

The proposed *Biodiversity Act* poses a serious threat to private landowner rights by granting the Minister broad and unprecedented authority over what activities (agriculture, forestry and development) can be carried out on YOUR private land.

The *Biodiversity Act* will be a priority of the new Premier of Nova Scotia and will be tabled in the upcoming house session. Although “consultation” has occurred with some groups, to this day, the new *Biodiversity Act* with proposed changes has never been presented in its entirety. **The *Biodiversity Act* will give the Minister the power to potentially stop and restrict management activities on your private land.**

Why private landowners should be concerned:

1. The overall purpose of this legislation is unclear. There are already many other Acts (*Species at Risk Act*, *Environmental Act*, etc.) that protect biodiversity. The broadness and vagueness of the *Biodiversity Act* leaves it as a mechanism for the Minister to control activities (agriculture, forestry, development, mining, etc...) on all private land.
2. It is not voluntary. There is a clause in the Act whereby a “Biodiversity Emergency Order” can be triggered which removes the voluntary aspect of the *Biodiversity Act*. It is unclear what triggers this event and who determines it. **This presents a significant risk to Private Landowners, as the Minister can stop and restrict activities on Private Land at their will.**
3. This legislation gives the Province and the Minister overarching and unfettered power across Private land, regardless of private landowner wishes, **which today they do not have.**
4. The fines associated with the *Biodiversity Act* are highly punitive (up to \$1,000,000) when compared to other similar acts.

The Government suggests that many of these issues will be resolved in the regulations. Given this Government’s record on consultation on the Act, private landowners are at serious risk of losing their ability to manage their land.

All stakeholders and landowners who will be impacted by this legislation should express their concern, in writing, to: The Premier of Nova Scotia, The Minister of Natural Resources and all Nova Scotia MLA’s. To reduce some of the risk to Private Landowners, the following changes to the *Biodiversity Act* are recommended:

- The *Biodiversity Act* should be implemented on Crown Land Only
- The *Biodiversity Act* should be provided to all stakeholders in its entirety for internal review before going to the house session.