

Community Based Watershed Planning on PEI

**Wading In: Watershed
Management in Nova Scotia**

March 26, 2009
Sean Ledgerwood

PEI Department of Environment, Energy & Forestry

PEI Environmental Issues

- Intensively farmed province, especially some areas
- Nitrate issues, both groundwater and surface water
 - Can exceed respective guidelines
- Leads to eutrophication / anoxia
 - Earlier and later in the year/last longer
- Pesticide contamination
- Soil erosion
- Bacterial contamination

PEI Challenges

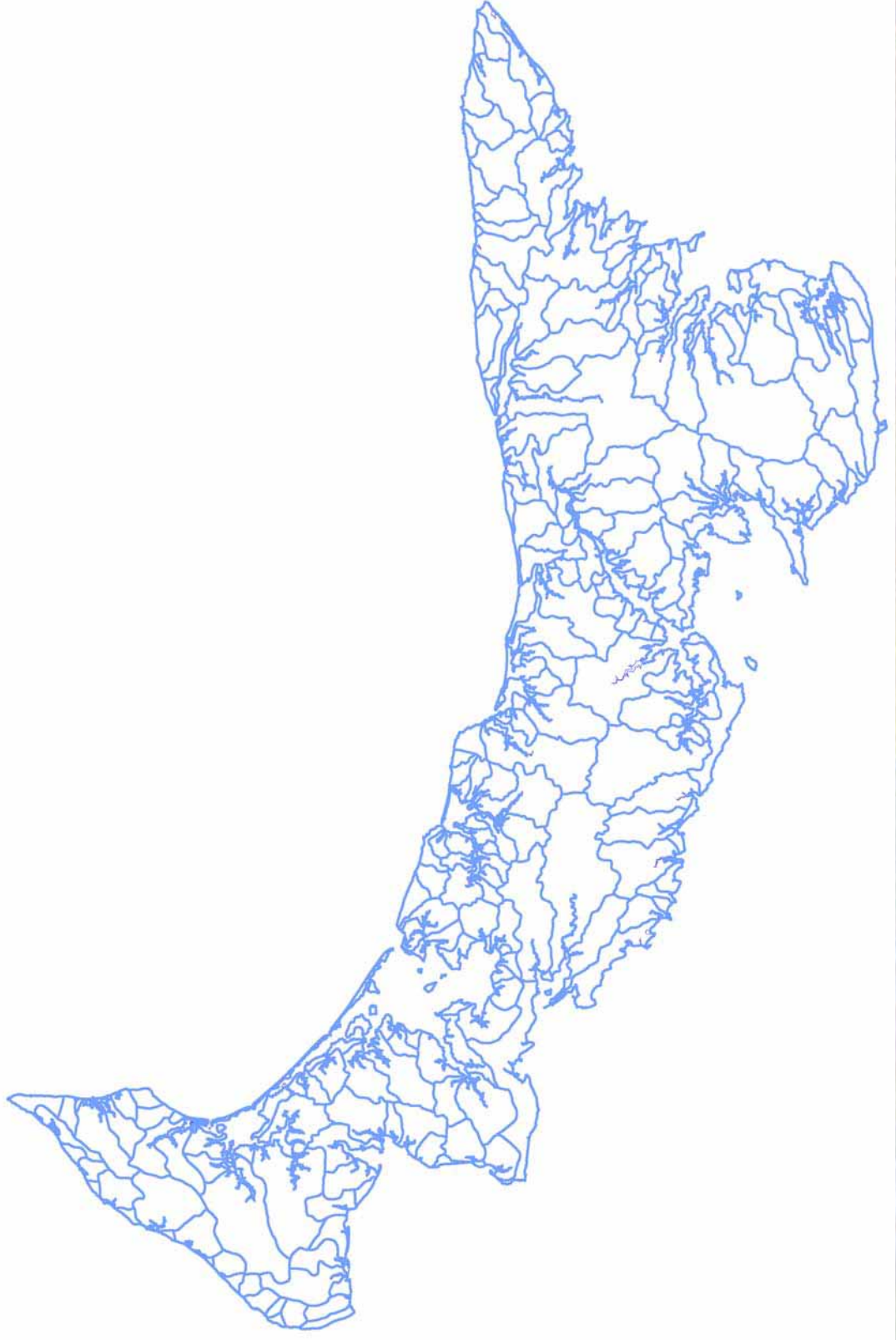
- We must change what we do on the land if we expect to have improvements in water
- Private land ownership means that it is private citizens who will actually make the changes
- Land owners will make changes because they want an improvement in their environment and because they want to support their community – **not because government asks them to**
- Government has a long history of not making decisions in a local context

History of Watershed Group Activities

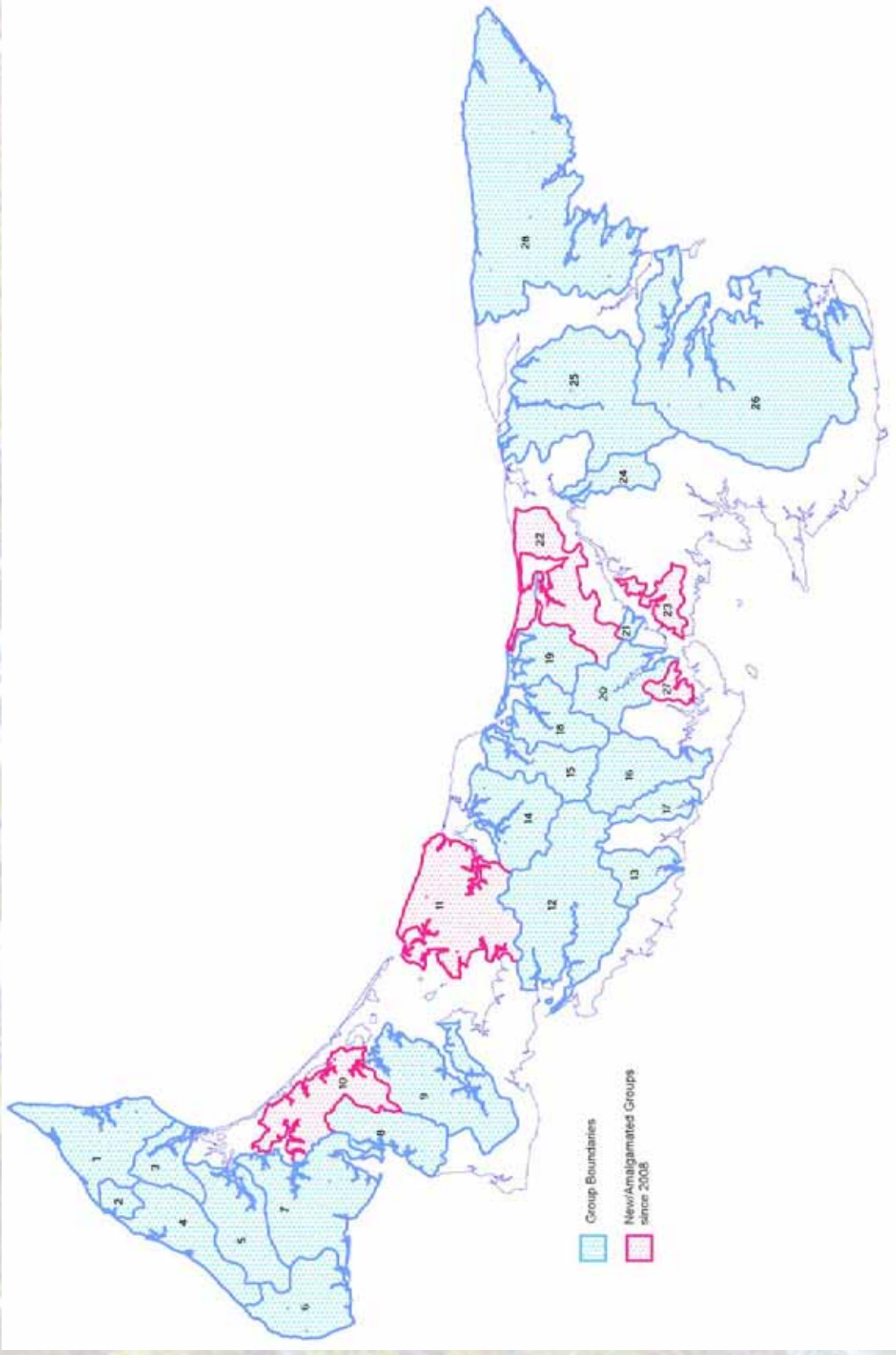
- **Stream Enhancement**
 - Primarily in or adjacent to the stream
 - Technique based:
 - Brush mats
 - Digger logs
 - Sediment traps
 - Fish passage rock dams
 - Does not usually address causal factors away from the stream

→ Watershed Planning

Watersheds on PEI



PEI Watershed Groups



PEI Watershed Groups

- Currently about 30 groups
- Cover about 72% of Island's landmass
- Large size/capacity variation
 - Largest Group is 62,000 Ha
 - Smallest is 947 Ha
- Would like to see groups around 40-50,000 Ha

Watershed Alliance

- Watershed groups agreed to form a watershed Alliance
- An Alliance will:
 - Communicate between watershed groups
 - Liaise/Lobby with provincial and federal departments
 - Provide representation on various provincial and federal committees
 - Raise public awareness, re: environmental issues
- Great step for watershed groups

Watershed Planning Principles

- Watershed basis
 - Provides objectives for individual watersheds
- All encompassing; holistic
 - Not restricted to water
- Community driven
- Works directly with private landowners
- Open public process
- Cyclic – ‘living document’

Community Driven

- It's holistic community planning of many potential issues through inclusive participation by all watershed stakeholders
- Stakeholders determine issues, objectives and strategies
- Commonly uses facilitated public planning sessions
 - Draft plan is crafted from the sessions
 - Stakeholders review and approve plan



How to Engage Landowners?

- Laws/regulations 
- Programs – ‘We’re here to help you’ 
- Direct neighbourly contact 

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Landowner Trust

- Much of the land is owned by farmers
- Need their trust and support
- Build Relationships



Watershed Plans in PEI

- 5 complete or completed shortly (with community approval)
- 2 completed, but not community approved
- 1 draft plan completed this winter
- 15 interested in/started watershed planning process
- 4 not interested/just stream enhancement

Why Does It Work?

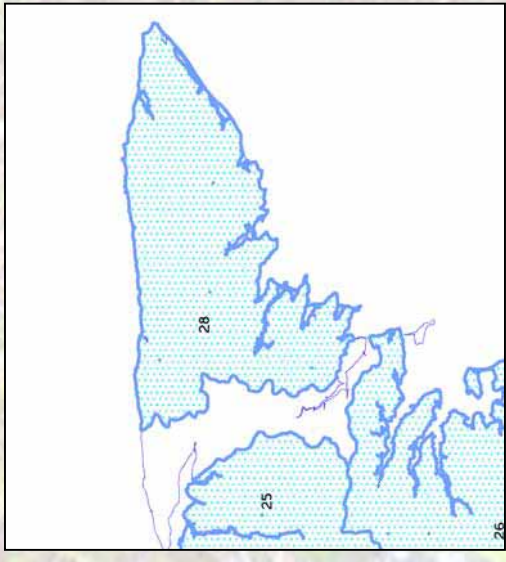
- **Social Marketing**
 - ‘the study of the why’s of behavioural change’
- **Traditional education/communications programs and economics alone don’t work**
 - In spite of ‘logic’, it just doesn’t get people to change their behaviour
- **Must make direct exchange, discussion and requests to people**
 - True no matter how big the watershed and number of people is!!

Ten Steps for Successful Watershed Planning for PEI

- Get the right participation
- Develop a mission statement, guiding principles and an organizational structure
- Get to know the watershed
- Identify issues and concerns
- Develop goals to deal with issues
- Develop an action or work plan
- Write it all down - the watershed management plan
- Implement an action plan
- Evaluate - monitor - plan adjustment
- Communicate, communicate, communicate

An Island Example

Souris & Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation



- Have community endorsed plan
- Very successful in community engagement
 - Hooked them in with other events
 - Door to door
 - Coordinator is key
- Had to build credibility and group capacity
- Need landowner support and trust
- www.souriswl.ca



- **Objective 3 – Enhance groundwater and surface water quality**
Water quality in the Souris River watershed is in need of improvement in order to achieve our goals of eliminating anoxic events, restoring previous shellfish classifications, restoring our streams to a gravel and rock substrate, eliminating red water events, and enhancing the quality of our drinking water.

Immediate Strategies (1-3 years):

- **(11) – Encourage and promote farmers’ efforts in utilizing Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs)**
 - Meet with Government to seek long-term incentives for producers to improve land stewardship
 - Provide regular updates on farmers efforts via quarterly newsletters
 - Meet with producers to discuss reducing local row crop concentration

Short Term Strategies (3-5 years):

- **(12) – Educate public on the proper disposal of household hazardous and other waste**
 - Publish guidelines for waste disposal in newsletter annually and/or maintain link(s) to guidelines on web site
- **(13) – Educate the public on the effective operation of septic systems**
 - Publish guidelines for septic systems in newsletter annually and/or maintain link(s) to guidelines on web site

Long Term Strategies (5-15 years):

- **(14) – Lobby Government to improve waste disposal facilities (waste oil, paint, etc)**
 - Arrange a meeting with Island Waste Management Corporation and Government to discuss increasing the capacity of and accessibility to waste disposal facilities
- **(15) – Promote discussions between agricultural producers, processors, government, and the public to seek change in industry requirements that will have a positive impact on the environment**

Souris Group Activities

- Photo Contests
- Public Meetings
- Educational Activities
- Family Fishing Day
- Nitrate Clinics



Souris Group Activities



Before

After brush mat installation



Government/Department Support

- 3 Provincial Coordinators
 - East, West, Central
- Watershed Management Fund
 - Priorities:
 - Watershed planning & management
 - Habitat improvement – both aquatic and upland
 - Resources
 - 2008 \$520,000
 - 2007 \$470,000
 - 2006 \$120,000
- Work Programs (EDA, student programs)
- ALUS
 - \$750,000

ALUS Program

- ALUS is a brand of ecological goods and services (EG&S) that rewards farmers/landowners for environmental services
- Annual payments to farmers/landowners under contract for the set aside of small areas of the agricultural landscape (beyond regulation)
- Outcome based (environmental and agricultural)
- Encourages greater cooperation between communities/watershed groups and farmers
 - Empowers farmers directly
- Public investment in agriculture

ALUS Program

- Buffer Zone Tree Planting
- Sensitive Land Retirement
 - Expand buffer zones
 - Permanent grassed headlands
 - High-sloped land retirement
- Land Under Soil Conservation Structures

The Report of
the Commission on
Nitrates in Groundwater



JUNE 2008

A Guide to Watershed Planning
on Prince Edward Island



Environment
Prince Edward Island

We are all downstream
We are all upstream

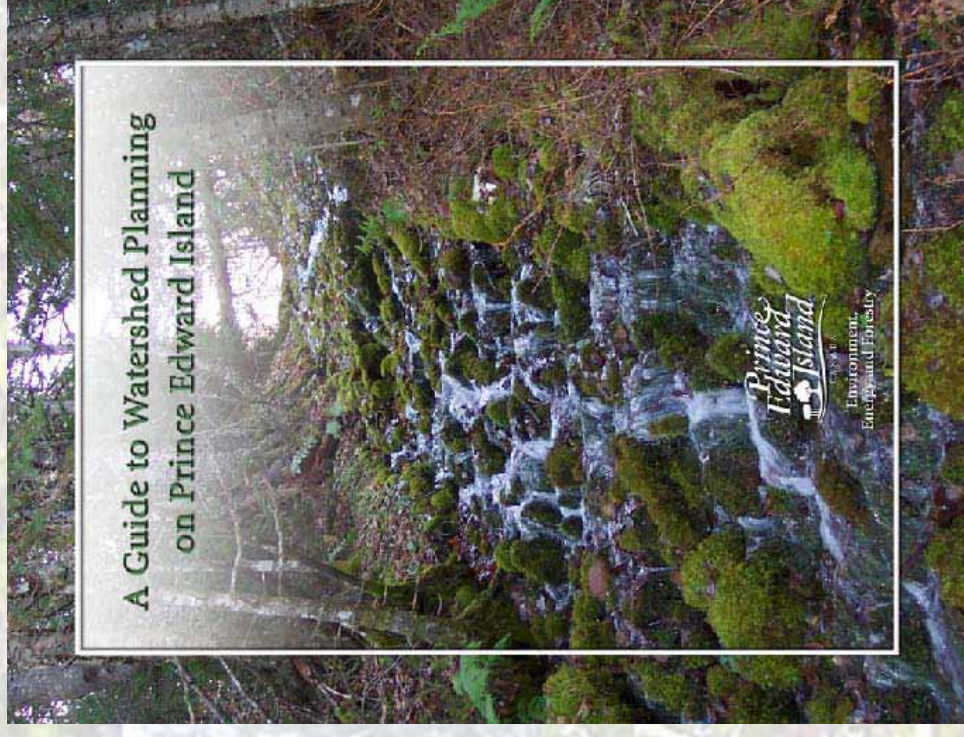
We are all part of a watershed

A Report on the Public Consultations on
Managing Land and Water on a Watershed Basis

Prepared by the Environmental Advisory Council
April 2007

Watershed Planning Guide

- Released January, 2007
- Provides advice on watershed planning from start-up to management plan implementation
- A “Cook Book” for watershed planning

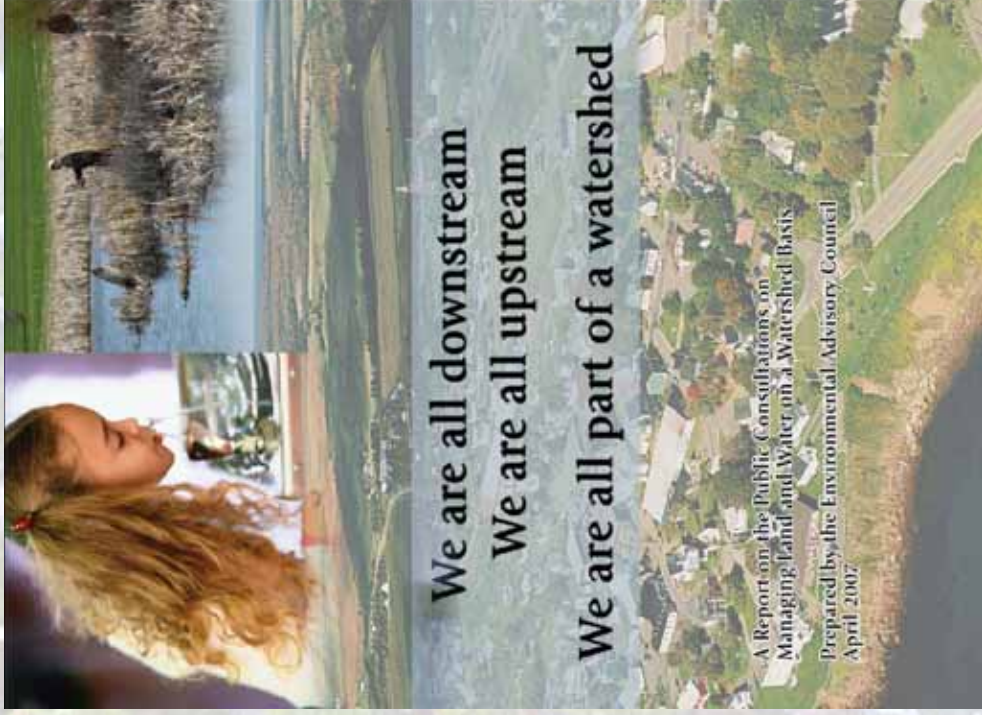


www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/eef_waterguide.pdf

Public Consultations Report

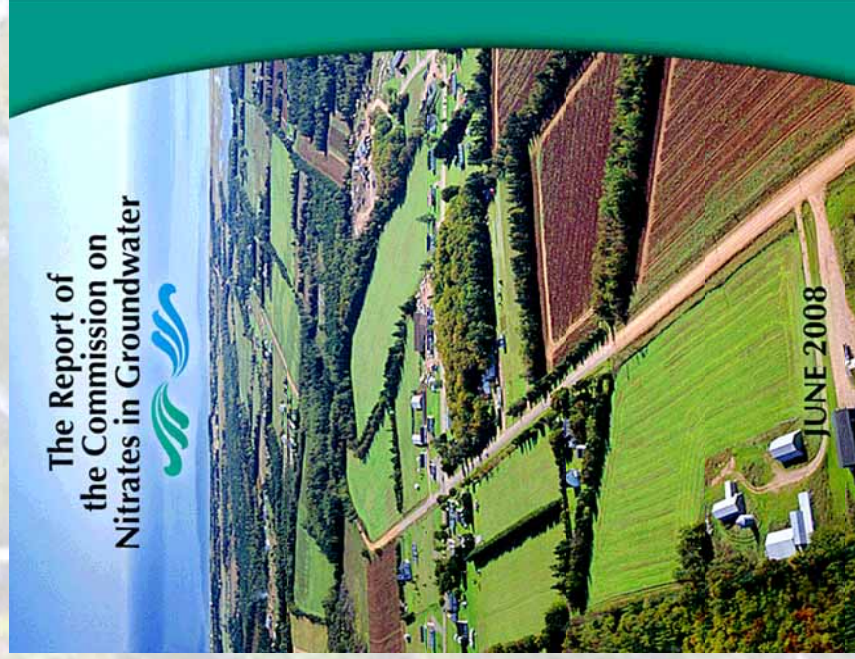
Managing land and water on a watershed basis

- 43 recommendations in 6 major areas
 - Governance on a Watershed Basis
 - Policies, Regulations and Programs
 - Education / Awareness
 - Research and Technical Support
 - Organization and Structure
 - Funding



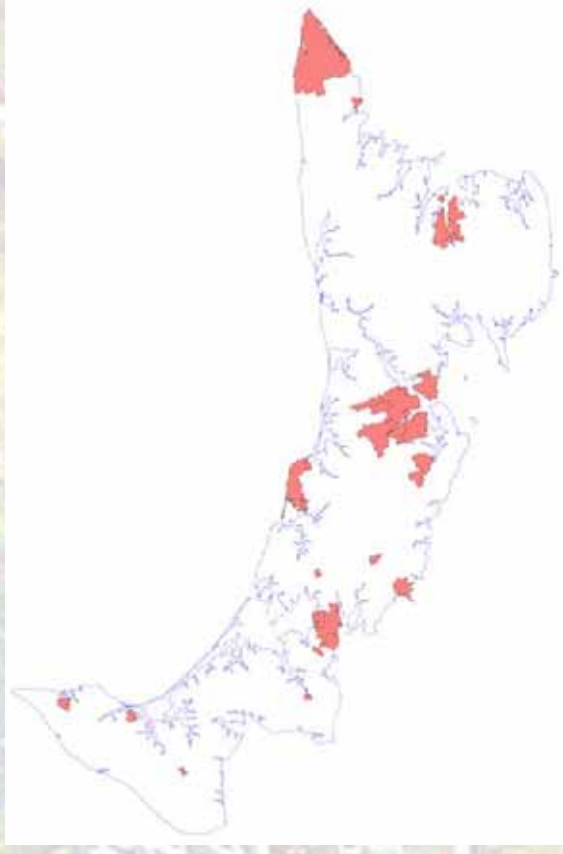
Report from Nitrate Commission

- Recommendation section regarding watershed-based water management planning
 - Contribute funding for watershed planning initiatives
 - Provide “start-up” funds and technical support to watershed groups



Commission on the Land and Local Governance

- Report due by end of 2009
- Will conduct a thorough review of land use challenges and municipal governance issues facing our province today.
- Land use decision making will be key for watershed groups



What are the Big Missing Pieces?

- Cash resources
 - Amount, Consistency, Contributors (feds?)
- Commitment on decision making
 - Various agencies need to buy in
 - Community empowerment is needed to provide the legal authority to manage the watershed
 - Regional governance???
- Need to reduce # of groups
 - 12-20 high capacity groups