.
 - 12% are from overseas.
- Outdoor Enthusiasts are environmentally oriented and are willing to pay premiums for sustainable products.
- Outdoor Enthusiasts have an average party spend of \$1,960 compared to \$1,280 for all pleasure visitors, making them one of the most prized segments in Nova Scotia's tourism economy

The following table illustrates types of outdoor activities at participation rates in all of Nova Scotia versus within the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area.

| Activity | All NS | Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke Destination Area |
|---------------------|--------|--|
| Coastal Sightseeing | 17% | 36% |
| Hiking | 16% | 36% |
| Beach Exploring | 16% | 36% |
| Swimming | 12% | 24% |
| Nature | 11% | 23% |
| Whale Watching | 4% | 13% |

Source: 2010 Nova Scotia Visitor Exit Survey and Tourism Nova Scotia

5.4 APPENDIX D – TIMELINE OF STEP WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES

2015

- Jan 24: STEP Launch and public meeting, Sheet Harbour
- Mar 5: Working Group (WG) meeting, Sheet Harbour
- Apr 13: WG meeting, Salmon River
- May 20: Drive-Abouts (preliminary assessment of tourism assets)
- June 2: WG meeting, Liscombe
- Oct 1: WG meeting, Sheet Harbour
- Oct 20/21: WG Best practices Mission – Alma, New Brunswick
- Oct 27: Public Consultation, Sheet Harbour
- Nov 25: WG meeting Musquodoboit Harbour
- Dec 7,8,9: Public Info Sessions

2016

- Jan 19: WG meeting and Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST) workshop
- Feb 25: Public Consultation, Oyster Pond
- Mar 3: WG meeting, Ship Harbour
- Mar 10: WG Meeting, Halifax
- April 7: Final Presentation to Community and Funding Partners
- Various: Presentations from Community members

5.5 APPENDIX E - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION #1 INPUTS

The first in a series of community open houses was conducted during the afternoon and evening of October 27, 2015 (the second series scheduled for February, 2016). The open houses consisted of a plenary presentation summarizing the draft strategic plan and a mixer which provided opportunities for attendees to visit a series of information stations to discuss the plan with working group members. The stations were themed on the plan's Vision, Mission, seven Strategic Objectives and positioning and brand ideas.

Following are the results of the inputs received from attendees.

Community Inputs to STEP Draft Mission Statement

To position and advance Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke as a dynamic new in-demand destination offering the best-designed touring, outdoor and nature infrastructure and experiences in Nova Scotia.

- Need to label the shore and brand it
- Engage the aboriginal people of Nova Scotia in this process for their input and ancient skills
- Look-out info stops – history
- Rest stops – Look outs, winter there are no stops between Jeddore and Sheet Harbour for any washroom facilities, roads, information areas
- Be sure you have what you are selling – don't create expectations that are unrealistic
- Our tourist's biggest comment is fix the roads
- People, tour busses, cruises are tired of seeing Nova Scotia the same way over and over. The Eastern Shore offers a new product that is waiting to be discovered

Community Inputs to STEP Draft Vision Statement

(Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke is internationally recognized as a sustainable one-of-a-kind Canadian coastal nature-based destination offering outstanding touring, outdoor, cultural and culinary experiences.)

- Too long, should be two sentences – less adjectives and more direct – eco, tourism, adventure
- Recreational fishing – tuna and shark
- Nature based culinary experiences, local products, and wild islands – eat wild meat, deer, moose, pheasant, etc
- Support local art and artisan, historical artisans
- Nature based destination
- Needs to be in line with other economic activities – will be some conflict
- More boat tours

- Tourism is activities-driven –target 30 something eco-tourist
- Canadian, coastal, engaging, touring experience
- Lobster/Clam/Mussel Boil on the beach – getting clams/mussels themselves

Community Inputs to Draft Strategic Objective # 1

(To adopt and adhere to a set of strategic guiding principles)

- Jobs – Spinoffs – Year Round jobs
- We all need to be promoters of our products on the Eastern Shore when someone visits our businesses, we need to encourage them to also visit one another in the area
- This seems more like a principle than a strategic outcome
- Objective seems vague
- Chicken before Egg – if we only have accommodations for one bus tour, how do we promote ourselves as a destination, we need infrastructure and entrepreneurial initiatives
- Keep our people making a decent living in our own community, do something exciting and different as opposed to a call centre for example
- Infrastructure, branding, capacity building (new jobs, new businesses), collaboration
- New jobs that work for the communities

Community Inputs to Draft Strategic Objective # 2

(To lead a strategic planning process that is reasonable, functional and effective and is based on a clear set of priorities)

- Add that it is area realistic
- Plan yearly – what and where will this be in 1 year, 5 years, etc
- Don't pit one industry/resource /community against another
- Need to set out priorities to fit everyone
- This seems more like a principle than a strategic outcome; the plan done in this way will be the outcome
- What are the priorities
- What are the 5, 10, 20 year goals

Community Inputs to Draft Strategic Objective #3

(To define the destination area based on an unequivocal unique selling proposition (USP) which enhances the destination's profile within NSTA and by extension the international marketplace)

- The Islands and their history: People, fishing, etc
- Home – friendly and serene
- We have cottage crafts and a diverse artistic community long the Eastern shore, for example the old Anderson House Craft Shop & Art Gallery and the Old School Art Gallery in Musquodoboit Harbour
- Marine Aquariums – Aquariums draw people – the most popular attraction in cities that have them
- Be careful about overselling the Eastern Shore - It is nice here, I love it but that is personal. Sell what we have
- The area from Spry Bay to Bickerton has a very active arts/crafts association with a board of directors who meet on a monthly basis with a mandate to promote the work of local artists. An annual bursary is awarded to a graduating student pursuing a career in the arts.
- Islands, Ocean, Nature
- The beaches, the islands, the history
- Don't forget fresh water assets, great canoeing in Tangier, no marked access!
- Considered best tasting fish due to the Labrador off shore current

Community Inputs to Draft Strategic Objective # 4

(To convince key influencers, communities, residents and investors that the destination area has outstanding destination potential)

- To develop a culture of sharing and openness with our knowledge, talents, history, vision, accomplishments, not viewing tourists as an inconvenience or nuisance
- Pristine coastline, uninhabited island, hiking, canoeing, wilderness like you have never seen
- Have the communities involved in the process (what is our brand?)
- Provide funding for key buildings to be converted to B&Bs as close to island destination as possible
- Perfect
- Artists – Accommodations – Food – Boat tours – kayaking – birders
- Liability Insurance for B&Bs and Boat Tours
- Aquarium – display local flora and fauna – clean water supply for marine life
- “Off season” Local fisherman have the skills to transport tourist on the boats to the off shore islands – for example Murphy's Campsite boat tours, this resource needs to be utilized as an extra source of revenue for the fishermen on their 'down time' Liability insurance could be investigated
- Engage key influencers

Community Inputs to Draft Strategic Objective #5

(To *capitalize* on the remarkable achievements of the *100 Wild Islands* and other initiatives relating to the region's protected islands and associated headlands)

- Develop purchasable tourism product that gives people access to the islands
- Partnerships between the nature trust and communities to build an interpretive centre
- Yes! Marine Parks Network
- I am afraid this has limitations for winter, older folks and people with disabilities, etc. Suggest the islands are important but don't stand alone
- Love the brand "Road to the Isles" – Archipelago is not a known item
- Working with school children in protecting our future environment
- Develop historic skills: Build a log cabin, build a boat (canoe), build a stone chimney, learn to be a black smith and make tools (ancient skills/art like Vikings)
- Keep residents aware of the steps, we don't want any surprises, opportunities available like boating, hiking but make opportunities available to start a venture not a select few
- Highlights of islands – history, hiking, camping, sailing, kayaking

Community Inputs to Draft Strategic Objective #6

(To *generate* a new generation of experiences that are linked to the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke, 100 Wild Islands and Nova Scotia brands)

- Cook/Boil periwinkle – escargot
- offer wilderness survival skills courses – live in underdeveloped wood area with a guide, go for short hikes through wild woods with a machete to clear branches
- Yes it is unique
- Even without assistance from government the Eastern Shore could immediately enhance tourism by developing interesting "experiences for tourists to purchase
- Company retreats in a pristine setting, revitalize your work force with artist led workshops (lots of artists/crafts people) on Easter Shore along with healthy recreational activities, walking at Taylor Head, kayaking the Islands
- What are our outdoor experiences – kayaking, mussel picking, fishing, hiking, treasure hunting, pirate's moonshine

- Lobster dinner – lesson on how to cook and eat the fixings, mussel boil, island drop offs
- Kids love crab fishing, parents like kids, like crab fishing
- Change generate to develop
- More than just outdoor experiences are needed, need to consider seniors and people with disabilities
- People want to experience the ocean in whatever aspect their interest lies, sometimes just to look at and touch or feel the ocean water

Community Inputs to Draft Strategic Objective #7

(To enrich the quality of life for residents of the destination area)

- Increase employment to maintain a community
- Increased visitation equals increased revenue which helps local businesses
- Weight loss, health and well-being at forefront
- Provide increased access points or service points for the residents as well as tourists – “this is my back yard”
- Fund employees for businesses that are struggling
- This will have to be managed during implementation – There will be resistance – demonstrate or build positive over time
- Governments are destroying small towns/villages re: centralizing in cities needs rethinking
- Trains or buses would help!
- Employment opportunities, promote local businesses especially B&Bs and Motels
- Establishing a marina in the area can only help/encourage growth in a positive way

Theme and Branding Directions

- The sanctuary islands
- The wild sanctuary islands
- Eastern Shore Atlantic Archipelago
- Need Eastern Shore in title
- Atlantic Canada’s/Nova Scotia’s Wild Islands – creates a feeling of mystery/adventure that we are trying to convey = Eastern Shore doesn’t have the same appeal/allure
- The Wild Island Coast
- Nova Scotia or Eastern Shore Ragged Island Coast

- Wild Islands Shore
- Nova Scotia Eastern Shore Archipelago
- Wake up to the Eastern Shore
- Awaken on the Eastern Shore
- The Eastern Shore is awake or has awoken
- Visit Nova Scotia's Wild Side
- Survive the Wild Islands
- I don't like Archipelago from a promotion perspective
- Wild Islands differentiated Eastern Shore's islands from other island in Nova Scotia
- Awakening of the Eastern Shore Experience
- Jewel of Nova Scotia
- Hidden Secret of Nova Scotia Unearthed

5.6 APPENDIX F – WILD ATLANTIC WAY POSITIONING/BRAND BEST PRACTICE

The Wild Atlantic Way in Western Ireland emerged during the STEP process as an excellent best practices model for the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke destination area, both in terms of product development and branding. The STEP Working Group struck a sub-committee (the Wild Atlantic Way Review Committee) to examine the relevance of the Irish destination as related to the STEP destination area.

Colliers International Wild Atlantic Way Development of Proposition and Brand

This Colliers International proposition and brand study for Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way is an essential best practice document for the consideration of the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke STEP Strategic Plan Working Group primarily because the brand proposition associated with the Wild Atlantic Way is acutely tuned into a segment recognized as 'experience-seeking drive travelers'. Please note that the Colliers study essentially opens with the recognition that: *'Early market testing shows a strong appetite for the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland's main source markets. There is strong fit in target markets identified by Tourism Ireland/Fáilte Ireland in a major recent study and the core market identified in this project – experience seeking drive travelers'*. In other words, it is important that the Wild Atlantic Way concept – with all of its many inclusions and potential for being an internationally appealing destination – is very strategically aligned with Tourism Ireland.

There are numerous outstanding lessons for the STEP Working Group emanating from the Colliers work – especially relating to future brand propositions.

The STEP sub-committee set out to examine the relevance of the Wild Atlantic Way as per the following table:

THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY FINAL REPORT - COMPARATIVE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee Mandate

"The Wild Atlantic Way Final Report Review Committee is an ad hoc committee of the STEP Working Group, reporting to the Working Group, tasked with reviewing in detail the report in question and applying the approach and methodology of the report to the Bay of Islands area and proposing to the Working Group a summary of its findings with recommendations for review by the Working Group as a whole.

THE WEST (ATLANTIC) COAST OF IRELAND

Geographical Description

The Wild Atlantic Way runs 2,500km in length along the West coast of Ireland. The Wild Atlantic Way is the longest designated coastal route in the world. It begins in the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal and ends in Kinsale, County Cork.

Fundamental Attraction

The Wild Atlantic Way is fundamentally a coastal touring route targeted at experience-seeking drive travellers with interest in landscapes, culture & the outdoors.

Target Markets

The target market for the Wild Atlantic Way is the "experience-seeking-drive-travellers".

THE EASTERN (ATLANTIC) SHORE OF NOVA SCOTIA

Geographical Description

The area stretches 100 km as the crow flies from Musquodoboit Harbour to Sherbrooke and is comprised of roughly four hundred wild and pristine islands easily accessed from the 135km of the #7 coastal highway **and its 100 kms of side roads**. The area can also be accessed directly from the Atlantic Ocean and has a number of inland wilderness areas accessible by river from the coast.

Fundamental Attraction

The area is fundamentally a coastal destination of increasing potential primarily targeted at travellers seeking to comfortably view and/or physically experience the numerous pristine wild islands and their surrounding waters, that together create a unique ecosystem, while also exploring the area's existing and emerging authentic heritage, culture and cuisine experiences.

Target Markets

Tourism Nova Scotia (TNS) has recently adopted the "Explorer Quotient" market segmentation approach of Destination Canada and identified "Authentic Experiencers", "Cultural Explorers", and "Free Spirits" as its priority market b. Given the central role that TNS

“Drive-travellers” are typically people who:

- Drive to capture a sense of freedom or independence
- Regard themselves as travellers rather than tourists
- Undertake a specific type of travelling at distinct stages of their lives
- Put a lot of thought and planning into the creation of their travels

“Experience seekers” can be characterized as people who:

- Are regular international travellers
- Seek out and enjoy a range of personal experiences of a type they particularly enjoy and like to talk about
- Involve themselves in active and participatory holidays, are sociable in personality and like socializing with local people
- Are naturally active and like to do and learn new things
- Are adventurous and enjoy a variety of experiences on each single trip
- Place high importance on value for money and critically balance benefits with costs
- Place a high value on experience that contrast with their day-to-day lives

Although they were not able to authoritatively document the market the WAW consultants believe that all of the evidence world-wide is that the experience-seeking drive-tourism market is growing and will continue to do so but for growth to happen in a specific place/region a strong brand needs to be developed and managed and that there needs to be a sound understanding of the demand/supply and

plays in the development, growth and funding of Nova Scotia’s tourism industry we recommend that the STEP Working Group seriously consider adopting the Tourism Nova Scotia market segmentation priorities in the development of its own Action Plan. This would mean a change from the previously adopted “Outdoor Enthusiast” segmentation but the STEP area does align very well with two (“Authentic Explorers” and “Cultural Explorers”) of the three TNS priorities with respect to the area’s fundamental attraction-potential for future product development.

“Authentic Experiencers” are:

- More learned, understated travellers who appreciate travel
- Prefer to do their own thing at a destination
- Have a keen interest in historical travel
- Actively seek the most authentic cultural experiences
- Have a lower interest in more active, adventurous experiences
- Love trips that teach them about history, take them away from the crowds of tourists and aren’t a whirlwind tour of “must-sees”

“Cultural Explorers” are:

- Avid travelers who value learning and discovery
- Don’t feel like a tourist, want to “blend in”
- Prefer a free and spontaneous approach to seeing the sights
- Love to share their experiences, it’s part of the fun of travel

push/pull factors which will influence the development of the market.

Demand/supply factors are things like the availability of rental vehicles of all kinds; the extent frequency and cost of ferry, rail and air access services; the level of knowledge and awareness of the market; and the growth in the target population eg. Baby Boomer retirees.

Push/Pull factors are things like the quality of the landscape; quality and extent of support facilities such as toilets, cafes, parking and accommodation; availability of attractions, events, travel itineraries, range of accommodations, police and emergency services, and insurance coverage.

Brand Proposition

The Brand Proposition for the Wild Atlantic Way is based on the unique selling point of "**Wild**" and five value propositions:

- Seeing and exploring the **WILD** landscape and seascape
- Driving roads on the edge of the **WILD** seascapes
- Exploring settlements along the **WAY**
- Exploring and experiencing the culture of the people
- Experiencing and participating in events

- Love trips that take them "off the beaten track", allow them to connect with the locals and fellow travelers, are fun but teach them something as well.

More detailed information about these two EQ market segmentations is provided at the end of this review.

Note that while the Wild Atlantic Way market segmentation and EQ market segmentation are not identical they are very similar and in particular it is important that the Demand/Supply and Push/Pull factors be considered for the Wild Islands

Brand Proposition

The Brand Proposition for the area is based on the unique selling point of "**Wild Islands**" as a minimum with the strong consideration(subject to consumer testing) of the addition of "**Archipelago**" as this adjective evokes the exotic and informs potential visitors that there are a lot of islands or it would not be called an archipelago. As well, the idea of an archipelago is unowned market territory in Atlantic Canada if not in Canada. The area's value propositions are:

- Driving and coastal highway and its side roads to see the **WILD ISLANDS** archipelago
- Exploring by water the **WILD ISLANDS** archipelago
- Exploring settlements along the **WAY**
- Exploring and experiencing the culture of the area's people
- Experiencing and participating in events

Unique Selling Proposition

The core USP is the wild Atlantic coastline and the meeting of its landscapes and seascapes together with the history, heritage and culture of the places and people where the roads pass through and the land meets the sea.

Unique Value Propositions

There are five specific value propositions embodied in the brand proposition:

- **Driving**, cycling and walking the roads/routes on the **edge** of the wild land and seascapes
- **Seeing** and exploring the **wild landscapes and seascapes**
- **Exploring** the settlements along the Wild Atlantic Way
- **Experiencing** the culture of the people and places along the Wild Atlantic Way
- **Participating** in events and activities along the Wild Atlantic Way

These value propositions focus on the roads where the land meets the sea and not on their hinterlands. This focus is what will attract experience-seeking drive travelers, the target market.

Brand Development Strategy

Brands and their value propositions need to be carefully and constantly managed if they are to be successful. For the development and management of the brand a Strategic Brand Development Partnership is needed, modeled on similar approaches that have been developed in

Unique Selling Proposition

The core USP's are the very idea of introducing the word 'Archipelago' into the Atlantic Canada tourism vernacular, and the unique-to-Nova Scotia pristine wild islands archipelago that is easily accessible from the coastal highway and its side roads, as well as directly from the Atlantic Ocean, an area where ocean, islands and land meet to create an enduring natural and cultural heritage.

Unique Value Propositions

The value propositions listed below are based on the profile of the Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers outlined above but with an inclusion of visitor who have a higher interest in more active and adventurous experiences.

- **Driving, cycling and walking** on coastal roads/trails from where the **wild islands** can be easily seen and learned about
- **Seeing** and learning about the **wild islands** close-up and in comfort from the deck of a hired tour boat
- **Exploring** the **wild islands** by a personally owned or rented kayak, or other watercraft
- **Exploring** the coastal settlements in the area
- **Experiencing and participating in** the culture and events of the people and places within the area

Brand Development Strategy

The STEP Working Group needs to commence the development of a brand. We suggest that:

1. A decision needs to be made about whether or not to adopt the new EQ market segmentation now used by TNS.

Norway and using the America's Byways as a best practice example.

2. Based on this decision the area needs to have a name that will appeal to the target market. Assuming the target markets are

Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers then we suggest the name should be "Nova Scotia's Wild Islands (something)" We feel the geographic delineator of Nova Scotia is better than "Canada's Wild Islands (something)" as it suggest an importance that could be lost if potential visitors were looking at Canada as a whole while giving the area more gravitas than "Halifax's Wild Islands (something)". The name must have "Wild Islands" in it and possibly a final adjective such as "Archipelago", "Coastline", "Coast" or "Way" etc. The final decision, if possible, should wait until after the GMIST meeting and, ideally, a testing of the name targeted at the target market and their methods of travel research and planning. The STEP initiative could importantly be the first such initiative in Atlantic Canada to insist on carrying out a comprehensive consumer test, thereby setting a new standard for sustainable tourism community planning within the region if not in Canada.

3. Secure the websites for whatever name is chosen (www.wildislandsarchipelago.ca has already been secured just in case this is chosen) and secure funding for two years to continually update it as services and products are developed. Note that we envisage an iterative approach to the physical development of the area, its products/services and marketing. This will allow for an incremental approach that can commence quickly and build over time minimizing unmet expectations by visitors and imprudent investment by the private sector.

Product Development Strategy

The proposed basic strategy is to form a partnership organization with representation from key stakeholders such as the Departments of Environment, Transport and Finance; the national tourism agency; the

Product Development Strategy

Create a prioritized list of free-to-use public-sector-funded base-level enhancements and private sector product developments that will quickly provide an increase in the way visitors are able to experience

national and local road authorities; and core private sector players including car rental agencies, event organizers, heritage/cultural attraction owners and managers. The partnership organization would be an integrated destination development, improvement and management organization that isn't a lead organization using existing resources with a **Lead, Champion and Broker**. The partnership would be responsible for:

- Allocating national funding to road development and the creation of new viewpoints and associated facilities
- The integrity of the brand
- Its marketing and promotion
- Market research to keep abreast of trends in the experience-seeker market segment
- The long-term development of the strategic value propositions (Driving, Seeing, Exploring, Experiencing, Participating)
- Monitor performance against established targets

Traveller Services Strategy

See Product Development Strategy immediately above

the islands, subject to detailed, professional advice and design based on consumer experiential demands. Such enhancements might, for example, include:

1. Design and build a critical mass of "Wild Islands" look offs that become hallmark moments representative of the destination, featuring state-of-the art viewing and interpretive aids Note that each warranted site needs to really connect people to the islands and should be located to maximize a "wild islands" view. The locations should be approximately equal distance so as to provide view-points along the entire #7 highway and its main side roads. This development would be a baseline attraction for Cultural Explorers.
2. Establish a working committee with the Eastern Shore Fisherman's Protective Association to investigate the opportunities and barriers to develop an area-wide capacity for visitors to explore the islands on authentic marine vessels with real economically diversified fishers. This strategy maximizes authenticity, accessibility, geographic service provision and passenger safety. Barriers will likely be regulatory, insurance and marketing/customer handling. This development would be a baseline attraction for Authentic Explorers.

Traveller Services Strategy

Create a prioritized list of basic services the targeted visitors will need and then implement them as funds for initial and ongoing costs become available. Initially we suggest:

1. The creation of a dynamic, interactive web site which creates a home for the destination and its services, experiences, social media activity, a YouTube channel and Trip Advisor interactive response.
2. The creation of a new state of the art signage and way-finding strategy that works in accordance with Provincial standards,

regulations and the existing scenic drive touring network.

3. Establish year-round, accessible, public washrooms, in each of the three primary access communities, clearly identified as a public washroom, that have potable water available. Critically, these washrooms must be spotlessly clean at all times and thus likely should be municipally operated. However, consideration should be given to locating these washrooms in association with existing year-round businesses such as gas stations, banks or motels, where at least a minimum of security/monitoring can be provided. Location of washrooms should be clearly signed and identified on-line.

4. Ensure there is cell phone and high-speed internet coverage a minimum of 5kms either side of the #7 highway and its coastal side roads.

5.7 APPENDIX G – THE TOURISM NOVA SCOTIA TOOLBOX

Tourism Nova Scotia has created a comprehensive toolbox consisting of programs, guides, kits, and other elements designed to help Nova Scotia tourism operators grow current business and develop new business opportunities. The contents focus on such topics as:

- Marketing Your Business
- Building Your Business
- Destination Development
- Experience Development
- Funding Programs
- Festivals and Events
- Product Knowledge and Fam Tours
- Industry Communications

More information can be found at: <http://www.tourismns.ca/toolbox>

5.8 APPENDIX H – BRAND CREATIVE BRIEF

The following Brand Creative Brief is not intended to choose toward or conclude on any positioning, thematic or brand proposition for the destination area. Rather it serves as an example or a model of questions and analysis which the ultimate positioning, thematic and brand choice should be subjected to.

Brand Creative Brief – *Canada's Wild Islands Archipelago (example only)*

SOURCE: imagine/Harvey Sawler

Purpose of the Theme/Brand Proposition

The purpose of the theme/brand proposition is to stimulate awareness, excitement and interest surrounding the Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke touring and outdoor adventure experience.

What do we not want to say?

We do not want to say what anyone else is saying. We do not want to say what has previously been said and which has not worked previously to generate sufficient awareness, excitement and interest involving the destination area as a competitive travel destination. The status quo is presented first and foremost as Nova Scotia's Eastern Shore as part of the Marine Drive or as a combined touring offering of Halifax and the Eastern Shore. What is most important is that this region has evolved to be a forgotten cousin within the family of in-demand Nova Scotia travel destinations.

What do we want to say?

We want to say something very fresh, dynamic, specific and authentic in a manner that will inspire tourism development and investment and generate competitive customer demand for the future: that the destination area is highlighted by a natural archipelago which according to the science, is a highly visible, rare geological feature in North America which can be sustained in accordance with responsible tourism development practices

What do we want to primarily illustrate and demonstrate?

We want to primarily illustrate and demonstrate how the classic Atlantic Canada touring vacation can be enjoyed in the destination area.

What do we want to secondarily illustrate and demonstrate?

We want to secondarily illustrate and demonstrate how outdoor experiences (e.g. marine excursions, experiential accommodations, culinary outings, paddling adventures, etc.) can be enjoyed in the destination area through exposure to a selection of customized quality, signature experiences.

Who are we primarily talking to?

We are ***primarily*** talking to the classic touring vacationers from Atlantic Canada and other markets that are first and foremost in pursuit of sightseeing for beauty and settings by the seacoast. From research, we know that the Explorer Quotient Segments (ref. Destination Canada): Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers are currently well represented in Nova Scotia's Visitors.

Who are we secondarily talking to?

We are ***secondarily*** talking to well-defined sub-segments of outdoor enthusiasts (ref: Appendix C) at three levels of potential: casuals (explorer-type touring vacationers), semi-enthusiasts and enthusiasts. As the appropriate products and experiences develop in the mid-term, we will be talking to Free Spirits (Explorer Quotient travel segment – ref: Destination Canada) to entice them to visit the destination area.

Who else are we talking to?

We are also talking to tourism influencers in Nova Scotia, to potential entrepreneurs and investors who are candidates for expanding touring development within the destination area.

What reactions do you want to evoke from the target audiences?

We want the target audiences to become emotionally swept away by the idea of visiting and experiencing the destination area.

We want the target audiences to unequivocally remember what is being presented to them.

We want the influencer target audience to make tourism-related investments in the destination area.

What do we want the target audiences to do?

We want the target audiences to be compelled to immediately inquire about and then book experiences within the destination area.

What messages have they received in the past?

Messages have been varied and mixed, typically focusing on a series of niche interests such as surfing or on stereotype experiences which can be found virtually everywhere in Nova Scotia.

What is the new Primary Message?

The primary message needs to be that *Canada's Wild Islands Archipelago* is a one-of-a-kind nature-based, dynamic coastal destination offering a selection of signature experiences.

What is the new Secondary Message?

The secondary message needs to be that *Canada's Wild Islands Archipelago* can build the capacity, the facilities, services and experiences to serve the needs of the touring vacationer and varying sub-segments of outdoor enthusiasts.

What are the barriers audiences may encounter?

Barriers the audiences may encounter might include:

- Being unaccepting of the fact that Musquodoboit Harbour-Sherbrooke and environs can be a dynamic, memorable place to visit.
- The belief/perception that the destination area is inconvenient to get to and is like a dead end road.
- The belief/perception that the destination area is boring.
- The belief/perception that they can enjoy better experiences elsewhere.
- Transitioning from a lack of immediate understanding of the word 'archipelago' toward a level of mystique and curiosity about this exotic destination idea.

The *Canada's Wild Island Archipelago* theme and brand concept will be packaged and marketed to combat these barriers and – over time – cast a halo of the destination area.

5.9 APPENDIX I – REFERENCE DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Eastern HRM Strategic Planning Report, April 14, 2014

<http://www.halifaxpartnership.com/site/media/Parent/Eastern.pdf>

"HRM Green Network Report: An Open Space and Greenbelting Priorities Plan for the Region" and follow-up study, " State of the Landscape - Issues and Opportunities" and NS Environment's Parks and Protected Areas Plan

www.novascotia.ca/parksandprotectedareas/pdf

STEP Musquodoboit Harbour to Sherbrooke Working Group, Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/groups/733379900104173/?notif_t=group_r2j_approved¬if_id=1459789320615120

PROPOSAL FOR PHASE 2 OF THE MUSQUODOBOIT HARBOUR – SHERBROOKE STEP PROJECT

(June 29 2016)

PHASE 1 BACKGROUND: **March 2014 –January 2016**

On Saturday, March 29, 2014, following months of behind-the scenes community collaboration and organization, a well attended, externally facilitated, community economic development engagement session was held in Oyster Pond, with representation from Lake Echo to Ecum Secum and the Musquodoboit Valley. The outcome of this daylong meeting, and the subsequent follow-up work, resulted in the creation of a comprehensive and prioritized strategic plan with three immediate priorities: better local transportation services, the extension and expansion of internet and cellphone coverage, and the development of the Eastern Shore as a “Bay of Islands” sustainable tourism destination via ACOA’s Strategic Tourism Expansion Program.

On January 24, 2015, following intensive collaboration, consultation and lobbying, spearheaded by the Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society, the Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce and Civic Affairs, and Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores, funding in the amount of \$50,000 was secured to initiate a Strategic Tourism Expansion Program (STEP) for the Bay of Islands. The bulk of the funding for the STEP program came from ACOA, but \$5,525 in cash, from seventeen local businesses and organizations, together with two municipal contributions, was raised before the application was made to ACOA. This up-front community contribution was a significant factor in securing the STEP program, the first on mainland Nova Scotia.

Phase 1 of the Musquodoboit Harbour – Sherbrooke STEP project, the Implementable Action Plan was completed and formally unveiled to the funding partners on April 7, 2016.

The Implementable Action Plan identified the following project actions:

- 1) There is a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the natural and cultural heritage values and assets associated with the conservation lands that: a) informs use of protected lands (i.e. what needs to be protected/what is available for use); and b) identifies natural and cultural attributes that contribute to product development
- 2) There is an up-to-date and well organized inventory and assessment of recreation opportunities and tourism assets (tangible and intangible) for the region.
- 3) A clearly understood and coordinated management approach for the conservation lands administered by NSE, DNR, and NSNT is in place to guide the appropriate protection and use of these lands.
- 4) The area is characterized by a professionally developed and market-tested brand and concept.
- 5) A sustainable tourism development plan is in place that identifies opportunities and gaps, and prioritizes actions for strategic tourism development, using a structured and transparent evaluation criteria.
- 6) Tourism infrastructure is in place that supports increased visitation to the area.
- 7) Visitor-focused information about the nature-based opportunity is readily available and accessible.
- 8) Well-linked and cohesive collateral materials are available to help promote the region, attract investment, and advance the tourism development process.

- 9) There is an ongoing process in place to track, monitor, and evaluate performance.
- 10) Best practices from within and beyond the destination area are considered and integrated as a means of continuous improvement.
- 11) Key influencers, communities, residents, and investors are participating in a range of ways to support tourism development in the region.
- 12) Effective communication tools and processes are in place to ensure ongoing awareness of the region and progress on strategic tourism development.
- 13) Tourism operators and organizations are communicating and collaborating with conservation land managers including Nova Scotia Nature Trust, Nova Scotia departments of Environment and Natural Resources, to advance experiential nature-based tourism opportunities.
- 14) Tourism operators have the knowledge and capacity to offer high-quality experiential tourism opportunities.
- 15) There are an increased number of monetized experiential tourism products available in the region.
- 16) Workshops and training opportunities are in place to help build capacity, entrepreneurial skills, and financial success of local tourism businesses and organizations.
- 17) Local business are benefiting from increased tourism visitation and spending.
- 18) There are more local employment opportunities connected to tourism and supporting industries.
- 19) An enhanced range and number of quality outdoor recreational opportunities and related facilities and services are available for local residents and communities.
- 20) Tangible (capital/infrastructure) tourism developments are benefitting local residents in their daily lives.
- 21) Local residents feel connected to the tourism initiative and feel that it is an authentic reflection of their lives and sense of place.
- 22) Processes and structures are in place to help encourage and support cooperation across the region.

Outlined below are a series of sequential actions, directly derived from the Phase 1 STEP Implementable Action Plan outcomes, that have been formalized as a STEP Phase 2 proposal, which needs to be undertaken as soon as possible to maintain the positive community collaboration, momentum and focused results achieved to date. The linkage between the Phase 1 Implementable Action Plan outcomes and the STEP Phase 2 proposal is indicated by: *LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 1,2, 3 etc.*

At the end of this document is an outline of what developments could potentially take place as part of Phase 3 once Phase 2 has been completed.

PHASE 2 STRATEGY: Focus on the “Wild Islands” and adopt the Travel Demand Generator Model

The key outcomes of the Phase 1 work was a recognition that the Unique Selling Proposition for the area is the unique-to-Nova Scotia pristine wild islands archipelago - an archipelago that is easily accessible from the coastal highway and its side roads, as well as directly from the Atlantic Ocean - an area where ocean, islands and land meet to create an enduring natural and cultural heritage. While the area does have other attributes, such as inland wilderness areas and a series of rivers, the focus of the development of the area as a sustainable tourism destination that will provide increased

economic benefits to the area's residents, must focus on the area's unique asset – it's wild island archipelago. The validity of this focus as the area's unique selling proposition is the success of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust's "100 Wild Islands" campaign and the unprecedented national coverage the area has received because of the recognition of the ecological value of the "wild islands archipelago" that has remained essentially the same for 10,000 years.

A key component in Tourism Atlantic's (ACOA) STEP process, as clearly outlined in the program's comprehensive guidelines, is the adoption of the Travel Demand Generator Model, which identifies the tasks and the order in which development activities should be undertaken to meet the key goal of increased demand, which leads to increased economic activity.

The Travel Demand Generator Model is essentially a series of sequential steps starting with **Research**, which drives the **Product**, which drives the **Brand**, which drives the **Marketing**, which drives **Demand**.

Outlined below are a series of actions that need to be undertaken, based on the STEP-process Travel Demand Generator Model, together with a preliminary schedule, projected cost and in-kind contribution.

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 1,2, 4-8, 10,12, 14-19 & 20

PHASE 2 PROJECT MANAGEMENT: STEP Working Group and DEANS continue to project manage

The overall management of Phase 1 of the Musquodoboit Harbour – Sherbrooke STEP project was undertaken through the joint efforts of the STEP Working Group and Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS). This overall project management structure will continue with a minor change for Phase 2, whereby the *Cultural Heritage Documentation of the Coastal Islands* and the *Archaeological Survey of the Coastal Islands* will be carried out under the direction of the Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society Research Committee, reporting to the STEP Working Group and DEANS.

However, a commitment to the same project management structure does not mean the community representatives who comprised the first STEP Working Group should necessarily remain the same. The community representatives who serve on the Phase 2 STEP Working Group should be determined after creating community awareness of the project and seeking new representatives through a community engagement process, to serve alongside those members of the first group who wish to continue on an active and participatory basis. Additionally, given the potential participation of Millbrook Economic Development Corporation and HRM, these groups should be represented on the Phase 2 STEP Working Group.

Given the scope of work involved, consideration will be given to having the Phase 2 STEP Working Group form sub-committees (with external membership where appropriate) to work closely with the various consultants where appropriate expertise within the Working Group/Community is available.

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 9-13 & 20-22

TRAVEL DEMAND GENERATOR MODEL: Phase 2 Actions Summary & linkages to Phase 1 outcomes

Research Actions

1. Cultural heritage documentation and interpretation outline for the coastal islands

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 1,2,3,5,8,9,12,13,14,15,20 & 21

2. Archaeological survey of the coastal islands with the highest probability of heritage-usage sites

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 1,2,3,5,8,9,12,13,14,15,20 & 21

Product Actions

3. Deliver local experiential tourism-product workshops & market readiness assessments

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 2,5,7,8,11,12,14,15,16,17,18,19,21 & 22

4. Deliver local tourism development workshops utilizing applicable successes from elsewhere

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 10

5. Prepare island-viewing look offs and water/land route-guide concept plan

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 2,5,6,7,8,10,12,14,15,17,8,19,20 & 21

6. Develop an essential-visitor-services strategy utilizing the private sector

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 5,6,7,10,11,12,14,15,19,20 & 21

7. Assess development opportunities for linking arts, culture and wilderness areas

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 1,2,5,10,11,12,14,15,16,17,18,21 & 22

Brand Actions

8. Establish target-market profiles, branding and visual identity

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 4,5,7,8,10,11,12,14,15,17,18,21 & 22

9. Design branded website, social media and self-escorted digital tour strategy

LINKAGES TO STEP PHASE 1: Outcomes 4,5,7,8,10,11,12,14,15,17,18,21 & 22

TRAVEL DEMAND GENERATOR MODEL: Phase 2 Research Action Details

1. Cultural heritage documentation and interpretation outline of the coastal islands

• Goal:

To prepare a comprehensive and authoritative cultural history of the islands between Jeddore Rock and Liscomb Island through the services of a professional historian who will conduct a research-intensive study to identify and consolidate historical sources into a general written history of the region together with a database heritage inventory of all of the roughly 400 islands within the area. These research findings will subsequently serve to guide an archeological investigation of the islands most likely to have cultural resources showcasing Pre-Contact, Contact and/or historic period use. The historical and archaeological knowledge of such resources will, in conjunction with a natural heritage inventory, analysis and community consultation, inform any future development and management of the islands to accommodate visitors through an integrated management plan for the islands in accordance with all applicable guidelines and regulations.

• Workplan:

- i) In collaboration with other project partners help to develop a unified comprehensive baseline searchable database that includes all islands between and including Jeddore Rock and Liscomb Island, together with their GPS coordinates, name, size and both cultural and natural attributes.
- ii) Prepare simple baseline maps from existing sources (e.g. HRM Green Network planning) for vehicular accessible headlands, together with the headlands' surrounding waters and islands, as a baseline document for the siting of island-viewing sites.
- iii) Commence comprehensive research on the social and cultural history of the area in relevant archives, libraries, museums, government holdings, and private collections in Nova Scotia.

- iv) Prepare a preliminary general history of the area between Musquodoboit Harbour and Sherbrooke from pre-Contact times to c.1950, with an emphasis on the coastal fringe, while also noting significant post 1950 events that have interpretive value.
- v) Enter island-specific research findings into the database in the form of descriptive histories, documentation of relevant published and unpublished sources, and scans of archival and graphic materials.
- vi) Maintain an inventory of archival and graphic materials (manuscripts, photographs, illustrations, artworks, maps, artifacts etc.) uncovered during research that may be valuable for future use at heritage interpretation sites, on interpretive panels, websites, social media and story-telling initiatives etc.
- vii) Prepare a library of scanned historical maps for the area, together with tested techniques for overlaying such maps at the same scale to help document usage and changes over time.
- viii) Establish a working relationship with the Archaeology Research Division at the Kwiilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office together with other recognized heritage authorities for the area, to seek their input, suggestions and advice, as more detailed heritage research is undertaken. Liaise with Peter Labor re the existing Mi'kmaw protocols DNR and DOE are using.
- ix) On the basis of the historical research, prepare an inventory of known and probable cultural heritage sites on the islands (including legends, census and archival documents).
- x) Hold five well-advertised community meetings to share with local residents the information gathered to date, and to solicit any community knowledge, documents and images relating to the usage of the islands and the headlands that might be available, and add these to the database.
- xi) Provide the Heritage Society with periodic updates in a format suitable for posting on the Society's Eastern Shore Archives Facebook site.
- xii) Consolidate all information obtained into a comprehensive report with a prioritized listing of the islands, or areas of islands, that are most likely to contain physical, and possibly intangible, evidence of occupation/usage.
- xiii) Meet with the archaeology team, assist them in their decision-making regarding which islands should have ground-based cultural screening, and then accompany them on their field trips.
- xiv) Working under the supervision of the Project Archaeologist, enter the information obtained into the islands database so that the final database contains all cultural heritage documentation and archaeological survey documentation that can be used, subject to all relevant Provincial and Federal guidelines, to inform any future development and management of the islands to accommodate visitors.
- xv) Complete research as necessary by the findings of the archaeological survey and complete the database and general history of the area.
- xvi) Based on all completed cultural research, prepare an interpretive outline and visual resources index for up to fifteen island-viewing sites identified by others.

- Project Management:

Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society Research Committee reporting to DEANS

- Timing:

August 1 2016 – June 1 2017

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$38,000 In-kind Contribution: \$15,000

2. Archaeological survey of the coastal islands with the highest probability of heritage-usage sites

- Goal:

To conduct a professional archeological survey of as many as twenty islands, addressing specific locations ascribed high archaeological potential on the basis of the compiled cultural history. Consisting of reconnaissance conducted by boat and on-foot, this survey would be implemented under the terms of a Nova Scotia Heritage Research Permit. Encountered cultural resources would be left undisturbed, but documented in detail in a report submitted to the Special Places Program of Nova Scotia's Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, in accordance with the Special Places Protection Act.

- Workplan:

- i) Liaise with the Archaeology Research Division at the Kwiłmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office to review the proposed Workplan.
- ii) Apply for and obtain a *Category B: Archaeological Research* permit from the Coordinator of Special Places, Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.
- iii) Plan and execute the archaeological survey under the hands-on direction of the Project Archaeologist with the assistance of one trained assistant and five volunteer field workers.
- iiiv) Analyse and report the results of the fieldwork. In its interpretation of finds, the report would include information obtained during the historical research.
- v) Enter information obtained into the islands database so that the final database contains all cultural heritage documentation and archaeological survey documentation that can be used, subject to all relevant Provincial and Federal guidelines to inform any future development and management of the islands to accommodate visitors.

- Project Management:

Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society Research Committee reporting to DEANS

- Timing:

January 1 2017 – June 1 2017

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$37,500 In-kind Contribution: \$15,000

TRAVEL DEMAND GENERATOR MODEL: Phase 2 Product Action Details

3. Deliver local experiential tourism-product workshops & market readiness assessments

- Goal: To create private-sector awareness of experiential tourism products and their potential for creating additional income for established businesses, opportunities for new businesses, the fundamentals of developing such products through a series of training workshops, and to then conduct a market readiness assessment amongst those interested in pursuing such opportunities.

- Workplan:

- i) Form a Working Group ad-hoc committee with strong local business representation (ie chambers of commerce etc.) to actively and widely promote the attendance of existing and potential tourism entrepreneurs at the day-long information meetings.
- ii) Hold three, day-long information meetings, with existing and potential businesses outlining the need to develop a business model that looks at theme, authenticity, emotional trigger, educational components, enrichment/entertainment quality, hands-on nature, value added, product packaging etc., and also provides information about appropriate federal and provincial business development support programs. Following the meeting attendees who have an idea for developing such a business will be given 20 days to prepare an outline for of their idea. Those

responding will be invited to attend a series of in-depth experiential workshops and market-readiness assessment.

iii) Deliver a series of in-depth experiential tourism workshops and market-readiness assessment to the participants based on the Nova Scotia Tourism Toolbox and industry experts with a particular emphasis on developing opportunities for visitors to visit the islands first-hand.

- Project Management:

Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores with assistance of ad hoc committee

- Timing:

September 1 2016 – December 1 2017

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$12,500 In-kind Contribution: \$8,000

4. Deliver local tourism development workshops utilizing applicable successes from elsewhere

- **Goal:** To capitalize on the successful track record of tourism businesses in other areas of North America that have business models predicated on unique selling propositions (USP) similar in content, market and accessibility to the Wild Islands USP, by inviting a key individual from such businesses to provide a workshop designed to share their expertise with local entrepreneurs. This action item differs from the more generic workshops outlined in Action item #3 above in that it provides access to the knowledge and experience of specific, relevant and successful tourism business, for example small-boat tours, glamping, bouldering, remote accommodations etc.

- Workplan:

i) Using internet and social media sources Identify 20 best-fit areas with similar USPs and tourism businesses and consolidate information into a comprehensive database .

ii) Establish a local-relevancy/applicability weighted scoring matrix and apply matrix to database to determine the ten most promising businesses .

iii) Conduct in-depth review of the ten most promising businesses and identify, in order of priority, which ones should be contacted to determine their willingness to assist in transferring their knowledge to local entrepreneurs and their fee and expenses for participating.

iv) Organize and deliver workshops within the budget.

v) Document and consolidate into a simple handbook the information provided by the workshop providers.

- Project Management:

Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores with assistance of ad hoc committee

- Timing:

November 1 2016 – January 1 2017

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$32,000 In-kind Contribution: \$5,000

5. Prepare island-viewing look offs and land-based route-guide concept plan

- Goal:

To prepare a concept plan that includes an implementation budget for the phased development of an integrated route guide, directional signage and island-viewing look offs that will allow road-based visitors to better experience the islands without having to actually visit them.

- Workplan:

- i) Drive the #7 Highway from Musquodoboit Harbour to Sherbrooke, as well as principal headland roads, to gain an insitu understanding of the area. Then review on-line and/or specialty publications to review other locations worldwide (including the Wild Atlantic Way) that have developed applicable integrated route guide and look off installations and rank the three best examples that can act as a model, with the client making the final decision based on the review.
- ii) Conduct criteria-based (number of islands that can be seen, proximity of the islands to the viewing sites, overall visual impact, degree of historical interest for visitors etc,) and numerically assessed field research to identify up to 15 ideal locations, evenly spread throughout the area (on both headland roads, as well as the #7 highway as appropriate), that can accommodate an island-viewing site that has parking for ten vehicles, a coin-operated telescope, and interpretive panels with the names and history of the islands that can be seen. Information will be provided by the Project Historian identifying all 400 islands and which ones have the highest visitor-viewing attributes together with a general location for viewing sites.
- iii) Prepare a design concept for client approval of a typical look off together with a range of probable implementation costs, recognizing that some sites will be less costly to develop than others. The purpose of this work is to allow the client to properly plan and budget subsequent stages of planning, design and implementation.
- iv) Prepare a design concept for a downloadable road-based route map/guide that will guide visitors to the look offs and is easily updateable as the look offs are completed.
- iv) Develop a detailed and comprehensive implementation budget to prepare detailed designs to build up to 15 sites over a three-year period with the first third probably sited on publically owned properties such as the Clam Harbour Beach Provincial, the Pope's Harbour look off, Taylor's Head Provincial Park and the Marie Joseph look off, where implementation can likely take place quickly and cost-effectively, as there will be minimal site work needed. Consider also locating some look offs at wharves if adequate parking is possible and wharf-management groups are in agreement. The purpose of this work is to allow the client to properly plan and create a realistic implementation budget.

- Project Management:

Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores with assistance of ad hoc committee

- Timing:

August 1 2016 – May 1 2017

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$3,500 In-kind Contribution: \$25,800

6. Develop an essential-visitor-services strategy utilizing the private sector

- Goal:

To develop a realistic strategy that will provide visitors with an essential level of fundamental services (clean washrooms, potable water, gas, food, information) throughout the area on a year-round basis no more than one hour apart by car together with full cell phone and wireless internet coverage. Refer to Roger Brooks for assessment of services and attractions that existed at the time of his study.

- Workplan:

- i) Research other cold-climate areas of the world to determine if there are examples that could apply to the STEP area. If possible, assess the established cost/benefit for both users and providers as a guide to what might be possible, recognizing that a key requirement is year-round access for

visitors. Note that there are Irving gas stations in each of the three primary service centres (Musquodoboit Harbour, Sheet Harbour and Sherbrooke).

ii) Identify and consult private sector businesses within the area who have year-round operations to determine their interest in working collaboratively to ensure that there is a minimum level of fundamental visitor-service sites that provide modern and clean washrooms, bulk potable water, visitor information and signage that clearly identifies their operation as a visitor-service centre. Ideally, the service providers should see their provision of these minimum services as a net business benefit as they will be identified on the branded website and thus have a motivation to provide the services at highest possible level.

iii) Document current cellphone coverage for the entire area and service-provider plans, if any, for upgrading the service. Target is “three-bar” coverage either side of the #7 Highway and all peninsular roads.

iv) Prepare a strategy to achieve the goal identified above ready for implementation.

- Project Management:

Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores with assistance of ad hoc committee

- Timing:

August 1 2016 – December 1 2016

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$15,400 In-kind Contribution: \$2,000

7. Assess development opportunities for linking arts, culture and wilderness areas

- Goal: To partner with the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment and the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design to secure full funding for a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities for building sustainable opportunities for local economic development based on an exploration of the arts and “wilderness assets”.

- Workplan:

i) Work with Karin Cope, PhD. Associate Professor Art History and Critical Studies, NSCAD University to develop an SSHRC Connections funding application.

- Project Management:

Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores with assistance of ad hoc committee

- Timing:

October 1 2016 – October 1 2017

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$5,000 In-kind Contribution: \$2,000

TRAVEL DEMAND GENERATOR MODEL: Phase 2 Brand Action Details

8. Establish target-market profiles, branding and visual identity

- Goal:

To create a brand statement, name and visual identity for the archipelago of islands between Jeddore Rock and Liscomb Island that has been tested in the target markets and found to be effective in enticing visitors to the area.

- Workplan:

i) Review all available documentation for the target markets of Outdoor Enthusiast, Authentic Explorers and Cultural Explorers, and prepare a synthesis that profiles the target market attributes as they apply to the MH-S STEP area in both the immediate future and over the longer term as the

destination is developed. Based on the created synthesis, identify and document the primary communication channels used by the MH-S STEP target market in making their travel decisions and also identify subscriber profiles for print and internet entities, such as Canadian Geographic, Saltscapes, MEC etc. who best match the MH-S STEP target market. The entities that best match the MH-S STEP target market profile will be used to conduct a target market focus group survey as outlined below.

ii) Propose 2-3 identification/marketing names for the area that reflect and are informed by the research work carried out to date, particularly the STEP committee review of the “Wild Atlantic Way Final Report”, as the Wild Atlantic Way is seen as being very relevant to the MH-S STEP area.

iii) Test marketing names with an on-line target-market focus group survey carried out with the subscriber base of the entity that best fits and is willing to participate. It is envisaged that this entity will be willing to survey their subscriber base in return for exclusive access to the findings of the archaeological survey and the inside story on the STEP process and the development of a sustainable tourism destination that is community-driven. Tabulate survey results and recommend, with justification, the best name for the area with the Working Group making the final decision.

iv) Prepare branding statement(s) for the selected name based on the area’s unique selling and value propositions.

iv) Prepare three, ranked, visual identity options for Working Group review, with the Working Group making the final decision.

v) Prepare visual identity manual for the selected identity to guide all future use of the visual identity

vi) Commence process of having the area officially designated with the same name.

- Project Management:

Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores with assistance of ad hoc committee

- Timing:

October 1 2016 – May 2017

- Projected Cost:

Cash Cost: \$54,075 In-kind Contribution: \$3,000

9. Design branded website, social media and self-escorted digital tour strategy

- Goal:

To create the structure and content for a branded website together with a social media and self-directed digital tour strategy that will utilize existing, readily available information, with the capacity to add new information as it becomes available, so that the website is ready to “go live” once a long-term website management service has been secured, and the social media and self-directed digital tour strategy can be implemented once funding is secured.

- Workplan:

i) Review other websites worldwide and rank the three best examples that can act as a model, with the Working Group making the final decision.

ii) Create the structure and appearance (based on the previously approved visual identity and branding) of the website with sample content to illustrate usage and secure Working Group approval.

iii) Gather all existing readily available information that can provide potential content (i.e. an image library using Nova Scotia Nature Trust, Saltscapes and Canadian Geographic sources;

Atlantic Boating Guide; Scott Cunningham kayak route guide, location of existing marinas, “A for Adventure” video, links to the area’s service providers and attractions etc.)

iv) Test and finalize website so that it is ready to go live.

v) Develop a social media and self-directed digital tour strategy linked to the branded website that is ready for implementation once funding is secured. Review best practice options in other jurisdictions (eg. New Zealand Tourism Radio) to determine what might work best along the Eastern Shore.

vi) Add a downloadable version of the route map/guide (see #4 above) once it has been created.

- **Project Management:**

Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores with assistance of ad hoc committee

- **Timing:**

December 1 2016 – June 1 2017

- **Projected Cost:**

Cash Cost: \$23,100 In-kind Contribution: \$3,000

PHASE 2: Preliminary cost estimate summary

The cost estimate summary is based on the detailed cost estimates immediately below, which in turn are based on consultations with knowledgeable professionals to arrive at a realistic cost estimate. Final prices will be determined on the basis of proposals received for specific services following an advertised request for proposals and evaluation by a three-person DEANS assessment committee.

1. Cultural heritage documentation and interpretation outline for the coastal islands

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Professional services | \$ 32,000.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 5,500.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 500.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 38,000.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 15,000.00 |

2. Archaeological survey of the coastal islands with the highest probability of heritage usage

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Professional services | \$ 31,000.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 5,500.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 1,500.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 37,500.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 15,000.00 |

3. Deliver local experiential tourism-product workshops and market readiness assessments

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Expenses | \$ 7,500.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 5,000.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 12,500.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 8,100.00 |

4. Deliver local tourism development workshops utilizing applicable successes from elsewhere

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Professional services | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 2,000.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 32,000 .00 |
| In-kind | \$ 5,000.00 |

5. Island-viewing look offs and land-route guide plan

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Professional services by HRM | \$ 0.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 1,500.00</u> |

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Total | \$ 3,500.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 25,800.00 |
| 6. Essential visitor services strategy | |
| Professional services | \$ 12,000.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 14,000.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 2,000.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 15,400.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 2,000.00 |
| 7. Assess development opportunities for linking arts, culture and wilderness areas | |
| Professional services | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Expenses | \$.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 5,000.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 2,000.00 |
| 8. Target-market profiles, branding and visual identity | |
| Professional services | \$ 50,425.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 1,400.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 2,225.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 54,075.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 3,000.00 |
| 9. Design branded website, marketing and social media strategy | |
| Professional services | \$ 20,450.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 1,400.00 |
| Project management | <u>\$ 1,250.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 23,100.00 |
| In-kind | \$ 3,000.00 |

Overall **Cash** Summary

Planning Actions

| | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Cultural heritage documentation of the coastal islands | \$ 38,000.00 |
| 2. Archaeological survey of the coastal islands | \$ 37,500.00 |

Product Actions

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 3. Product workshops and market readiness assessments | \$ 12,500.00 |
| 4. Business development workshops utilizing applicable successes | \$ 32,000.00 |
| 5. Island-viewing look offs and land-route guide plan | \$ 3,500.00 |
| 6. Essential visitor services strategy | \$ 15,400.00 |
| 7. Assess links for arts, culture and wilderness areas | \$ 5,000.00 |

Brand Actions

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| 8. Target-market profiles, branding and visual identity | \$ 54,075.00 |
| 9. Design branded website and social media strategy | <u>\$ 23,100.00</u> |

Overall Total including HST as applicable **\$221,075.00**

Overall **In-kind** Summary

Planning Actions

| | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Cultural heritage documentation of the coastal islands | \$ 15,000.00 |
| 2. Archaeological survey of the coastal islands | \$ 15,000.00 |

Product Actions

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 3. Product workshops and market readiness assessments | \$ 8,100.00 |
| 4. Business development workshops utilizing applicable successes | \$ 5,000.00 |
| 5. Island-viewing look offs and land-route guide plan | \$ 25,800.00 |
| 6. Essential visitor services strategy | \$ 2,000.00 |
| 7. Assess links for arts, culture and wilderness areas | \$ 2,000.00 |

Brand Actions

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| 8. Target-market profiles, branding and visual identity | \$ 3,000.00 |
| 9. Design branded website and social media strategy | \$ 3,000.00 |
| Overall In-Kind Total | \$ 78,900.00 |

PHASE 2 STRATEGY: Detailed budget and in-kind contribution

1. Cultural heritage documentation of the coastal islands

Professional services

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Project Historian, 10 months @ \$3,200/month | \$ 32,000.00 |
| Total | \$ 32,000.00 |

Expenses

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Office access for 10 months, internet, scanning, copying, storage etc, | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Out of pocket expenses (travel, community meetings, document purchases) | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Honorariums for five heritage expert consultations | \$ 2,500.00 |
| Total | \$ 5,500.00 |

Project Management

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Project Management by DEANS | \$ 500.00 |
| In-kind contribution LCAHS Research Committee (3 experts @ \$5,000pp) | \$ 15,000.00 |

2. Archaeological survey of the coastal islands

Professional services

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Archaeologists, 180hrs. | \$ 21,500.00 |
| Archaeological technicians, 65hrs. | \$ 4,500.00 |
| Expenses (travel, permits, printing, binding) | \$ 1,000.00 |
| HST | \$ 4,000.00 |
| Total | \$ 31,000.00 |

Expenses

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Rental of boats to carry people to the islands | \$ 3,500.00 |
| Travel and food expenses for volunteers | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Total | \$ 5,500.00 |

Project management

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Project Management by DEANS 50hrs. @ \$30hr. | \$ 1,500.00 |
| In-kind contribution LCAHS Research Committee (3 experts @ \$5,000pp) | \$ 15,000.00 |

3. Product workshops and market readiness assessments

Expenses

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Household flyer, hall rental for workshops, food, PR gear, printing, travel etc. | \$ 7,500.00 |
| Total | \$ 7,500.00 |

Project management

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Project Management by DEANS, 20 days @ \$250/day | \$ 5,000.00 |
| In-kind contribution by Tourism Nova Scotia | |
| Deliver product development workshops & market readiness assessment, 15 days | \$ 7,500.00 |
| Expenses (travel expenses for workshop personnel) | \$ 600.00 |
| Total | \$ 8,100.00 |

4. Business development workshops utilizing applicable successes

Professional services

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Conduct research, create matrix, establish priorities and organize workshops | \$ 15,000.00 |
|--|--------------|

Expenses

| | |
|--|--------------|
| In-coming presenters fees and expenses | \$ 15,000.00 |
|--|--------------|

Project Management

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Project Management by DEANS, 8 days \$250.day | \$ 2,000.00 |
| In-kind contribution TIANS (professional services assistance | \$ 5,000.00 |

5. Island-viewing look offs and land-route guide

Professional services (provided by HRM)

Expenses

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Working Group meeting expenses and Project manager travel | \$ 2,000.00 |
|---|-------------|

| | |
|-------|-------------|
| Total | \$ 2,000.00 |
|-------|-------------|

Project Management

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Project Management by DEANS, 50hrs. @ \$30hr. | \$ 1,500.00 |
| In-kind contribution | |
| Landscape Architect/Planner, 30 days @ \$800/day | \$ 24,000.00 |
| Travel, accommodation, printing and binding | \$ 1,800.00 |
| Total | \$ 25,800.00 |

6. Essential visitor services strategy

Professional services

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Survey of cold-weather service examples and local internet/cellphone/wifi plans | \$ 12,000.00 |
|---|--------------|

Consultation with area businesses and preparation of implementation strategy

Expenses

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Planner travel/accommodation | \$ 1,400.00 |
|------------------------------|-------------|

Project Management

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Project Management by DEANS, 67hrs. @ \$30hr. | \$ 2,000.00 |
| In-kind contribution by local business organizations | \$ 2,000.00 |

7. Assess links for arts, culture and wilderness areas

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Professional services | \$ 5,000.00 |
|-----------------------|-------------|

| | |
|--|-------------|
| In-kind contribution by local arts organizations | \$ 2,000.00 |
|--|-------------|

8. Target-market profiles, branding and visual identity

Professional services

Prepare MH-S Step target market synthesis, profile and attributes followed

| | |
|--|--------------|
| by matching subscriber profiles and preliminary contact with same Marketing specialist 24 days @ 750/day | \$ 18,000.00 |
| Propose three names to client with recommendation and rationale and then conduct on-line target market focus group survey and recommend, with rationale, the best name for the destination together with a branding statement(s) based on the area's unique selling proposition(s) | |
| Marketing specialist 26 days @ 750/day | \$ 19,500.00 |
| Prepare three visual identity options with recommendation to client based on visual identities used by successful equivalent locations, and then finalize design and prepare visual identity manual | |
| Graphic Designer 12 days @ 750/day | \$ 9,000.00 |
| HST | \$ 5,925.00 |
| <u>Expenses</u> | |
| Working group review expenses | \$ 1,400.00 |
| <u>Project Management</u> | |
| Project Management by DEANS, 100 hours @ \$30hr. | \$ 3,000.00 |
| In-kind contribution by professional marketing volunteers | \$ 3,000.00 |

9. Design branded website, marketing and social media strategy

| | |
|---|--------------|
| <u>Professional services</u> | |
| Review competitive websites worldwide and propose basic structure and Appearance for client review and approval. Upon approval gather relevant Info from all sources and add same to website with relevant links to local service- providers. Secure client approval, test and be ready to go live. | |
| Website Specialist 16 days @ \$750/day | \$ 12,000.00 |
| Travel and image usage expenses | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Research comparable social media awareness and digital tour products and prepare a budgeted outline for developing and implementing the best option for the MH-S STEP area. | |
| New Media Specialist, 5 days @ \$750/day | \$ 4,500.00 |
| HST | \$ 2,950.00 |
| <u>Expenses</u> | |
| Working group review expenses | \$ 1,400.00 |
| <u>Project Management</u> | |
| Project Management by DEANS, 25 hours @ \$30hr. | \$ 1,250.00 |
| In-kind contribution by professional marketing volunteers | \$ 3,000.00 |

PHASE 2 : Funding Partners – Cash and In-kind contributions

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Federal (ACOA) | \$ 176,175.00 |
| CCH One-time Emerging Culture Fund | \$ 10,000.00 |
| DOE cash contribution | \$ 7,500.00 |
| DNR cash contribution | \$ 7,500.00 |
| Tourism Nova Scotia | \$ 5,000.00 |
| HRM Planning (Hire contract worker for essential Visitor Services strategy - cash) | \$ 7,900.00 |
| Community cash | \$ 7,000.00 |

Overall Cash Total including HST as applicable **\$221,075.00**

Community in-kind contribution \$ 45,000.00

HRM in-kind contribution \$ 25,800.00

Tourism Nova Scotia contribution \$ 8,100.00

Overall Cash Total including HST as applicable **\$ 78,900.00**

PROJECT FUNDING SUMMARY

| | | |
|------------------------------|--------|---------------------|
| ACOA cash | 58.72% | \$176,175.00 |
| Other funding partners cash | 14.66% | \$ 44,900.00 |
| Funding partners in-kind | 26.30% | \$ 78,900.00 |
| Overall project total | | \$299,975.00 |

PROJECT FUNDING ACOA CATEGORIES

| | Consulting | Travel | Expenses | Project M. | Total |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Cultural heritage research | \$ 32,000 | \$ 1,500 | \$ 4,000 | \$ 500 | \$ 38,000 |
| 2. Archaeological research | \$ 31,000 | \$ 1,500 | \$ 3,500 | \$ 1,500 | \$ 37,500 |
| 3. Tourism product workshops | | \$ 2,000 | \$ 5,500 | \$ 5,000 | \$ 12,500 |
| 4. Business development strategy | \$ 28,000 | \$ 2,000 | | \$ 2,000 | \$ 32,000 |
| 5. Lookoffs and route planning | | \$ 500 | \$ 1,500 | \$ 1,500 | \$ 3,500 |
| 6. Visitor services strategy | \$ 12,000 | \$ 1,400 | | \$ 2,000 | \$ 15,400 |
| 7. Arts/wilderness assessment | \$ 5,000 | | | | \$ 5,000 |
| 8. Markets, branding, identity | \$ 50,425 | \$ 1,400 | | \$ 2,225 | \$ 54,075 |
| 9. Website/social media strategy | \$ 20,450 | \$ 1,400 | | \$ 1,250 | \$ 23,100 |
| Totals | \$ 178,875 | \$ 11,700 | \$ 14,500 | \$ 16,000 | \$ 221,075 |

PROJECT OUTCOMES

1. A comprehensive research plan will be in place that identifies the historical resources as well as a heritage inventory of the c. 400 islands.
2. An inclusive database will be created of all islands between Jeddore Rock and Liscombe along with size and cultural features that can be used in creating tourism product.
3. An archeological survey will be completed of the coastal islands demonstrating the highest probability of heritage usage that will assist with future product development
4. A concept plan will be created to prepare island viewing look offs, directional signage and a land based used guide.
5. An essential visitor services strategy will be developed.
6. An assessment and development of sustainable community based and wilderness arts and cultural activities.
7. Brand testing will be completed with the end result the development of a brand based on our unique selling and value propositions.
8. Tourism experiential workshops will be conducted with business to develop and encourage product development
9. Further community engagement

PHASE 2 SEQUENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS: Implement once research and planning done

1. Based on the research, planning and inventories conducted as part of Phase 2, prepare an outline for a comprehensive integrated management plan for the islands and headlands that will support the sustainable economic development of the area, with a focus on an iterative approach whereby actions with the most potential for success are implemented quickly on a small scale and then modified as needed after insitu testing.
2. Launch branded website and social media strategy once a long-term website management service-provider and their funding, if required, has been secured. Ensure that the website and strategy does not promise what cannot yet be delivered and is focused on the target markets with a product that is genuinely market-ready.
3. Commence implementation of the three-year island-viewing look offs and land-based route-guide concept plan. Consult summary of the Economic Planning Group report.
4. Implement the essential visitor-services strategy.

PHASE 3 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS: Review Phase 2 before proceeding

The specific elements for Phase 3 of the Musquodoboit Harbour – Sherbrooke STEP Project are difficult to authoritatively identify and prioritize at this point in time but they should include:

- An impartial effectiveness-analysis of all initiatives undertaken during Phase 2 to determine what has worked well, and what may not have, to help guide the prioritization, planning and implementation of the next phase.
- The preparation of a comprehensive development/management plan for public access to the islands that is consistent with their environmental protection (both natural and cultural) while maximizing the options for visitors to intimately experience and visit them in a variety of ways.
- The planning and execution of a research and community engagement process designed to secure the information necessary for the development of a comprehensive, integrated management plan for the watershed lands bounded by Jeddore Head and St. Mary's River
- The development of a longer-term marketing plan utilizing the most effective marketing channels.
- A review of all in-place natural and cultural heritage interpretation and then the development of a comprehensive integrated interpretation strategy that might include a traditional interpretation centre, located roughly in the centre of the area, but at a location that provides a dramatic island-viewing experience.
- The preparation of an integrated routes/facilities guide for visiting the islands by kayak, sailboat and powerboat, that has is fully in accordance with a comprehensive development/management plan for public access. The water route guide should not be released until the access plan has been completed and approved by all stakeholders.