

Resolution 1A

SUSTAINING THE PROVINCE'S AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY AND LAND BASE (PASSED)

⇒ District of Lunenburg

WHEREAS Section 193 of the *Municipal Government Act*, identifies the adoption of Statements of Provincial Interest necessary to protect provincial wide interest in the use and development of particular lands; and

WHEREAS the basis of an existing Statement of Provincial Interest is that the preservation of agricultural land is important to the future of all Nova Scotians; and

WHEREAS an Agricultural Land Review Committee was created in 2010 by the Ministers responsible for the Department of Agriculture and Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations, to produce a Report that would identify areas of interest to the public that may require action by the Province regarding agricultural land in the future; and

WHEREAS the ALRC Report "**Preservation of Agricultural Land in Nova Scotia**" upon its completion cited the decline in active farmland in this Province by approximately two-thirds land area since 1901, and furthermore the Report identified as one of its foundational recommendations that: "The cost of preserving agricultural land should not be borne only by the farm community. Preservation of the capacity to grow food and support the rural economy benefits Nova Scotia in general, and those who benefit should share in the cost of protecting agricultural land;" and

WHEREAS the Municipality has reviewed the ALRC Report, and while not supporting all recommendations found in the document, the Municipality supports in principle the general intent of the Report to protect the natural capital of the province's agricultural lands;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities work effectively with municipalities, the Department of Agriculture, and Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations, to determine the most constructive course of municipal action and policy developments in support of sustaining the Province's agricultural industry and land base.

Forwarded to:

Minister of the Department of Agriculture

RESPONSE:

Thank you for your November 21, 2011 letter acknowledging and including Resolution 1A: Sustaining the Province's Agricultural Industry and Land Base.

Since the release of the ALRC report, an interdepartmental working group was formed with Department members from Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. This group reviewed the recommendations put forth in the ALRC report while also considering the policy efforts that industry, municipalities, and the Province could consider to address agricultural land protection and preservation. Their report will soon be complete.

I thank you for passing along the UNSM's resolution.

The Honourable John MacDonell

Minister

December 14, 2011