

Fundy Connects Summit

Securing the Future of Tourism

November 1–3, 2022

Poley Mountain, Waterford, New Brunswick



Presented by the Upper Bay of Fundy
Rural Region Destination Development Project

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Welcome

The Bay of Fundy has been called many things over the centuries. A bounty. A wonder. A trade route. A Canadian tourism icon. We call it home. This is where we raise our families, run our businesses, enjoy retirement and because of that we care deeply about our local communities, economies, and ecosystems – all of which are changing.

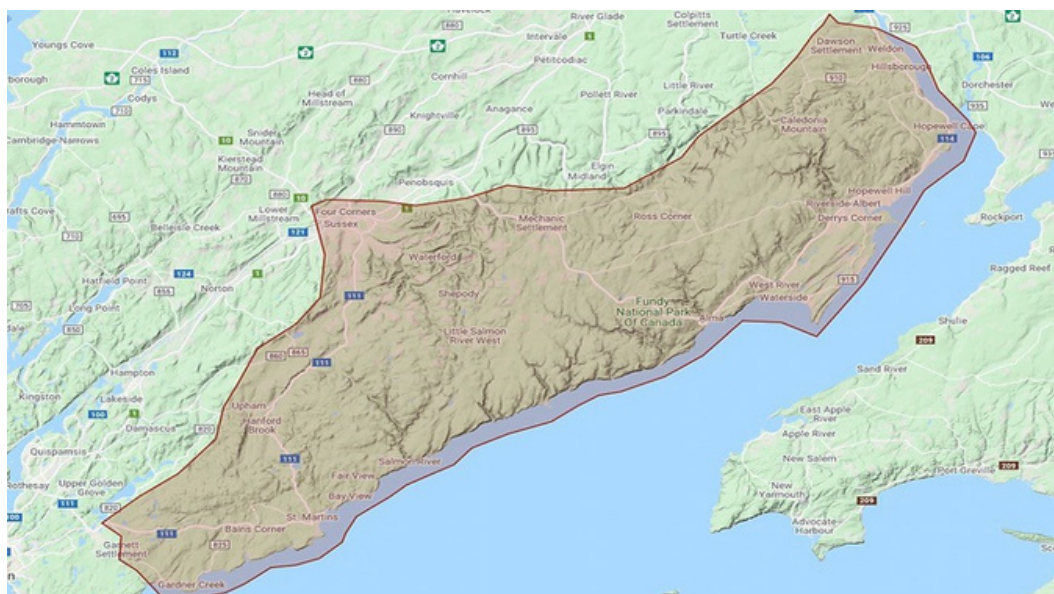
That is why in Fall 2021 a small group of operators, community organizers and municipal officials came together to create the Upper Bay of Fundy Rural Region Destination Development Project. It is a two-year initiative funded by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and the Province of New Brunswick.

In July 2022 we released our Phase 1 report, which provided baseline analysis related to digital marketing, community attitudes towards local tourism development, and previous regional development recommendations. It also created a baseline asset inventory of built heritage and cultural assets, and began to map the region's tourism assets, both public and private.

This initial work laid the foundation for Phase 2 and the reason for our Summit: the creation of a new locally-led Destination Development Network for the Upper Bay of Fundy.

The Upper Bay of Fundy is the ecological zone defined by the northeastern half of the Bay of Fundy, stretching from the outskirts of St. Martins through to Cape Enrage, and includes the communities of Hillsborough, Riverside-Albert, Alma, Sussex and the adjacent rural areas.

This Summit's purpose is to bring together area operators, non-profit leaders, government officials, residents & investors to collaborate on the design & direction of our new Upper Bay of Fundy Destination Development Network.



Our Principles of Engagement

Our goal in all our work is to create safe, welcoming and inclusive spaces and experiences for everyone regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, visible or hidden ability, physical appearance, race, religion, or creed. To do that we have some ground rules for all of us to follow.



Lead with empathy

Appreciate others as people with abundant experiences & perspectives.



Value diverse perspectives

Honour the unique experiences each of us brings to our conversations.



Move up, move back

Move up to share your perspective and move back to listen to others' contributions.



Stay judgment free

Of others and of yourself.



Practice radical inclusion

Make sure everyone, especially those historically at the margins, feels truly included.



Advocate for your emotional wellbeing

Take care of yourself & your team; speak up when you feel overwhelmed.



Get comfortable with uncomfortable questions

Stretch yourself to consider new ways of looking at how we work, interact and support each other, and how we can collaborate to address shared challenges and opportunities.

Destination Development & the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 integrated and interrelated goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that humanity enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030.



No one needs to tell us the effect Covid-19 had on our local economies. While the summer 2022 season brought tourists back to the Upper Bay of Fundy, many of us are all still in recovery mode. Add to that the upcoming municipal changes and our region is facing a lot of uncertainty – and opportunity to transform our businesses and communities into leaders in regenerative and sustainable tourism.

During our first round of community conversations, we received strong support for aligning our region with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Destination Development & the UN Sustainable Development Goals

In 2019 the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) released guidelines for effective destination management in the face of new and emerging challenges. Its purpose is to help local organizations focus on enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of destinations while guaranteeing a harmonious relationship between residents and visitors. Using the UNWTO guidelines, we identified 20 issues of importance to residents and operators in the Upper Bay of Fundy, grouped across the three tenets.

Strategic Leadership

Regional Coordination/Collaboration: This was a near universal sentiment; it is time for our small communities to work together to leverage our collective knowledge and expertise to create a shared vision and direction for our rural region.

Sustainable/Regenerative Tourism: Many of our operators and residents are here because they share a love of the Bay of Fundy ecosystem and want to protect it and are interested in aligning with the UN SDGs.

Restoration/Conservation: There are a number of historic, cultural and ecological sites of importance that require restorative work and then ongoing conservation to preserve and enhance these areas.

Leverage UNESCO designations: The merging of the Fundy Biosphere and Stonehammer under one management structure makes the Upper Bay of Fundy a leading region in the global UNESCO World Heritage program. This can be leveraged for marketing and conservation purposes.

Capacity Building: Our destination economy is dominated by small business owners and entrepreneurs and enhancing access to both training and shared services is of great interest to them.

Seasonal Extension: Operators are interested in learning how to extend their business seasons, a move that will enhance services for locals because of increased volume and revenue.

Product and Experience Development: Operators and investors are interested in learning how they can create or enhance existing products and experiences to increase revenue and market reach.

Visitor Experience: Developing the Upper Bay of Fundy into a premiere visitor destination is of primary importance to local operators, industry groups, and provincial and national tourism marketers and funders.

Events/Programming: The region has the capacity for more events, particularly events and programming that links the communities to create a regional map and calendar of activities.

Trails: Linking existing trails to create a unified regional trail system for diverse stakeholder groups in the non-motorized and motorized trail community will help extend the seasons and market the Upper Bay of Fundy as a year-round destination. Local groups lead the way on this and bringing them together will have many benefits.

Destination Development & the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Interpretation: During our stakeholder sessions, operators and residents identified training staff and employees of visitor information centres to speak knowledgeably about the region's ecosystem, culture and heritage will enhance the visitor experience, as will training interpreters to understand the stories of this place and recommend activities throughout the region.

Indigenous Knowledge & Leadership: Fundy National Park is the regional leader in integrating Indigenous knowledge and leadership into its practices and programming and can share its knowledge with the network.

Effective Execution

Land Use: This is a fundamental issue for residents in our region and must be front and centre of any work moving forward. Open and transparent land management is an essential requirement for building and maintaining trust with Upper Bay of Fundy residents and operators.

Infrastructure: Deteriorating roads, unreliable Internet, and neglected buildings were the top complaints from residents and operators, stating it makes living and visiting the Upper Bay of Fundy a frustrating experience.

Signage: Operators told us better signage is required to help guide visitors through the region.

Marketing: Our emphasis will be digital marketing, particularly increasing operators' capacity and knowledge.

Measurement & Evaluation: This is essential to building trust with operators, investors, funders, and residents, and in providing the Network with data to analyze our work and make adjustments.

Impact Assessments, Studies, and Research: Work with research partners, such as our successful project with UNB, to analyze specific elements of the network's work and to determine how to support operators, local governments, industry associations, and other network members in achieving individual goals.

Inclusive Stakeholder Participation: At the heart of our engagement process lies a commitment to access and diversity. To achieve that we will cultivate broad community support for the process and the resulting strategy by practising open communication, and welcoming a diverse mix of perspectives, experiences and skillsets.

Sustainable Governance

Management & Implementation: We will build out a management and implementation plan for the Upper Bay of Fundy Regional Destination Development Network, including a proposed management model, which will include governance and funding guidelines.

Our Priority SDGs

The UN has identified 169 targets across 17 SDGs. While all are important and interrelated, some will be more relevant to your organization. We have identified five priority SDGs for the new destination development network.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



#8 Decent Work & Economic Growth

Tourism, as services trade, is one of the top four export earners globally, currently providing one in ten jobs worldwide. Decent work opportunities in tourism, particularly for youth and women, and policies that favour better diversification through tourism value chains can enhance tourism positive socio-economic impacts.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



#11 Sustainable Cities & Communities

Tourism can advance urban infrastructure and accessibility, promote regeneration and preserve cultural and natural heritage, assets on which tourism depends. Investment in green infrastructure (efficient transportation, potable water) should result in smarter and greener communities for not only residents but also tourists.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



#12 Responsible Consumption & Production

The tourism sector needs to adopt sustainable consumption and production (SCP) modes, accelerating the shift towards sustainability. Tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for tourism including for energy, water, waste, biodiversity and job creation will result in enhanced economic, social and environmental outcomes.

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



#14 Life Below Water

Coastal and maritime tourism rely on healthy marine ecosystems. Tourism development must be a part of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in order to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle to promote a blue economy, contributing to the sustainable use of marine resources.

15 LIFE ON LAND



#15 Life On Land

Rich biodiversity and natural heritage are often the main reasons why tourists visit a destination. Tourism can play a major role if sustainably managed in fragile zones, not only in conserving and preserving biodiversity, but also in generating revenue as an alternative livelihood to local communities.

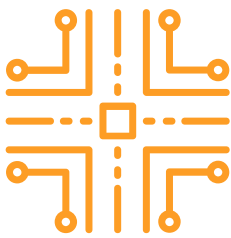
Network Action Areas

The mission of the new Destination Development Network is to bring together operators, non-profit leaders, government officials, residents and investors to identify and access resources required to strengthen local communities, beginning with the following four action areas.



Labour & Training

Purpose: To develop innovative region-wide solutions to attract, train and retain staff by pooling resources to efficiently onboard new hires, meet NB workplace standards, and support knowledge access about regional products for staff to promote to travellers. Operators cited this as a major challenge because developing and delivering training is time-intensive when they need to be focused on the new tourism season.



Infrastructure

Purpose: To identify and develop a region-wide agenda, funding model, and timeline for achieving upgrades and enhancements to key infrastructure, which includes roads, trails, signage, water/sewer and internet. This is the #1 issue for residents, who are worried an increase in tourism will further deteriorate critical and already faltering infrastructure. Operators, many of whom are residents too, are also concerned that crumbling roads and boil orders reduce the Upper Bay of Fundy competitiveness.



Housing

Purpose: to develop innovative solutions to the region's chronic and worsening housing shortage. This should include a short-term solution for housing staff for the summer 2023 tourism season; and longer-term solutions. Operators cited this as the #1 barrier to business growth because potential new staff don't have anywhere to live.



Regenerative Tourism Product Development

Purpose: To identify and develop programming for operators to learn about regenerative tourism and the UN SDGs; access professional development & training to develop regenerative programs & visitor experiences; and build a community of practice in the Rural Upper Bay of Fundy.

Agenda – Day 1

Tuesday November 1

Registration opens at 9:30 AM

Part 1 – Creating a Values-led Agenda for the Upper Bay of Fundy

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome – Jamie Hare, Poley Mountain Resort, Waterford, NB
- 10:05 a.m. Land Acknowledgement
- 10:20 a.m. Explaining our Mission – Lisa Hrabluk, Wicked Ideas
- 10:30 a.m. Keynote "Regenerative Approach to Tourism in Canada" – Emilie Comeau-Sinclair, Destination Canada
- 11:20 a.m. BREAK
- 11:30 a.m. Video Interview "Co-creating a Destination Development Agenda" – Thompson-Oakanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) Ellen Walker-Matthews, CEO & Mike Overend, Director of Development
- 11:50 a.m. Morning Review – Lisa Hrabluk & Janet Clouston, Albert County Museum, Hopewell Cape, NB
- 12:00 p.m. LUNCH

Part 2 – Putting our Values to Work via Community-led Innovation

- 1:00 p.m. Introduction to afternoon agenda – Lisa Hrabluk
- 1:05 p.m. Keynote "Navigating Collaborative Change" – Jamie Gamble, Imprint Consulting, Hampton, NB
- 2:15 p.m. BREAK
- 2:30 p.m. Keynote "The Future of Travel: Sustainable Tourism & Strategic Storytelling" – Rob Holmes, GLP Films, Kennebunkport, Maine
- 3:50 p.m. Day 1 Review – Lisa Hrabluk & Jordan Jamison, St. Martins & District Chamber of Commerce and Regional Tourism Association, St. Martins, NB

Part 3 – Eat, Play, Love Local Food & Festivities

- 6:00 p.m. Fundy Fresh Culinary Celebration
- 7:00 p.m. GLP Films showcase

Agenda – Day 2

Tuesday November 2

Registration opens at 8:30 AM.

Part 4 – How to Organize Place-based Problem Solving

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome – Dr. Jennifer Dingman, UNESCO designated Fundy Biosphere Region, NB
- 9:20 a.m. Keynote “Community Economies” – Dor Assia, Shorefast Foundation, Fogo Island, NL
- 10:00 a.m. Community Economies - Actor Mapping Activity
- 10:30 a.m. BREAK
- 10:45 a.m. Keynote “Development by Community and for Community” – Jonathan Foster, Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST), Gros Morne, NL
- 11:15 a.m. Panel “How Communities in Atlantic Canada are Rethinking their Role in Destination Development” – Jonathan Foster, Cecelia Brooks, & Micha Fardy (Lisa Hrabluk, moderator)
- 11:50 a.m. Morning Review – Lisa Hrabluk & Phyllis Sutherland, Ponderosa Pines, Lower Cape, NB
- 12:00 p.m. LUNCH

Part 5 – Getting to work on our Network Action Area

- 1:30 p.m. Introduction to afternoon agenda – Lisa Hrabluk
- 1:50 p.m. Concurrent Sessions
- Labour + Housing, Lisa Hrabluk, Wicked Ideas, facilitator
 - Infrastructure with a focus on Trails, Jane McCulloch, Terminus Consulting, facilitator
- 2:30 p.m. BREAK
- 2:40 p.m. Concurrent Sessions
- Labour + Housing, Lisa Hrabluk, facilitator
 - Infrastructure with a focus on Trails, Jane McCulloch, Terminus Consulting, facilitator
- 3:50 p.m. Day 2 Review – Lisa Hrabluk & Mike Carpenter, Bay of Fundy Adventures, St. Martins, NB

Part 6 – Eat, Play, Love Local Food & Festivities

- 6:00 p.m. Local Dinner
- 7:00 p.m. Entertainment

Agenda – Day 3

Thursday November 3

Part 7 – Collaborative Partnership for Change

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome & Review – Jason Thorne, Town of Sussex, NB
- 9:20 a.m. Facilitated Conversation with Government Partners (Municipal, Provincial, Federal)
- 10:20 a.m. BREAK
- 10:30 a.m. Facilitated Conversation with Government Partners (Municipal, Provincial, Federal)
- 11:40 a.m. Next steps – Lisa Hrabluk & Bob Rochon, Hillsborough, NB
- 11:55 a.m. Thank you & good-bye

Our Speakers



Dor Assia, Project Manager, Shorefast

Dor Assia is a project manager with Shorefast where he is working on the development of the organization's national Community Economies program. Prior to this role, Dor worked in the areas of system transformation, program development and community engagement in the non-profit sector in Ontario. Dor is passionate about asset-based and community-led approaches to development, he completed his master's degree in Adult Education and Community Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.



Cecelia Brooks, Wabanaki Tree Spirit Tours, Canadian Rivers Institute & Mi'kmaw Wolastoqey Centre, University of New Brunswick

Cecelia Brooks has had a lifelong love of plants and spends her days foraging in her Wabanaki homeland. She combines her Chemistry degree with the best of her plant knowledge to make personal care products that are sustainable and effective. Local and sustainable are key considerations when Cecelia is formulating each of her creations. She applies her entrepreneurial skills to her family run body-care business (Soul Flower Herbals) where they harvest, extract and produce plant-based products. Cecelia also is co-owner of Wabanaki Tree Spirit Tours where she and her naturalist son, Anthony teach Wabanaki culture and history while walking in the old growth forest in Odell Park.



Emilie Comeau-Sinclair, Executive Director, Destination Canada

Emilie Comeau-Sinclair joined Destination Canada in 2022, passionate about the importance of collaboration, community engagement and data she is excited to be part of the discussion on regenerative approaches to tourism, and the evolution of the visitor economy. As the Executive Director, Strategic Initiative in Destination Development at Destination Canada, Emilie is guided by her belief that hosting guests in our communities can improve the quality of life of all of Canada. With over 20 years in the Tourism industry, both at the provincial and municipal level Emilie brings a vast knowledge from different aspects of the tourism ecosystem. Emilie is proud to live in New Brunswick and of her Acadian heritage.

Our Speakers



Jonathan Foster, Executive Director, Gros Morne

Executive Director of the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism. Jonathan has been involved in the tourism industry as both an operator and advocate having worked in the private sector, government and university settings over the past 25 years. Having studied and worked across Canada and New Zealand, Jonathan has been exposed to many destinations and ways of doing business. It is this exposure that has helped shape his understanding and passion regarding community-centred development. This passion has led him to become heavily involved regionally working with communities and businesses to help facilitate and grow their sustainable tourism experiences. Jonathan strongly believes that by utilizing the talents and skills of people within communities that businesses and destinations can flourish in a very globally competitive marketplace.



Jamie Gamble, Principal, Imprint Consulting

Jamie has an extensive background in designing and delivering consulting projects in a variety of areas including strategy, evaluation and organizational change. A talented writer, excellent facilitator and effective researcher, Jamie has earned acclaim from the many groups he has worked with. Jamie holds a Masters of Management Degree from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec where he graduated from the highly-regarded McGill-McConnell Program.



Rob Holmes, Founder, GLP Films

Rob Holmes | Founder & Chief Strategist of GLP Films, a full-service content marketing agency based in Maine, USA helping destinations reach their sustainability goals using award-winning storytelling, digital media distribution, and communications strategy for destination management. With 30+ years of experience in the sustainable tourism industry, Rob Holmes has spearheaded global strategic marketing campaigns for top-tier destinations, media, brands, & operators. Rob regularly presents at leading industry events, such as WTM London, ITB Berlin, CREST World Tourism Day Forum, and has led workshops on strategic communication and sustainability storytelling in destinations ranging from Croatia, Northern Ireland, Armenia and Sedona, Arizona.

Our Speakers



Lisa Hrabluk, Principal, Wicked Ideas

Lisa knows that to do good, you gotta get wicked. An award-winning writer, journalist, and entrepreneur, Lisa has over three decades experience wrestling with wicked problems. If it's complicated, contentious or controversial, Lisa's been there, behind the barricades, in front of boardroom tables, and huddled in the bullpen with leaders in Canada and the U.S. who have big missions to achieve and small windows of opportunity to get it right. Lisa is a leader in the B Corp movement, for-profit companies that meet the highest certified standards for social and environmental impact, and is working towards UN SDGs #4 (quality education), #5 (gender equality), #10 (reduce inequalities) and #16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).



Jane McCulloch, Principal, Terminus Consulting

Jane was instrumental in the development and launch of the Destination Trail Assessment Tool through Atlantic Canada Trails. This program saw the assessment of nearly 40 trails in Atlantic Canada with 12 reaching destination trail status. This tool has resulted in the enhancement of many long-distance trails in Atlantic Canada and has been adopted by the Province of New Brunswick for the assessment of their Signature Trails. As National Director of Trail with the Trans Canada Trail, Jane was involved in the development of 10,000km of land and water trail along with road cycling infrastructure to ensure the successful connection of The Great Trail (Trans Canada Trail) by 2017. In her role as National Director of Trail, she was the lead for the development of the National Road Cycling Strategy and the National Signage Program which provided opportunities to brand trails and road cycling infrastructure as well as enhance the overall experience for the user. Jane provided leadership and expertise in organizing an ACOA Best Practice Mission to the Great Allegheny Passage to learn about the Trail Town Program and has participated in four Best Practice Missions in Canada and the United States.



Rach Derrah, graphic facilitator

Rach Derrah is a facilitator, graphic recorder, and illustrator.

With deep listening and co-creation at the core, she supports clients with strategic processes to have challenging conversations and propel visions forward. Rach is used to working across sectors and across communities in highly collaborative environments. Her formal education is in Community Design at Dalhousie University. Her studies and practice continued in the Art of Hosting, Social Innovation and Anti-Oppression frameworks. She was a co-founder of Brave Space Social Innovation where she learned and developed internationally recognized graphic recording expertise. Rachel is a settler, born and raised on Wolastoqiyik territory. She is of British, Irish and Scottish descent. Currently she lives in Kijipuktuk.

Our Speakers



Mike Overend, Director of Destination Development & Stewardship, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA)

Mike Overend is the Director of Destination Development & Stewardship for the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA). Mike is directly responsible to oversee initiatives specific to the advancement of destination development projects and sustainable tourism practices related to both community DMO's and industry stakeholders in the TOTA region. These initiatives include the ongoing activities to maintain the Thompson Okanagan Regional Biosphere Destination Certification; the advancement of the Biosphere Commitment Program, aligning stakeholders with the Biosphere Certification, and the continued engagement with industry partners to meet the United Nations World Tourism Organization's 2030 objectives to advance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) at a regional level.



Ellen Walker-Matthews, CEO, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA)

Ellen Walker-Matthews has over 40 years of experience in the hospitality, travel and tourism industry, with a career that included senior and regional positions with CP (Fairmont) Hotels, Delta Hotels and Tepic Management / Rim Hospitality. Her roles in these organizations included working with new and existing properties to oversee their sales and marketing departments, developing and executing marketing plans, evaluating and purchasing media, working directly with Travel Trade and Travel Media, implementing promotional activities and assisting management teams in building strategic business plans to drive revenues and competitively position properties within their respective marketplaces. She also worked in the capacity of both General Manager at a property level and as a Regional Sr Vice President. Since 2009 EWM has worked with the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association in many areas of the organization including lead roles in Consumer Marketing, Travel Trade/Travel Media, Industry/Destination Development and most recently as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) effective July 2021.

Your Role in Next Steps

The purpose of the Upper Bay of Fundy Destination Development Network is to bring people together to share expertise, knowledge and information so we can co-create community-led solutions and maximize opportunities. Between now and Spring 2023 we will determine the structure of the Upper Bay of Fundy Destination Development Network and begin work addressing our four action areas: labour, housing, infrastructure, and regenerative tourism product development. Here's how you can get involved.

1

Join an Action Team

We are looking for people from across our region to join one of our four action teams. Action team members have 2 objectives:

- to confirm the short-term and long-term priorities for the action team you join and,
- to participate in our facilitated problem-solving activities, with the goal of having a short-term solution ready by Spring 2023.

2

Organize a Community Learning Event

Invite us to speak or facilitate a workshop in your community or organization to help us share information about the Network and how to get involved. In 2023 we will be launching professional learning workshops based on the initial work of the action teams to help operators and communities prepare for the summer 2023 tourism season.

3

Stay Connected



<https://www.facebook.com/RuralFundyRegionDevelopment>



<https://www.ruralfundyregiondevelopment.com/>



community@friendsoffundy.ca

Working Group & Partners

Project Working Group

Mike Carpenter, Red Rock Adventure, St. Martins

Janet Clouston, Albert County Historical Society and Museum, Hopewell Cape

Dr. Jennifer Dingman, Fundy Biosphere Region, Stonehammer Global Geopark

Micha Fardy, Friends of Fundy, Alma

Jamie Hare, Poley Mountain Resort, Waterford

Michelle Harvey-Larsen, Studio On the Marsh, Harvey (Fundy Tourism -ACTA)

Jordan Jamison, St. Martins & District Chamber of Commerce and Regional Tourism Association

Bob Rochon, Mayor, Village of Hillsborough

Phyllis Sutherland, Ponderosa Pines Campground, Lower Cape (Fundy Tourism - ACTA)

Jason Thorne, Community Services Director, Town of Sussex

Paul Winkle, Beach Street Inn, St. Martins

Government Funders



Summit Partners

