

Resolution 3A

CREATION OF COASTAL ZONE ACT (PASSED)

⇒ UNSM Resolutions Committee

WHEREAS Nova Scotia's coast has been and continues to be, our most defining asset, providing jobs, economic opportunity, recreation, and protection of health and property for residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS coastal areas, and coastal features such as islands, cliffs and bluffs, wetlands, beaches, sand dunes, and floodplains are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts including sea level rise, storm surges, flooding, salt water intrusion, and accelerated erosion, as well as the impacts of development; and

WHEREAS many municipalities and communities have existing infrastructure and homes located in coastal areas prone to flooding, rapid erosion, or storm damage; and

WHEREAS some recent patterns of residential development along the coast, particularly those based on low-density single-dwelling homes located very close to the water's edge and protected by rock walls or boulders have a negative impact on water quality, erosion rates, and the health and productivity of the coastal zone; and

WHEREAS prospective buyers, sellers, and builders of homes in coastal areas currently receive no information about potential expenses and risks associated with living in coastal areas, and most assume their being issued a building permit implies their site has been assessed as safe; and

WHEREAS many municipalities and communities have experienced extensive and costly flood and storm damage in recent years, and the frequency and costs of such events is expected to rise in coming decades; and

WHEREAS many municipalities have acknowledged the problem and are developing individual adaptation or coastal planning strategies or land use bylaws in the coastal zone; and

WHEREAS the province retains responsibility for many environmental permitting decisions and infrastructure placement and maintenance that directly influence the quantity and nature of development in coastal areas and floodplains despite municipal responsibility for land use planning; and

WHEREAS the Province and municipalities have shared and overlapping responsibilities for re-directing coastal development to safer areas, yet many

of the current and future costs of these developments are borne directly by the municipalities; and

WHEREAS many other jurisdictions, including Alberta, have enacted or plan to enact legislation restricting new developments in flood plains and other potentially hazardous areas; and

WHEREAS there is strong public support for protection of Nova Scotia coast;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities request that the Province of Nova Scotia partner with municipalities to develop a *Coastal Zone Act* to recognize and protect the values of Nova Scotia's coasts, and keep people and property safe from coastal hazards. The *Act* would provide clear objectives and guidelines for coastal development, supported or enforced by a clear and simple regulatory system.

Response from:

Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture & Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations

RESPONSES:

(Response from Fisheries & Aquaculture)

Nova Scotia's coast provides numerous social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits to our province. The coast is where the majority of our population lives and where many make their living. It is important

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture is currently reviewing our coastal priorities and direction for coastal management provincially. The Province recognizes that land-use planning falls under the jurisdiction of municipalities and that collaboration will be required in order to address coastal development concerns. We would be willing to meet with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations or representatives from the UNSM to discuss how the Province can engage with municipalities to advance coastal land-use planning.

(Response from Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations)

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations meet on a regular basis with other provincial departments involved in addressing issues that impact or affect municipalities.

Meetings between the province and the UNSM to discuss coastal issues would also involve other departments with an interest in the coastal zone, namely; Nova Scotia Environment, Department of Natural Resources; Fisheries and Aquiculture; and Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Any discussions that are to take place between the UNSM, and the Province, with respect to coastal zone management would involve all of these departments as key participants and would be facilitated by SNSMR.