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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REGISTRATION DOCUMENT

Terra Nova Cabin Access Trail

Terra Nova, NL

June 11, 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Name of Undertaking	1
1.2 Proponent Information.....	1
2.0 Project Information	1
2.1 Overview of the Undertaking	1
2.2 Rational for the Undertaking	1
2.3 Regulatory Framework	2
2.4 Permitting	2
3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE UNDERTAKING.....	3
3.1 Geographical Location	3
3.2 Study Area & Project Boundary	3
3.2.1 Spatial & Temporal Boundaries	3
3.3 Project Phases	3
3.3.1 Site Preparation & Construction	3
3.3.2 Operations & Maintenance.....	4
3.3.3 Decommissioning	4
3.4 Physical Environment.....	4
3.4.1 Ecozone and Ecoregion	4
3.4.2 Aquatic Environment	5
3.4.3 Terrestrial Environment.....	5
3.4.4 Land and Resource Use.....	6
3.5 Mitigations	7
3.6 Conclusion.....	8
3.7 Project Schedule	8
3.8 Occupations	8
4.0 REFERENCES.....	9

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.2: Consultant Contact Information 1

Table 2.1: Non-Exhaustive List of Potential Governmental Regulatory Requirements..... 2

Table 3.1: Flora SAR and SOCC Identified within 5 km of the Project Area by ACCDC 5

Table 3.2: Avian SAR Identified within 5 km of the Project Area by ACCDC 6

Table 3.3 Mitigations to Potential Impacts of Project Activities 7

Table 3.4: Proposed Project Schedule 8

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Drawings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Name of Undertaking

The project is known as the Terra Nova Cabin Access Trail.

1.2 Proponent Information

Mr. Fred Cox (Proponent) has retained Strum Consulting (Strum) to support the development and submission of an Environmental Assessment (EA) Registration Document under the Newfoundland and Labrador *Environmental Protection Act* (NL EPA, S.N.L 2002, c.14.2). Strum is an independent multi-disciplinary team with extensive experience with submission of EA Registrations within Atlantic Canada. The EA Registration is being led by Strum's team based in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador (NL).

Consultant contact information is provided in Table 1.2

Table 1.2: Consultant Contact Information

Environmental Consultant Contact	
Name	Nicole Thomas
Title	Manager, Environmental Assessment & Approvals
Address	#E120 – 120 Torbay Road St. John's, NL A1A 2G8
Telephone	709-738-8478
Fax	709-738-8494
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2.0 PROJECT INFORMATION

2.1 Overview of the Undertaking

The Proponent is proposing to establish a 5.2 km all terrain vehicle (ATV) trail to provide year-round access to his cabin on Terra Nova Lake located in Central NL with the nearest community being the Town of Terra Nova.

2.2 Rational for the Undertaking

The Proponent has owned a cabin on Terra Nova Lake since 1995. The cabin is currently only accessible by boat. Because of this, accessibility to the cabin is regularly impaired based on seasonal and weather conditions. Additionally, the limited access can pose a safety risk. These factors limit his personal enjoyment of the property. To remedy the situation, the Proponent is proposing to construct a trail suitable for off-road vehicles, to provide year-round access.

2.3 Regulatory Framework

The Project must be registered with the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change (NLECCC) pursuant to the NL EPA (2002) and its associated Regulations (2003). Section 48 (f) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations indicates that an EA Registration is required for any undertaking that will be engaged in the establishment or operation of trails and facilities for motorized recreational vehicles. An EA Registration is a formal document required to initiate an environmental review process for a proposed project.

2.4 Permitting

Summaries of the potential federal, provincial, and municipal regulatory permits, and approvals that may be required for the Project are provided in Table 2.1, along with the associated regulatory body and a preliminary evaluation of applicability and approach.

Table 2.1: Non-Exhaustive List of Potential Governmental Regulatory Requirements

Requirement	Regulatory Body	Status/Comments
Federal		
<i>Canadian Navigable Water Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. N-22</i>	Transport Canada	No anticipated requirement – Project does not currently interact with navigable waters
<i>Fisheries Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. F-14</i>	Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)	No anticipated requirement. – If the Project is determined to have the potential to impact fish or fish habitat, the Proponent will submit a Request for Project Review to DFO
Provincial		
Body of Water Alteration Permit	NL Environment, Conservation and Climate Change (NLECCC), Water Resources Management Division	No anticipated requirement – All bodies of water appearing on a 1:50,000-scale NTS have been buffered by 50 m. Alteration applications, if required, will be submitted to NLECCC following EA approval
<i>Storage and Handling of Gasoline and Associated Products Regulations, 2003</i>	NLECCC, Pollution Prevention Division	Compliance legislation – permits will be applied for as required for construction and operations
Use of Crown Lands	NL Forestry, Agriculture and Lands (NLFAL), Crown Lands Division	Licence to Occupy application submitted. In progress. No requirement for an application under Section 7 of the Lands Act is anticipated as a buffer of 50 meters was applied to all bodies of water
Commercial Cutting Permit	NLFAL, Forestry Division	Application for permits will be made on an as-needed basis
Operating Permit	NLFAL, Forestry Division	Application for permits will be made on an as-needed basis

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE UNDERTAKING

3.1 Geographical Location

The area under review in this registration is a proposed trail located at approximately 48.5051329 N, 54.283210 W (Drawing 1 & 2, Appendix A).

3.2 Study Area & Project Boundary

3.2.1 Spatial & Temporal Boundaries

For the purposes of this registration document, the Project Area is defined as the approximately 3 m wide, 5.2 km long footprint of the proposed trail. A Local Study Area (LSA) including the Project Area and a 5 km buffer has been used in this document to identify the potential occurrence of Species at Risk (SAR) and Species of Conservation Concern (SOCC). Temporal boundaries include its construction period (1-year) and annual maintenance, with no known anticipated date of decommissioning

3.3 Project Phases

3.3.1 Site Preparation & Construction

The Project will be constructed with a focus on minimizing potential impacts through avoidance where possible and mitigations where required. The trail will traverse on foot to mark the route prior to starting clearing activities. This will allow for realignment of Project footprint around sensitive areas, such as wet terrain, where possible. The Project will be routed along open, lightly forested terrain, underlain by mineral soil, when available to minimize the volume of clearing required. In areas where tree clearing is required, trees will be mulched on site.

Clearing and trail activities will be conducted using an excavator. The Project will be cleared to no wider than 3 meters to permit the passage of off-road vehicles, while limiting the use of the trail for other vehicles. Trail surface will be left rugged and natural, with no grading or compaction of materials to occur during construction. Any required fill will be accessed from borrow pits adjacent to the Project.

Soil grubbing activities will be conducted only where required to provide a firm base for the Project and to minimize erosion. Where areas of wet soil are encountered and cannot be avoided, culverts will be placed to maintain adequate drainage and permeability of the Project. Alternatively, trees cut in during clearing activities may be used to provide the materials for corduroy and brush-matting. Where required, erosion and sediment control measures will be employed to prevent waterborne sediment eroded from the Project from entering a waterbody or watercourse. These measure may include the use of ditches designed to redirect run-off and any associated sediment into surrounding vegetation, as outlined by DFO best management practices (DFO 2022)

All fuel storage containers will be placed in secondary containment, and no refueling will occur within 50 m of a body of water. Any spill above 70 L will be reported to NL Department of Government Services (NLGS) and any deposition of deleterious substances in water used by fish will be reported to DFO. Spill response equipment will be readily available on-site to allow for quick response and personnel onsite will be familiar with spill response procedures.

At the completion of the work, any disturbed ground outside the Project footprint will be stabilized, and any removed overburden will be replaced. Any waste generated as part of the construction will be removed from site and disposed of at an approved waste facility. To date, anticipated wastes include only personal/domestic waste associated with consumables (ex. water bottles, sandwich wrappers, etc.) carried in and out of site by the proponent. These wastes will be transported back to the Proponent's residence and disposed of through the standard residential waste management programs.

3.3.2 Operations & Maintenance

The access trail will be used intermittently year-round, with spring/summer/fall access consisting of tired off-road vehicles (ex. ATV, Side-by-Side) and winter access by snowmobile. Any trees that fall into the trail that impair access will be cut and placed along side the trail. Damage to the trail due to rain or snowmelt will be addressed only if it impairs access. All culverts will be assessed regularly to ensure their condition and function and replaced as required. Corduroy and brush-matting, if used, shall be replaced or topped up as necessary to maintain effective protection of the wet or soft ground beneath.

3.3.3 Decommissioning

As the Proponent is actively using the cabin this trail will permit access to, there is no available timeline with associated with the decommissioning of this trail, with the operating life of the trail presumed to be indefinite (Section 3.7). In the event that the Proponent decides to discontinue the operation and maintenance of the trail, the trail will be allowed to return to a naturally vegetated state. At such time, specific requirements associated with decommissioning the trail will be discussed the appropriate regulatory agencies.

3.4 **Physical Environment**

3.4.1 Ecozone and Ecoregion

The Project is in the Central Newfoundland Forest Ecoregion and North Central subregion. This subregion covers the central and northeastern section of the island portion of the province and covers 23,107 km² (Protected Areas Association, 2008). The subregion is characterized by warm summers and cold winters with the least amount of wind and fog in comparison to the rest of the Island. The landscape is dominated with rolling hills and prolonged dry spells leading to frequent forest fires. Outside of fire stands, balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) is common, while black spruce (*Picea mariana*), white spruce (*Picea glauca*) and

trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) dominant in fire stands. Domed bogs are common, and ground lichen is abundant in gravel and sandy areas. Dwarf shrubs including *Kalmia* and *Rhodora* spp. are widespread in disturbed sites.

3.4.2 Aquatic Environment

The Project Area excludes all water courses, water bodies, and wetlands. A 50 m buffer was applied to all watercourses, and a 30 m buffer was applied to all wetlands visible on a 1:50,000-scale NTS map prior to the routing of the trail. The Project Area includes lands adjacent to Terra Nova Lake (part of the Terra Nova River Scheduled Salmon River) and is located within 1.25 km of the north shore of the lake. Between the Project and Terra Nova Lake, there are five unnamed rivers that run perpendicular to the trail, with the closest of those rivers approximately 165 m from the trail. There are three unnamed rivers north of the Project, situated parallel to the Project Area, with closet point to any of these rivers being approximately 56 m.

Known species within the Terra Nova River include Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*). Additionally, sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) have been documented historically (Dempson and Porter 1993). ACCDC Expert Opinion Maps suggest that banded killifish (*Fundulus diaphanous*) are possible within 5 km of the Project Area.

3.4.3 Terrestrial Environment

The terrestrial environment of the Project Area is typical of the subregion. The Local Study Area (LSA) is dominated by black spruce and coniferous scrub, with some small mixed stands of white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) and black spruce. A large wetland complex is located immediately north of the Project Area, however access to this wetland from the proposed Project Area is restricted topographically with the Project Area located on the ridge above the wetland. One SAR and one SOCC flora species have been identified within the LSA (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Flora SAR and SOCC Identified within 5 km of the Project Area by ACCDC

Common name	Scientific name	SARA	NL ESA	S-Rank
Red pine	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>	-	Threatened	S2
Lance-leaf violet*	<i>Viola lanceolata</i>	-	-	S2S3

*SOCC Species

ACCDC Expert Opinion Maps suggest that it is possible but unlikely that Boreal felt lichen (*Erioderma* spp.) occur within the LSA.

The LSA is likely to host a variety of small mammals and furbearers such as snowshoe hare, fox, coyote, black bear, and various rodent species. Large mammals such as black bear and moose may also be present and the LSA is located within Moose Management Area 27. The

only SAR species noted in the LSA is Newfoundland marten (*Martes americana*). The marten population in Newfoundland was downlisted in 2024 from threatened to vulnerable under the NL ESA (Newfoundland and Labrador 2001; NLFFA 2024). No SOCC were identified within the LSA.

The Project falls within the Central Newfoundland Ecoregion, the second largest ecoregion on the island of Newfoundland. This ecoregion is classified as having a maritime mid-boreal ecoclimate. Common avifauna species in this region include Canada Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*), ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), spruce grouse (*Canachites canadensis*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), pine siskin (*Spinus pinus*), boreal chickadees (*Poecile hudsonicus*), black-capped chickadees (*Poecile atricapillus*) and fox sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*). Common waterfowl include green-winged teal (*Anas carolinensis*), ring-necked duck (*Aythya collaris*), American black duck (*Anas rubripes*) and Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*). Many warbler species as well as thrushes can be found in the dense forests of this region (Protected Areas Association 2008).

Three SAR bird species were identified within 5 km of the Project Area. These have been identified in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Avian SAR Identified within 5 km of the Project Area by ACCDC

Common name	Scientific name	SARA	NL ESA	S-Rank
Rusty blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	Special Concern	Vulnerable	S2S3B
Olive-sided flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	Threatened	Vulnerable	S3B
Evening grosbeak	<i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i>	Special Concern	Vulnerable	S3S4

ACCDC Expert Opinion Maps suggest that it is possible but unlikely that Short-eared owls (*Asio flammeus*) occur within the LSA.

Trail construction may present a short-term disturbance to terrestrial flora and fauna, however construction will be planned to minimize clearing, grubbing, and disturbance activities. The Project footprint will be planned to the minimum required to provide avoidance of sensitive habitat, and routing along open, forested, mineral soil. The Project is not anticipated to result in a substantive loss of habitat.

3.4.4 Land and Resource Use

The Project Area has limited road and trail access. Several cabins are located along Terra Nova Lake approximately 1.25 km south of the proposed trail. The trail is within the Central Region, Gambo – Port Blanford Cottage Planning Area. No mineral claims, forestry areas, or outfitter buffers have been identified in the area.

3.5 Mitigations

The Project was designed avoid potential integrated with bodies of water and wetlands by buffering features visible on the 1:50,000-scale NTS map as described in Section 3.4.2. Additional measure will be taken to avoid sensitive habitats in advance and during construction. Additionally, the route has been planned to take advantage of open, forested mineral soil in an effort to reduce the volume of cutting and clearing required for Project development.

Where avoidance is not possible, the Proponent will mitigate the potential for negative effects on the environment. Proposed mitigations have been outlined in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Mitigations to Potential Impacts of Project Activities

Valued components	Mitigations
Aquatic Environment	Machinery axles and differential vents will not be submerged in water.
	If accidental spills occur in or near a body of water, or if a spill greater than 70 litres occurs on land it will be reported to NLGS as soon as possible.
	Secondary containment (i.e., drip trays lined with absorbent material) will be placed under all fuel storage containers.
	Spill response equipment will be readily available on-site to allow for quick response.
	Personnel on site will be familiar with appropriate response procedures.
	Machinery will be refueled and serviced in a way to prevent deleterious substances from entering the water.
	Suitable refuse containers will be used for all waste material and brought to an approved waste disposal site.
Terrestrial Environment	Any observed Species at Risk will be reported to the Wildlife Division.
	To prevent harm to raptor populations, vegetation will not be cleared within 800 m of a raptor nest (bald eagle, osprey, etc.) from March 15 – July 31, or within 200 m for the remainder of the year.
	No vegetation clearing will occur within 200 m of other raptor nests between March 15 – July 31.
	No ground disturbance or vegetation clearing will occur within 800 m of a short-eared owl nest between May 15 – August 15.
	Any observed raptor nests will be reported to the Wildlife Division.

Valued components	Mitigations
	For the protection of riparian and aquatic species, a minimum 30 m vegetated buffer will be maintained along all wetlands that appear on a 1:50,000 scale NTS map.
	A 50 m buffer will be maintained on all watercourses and waterbodies that appear on a 1:50,000-scale NTS map.
	Any serious harm to fish, or the deposition of deleterious substances in water used by fish will be reported to DFO.
Land Use Conflict	Project activities will not encroach on existing titles and Project personnel will be mindful of the safety of cottage owners in the area.
Historical and Cultural Recourses	If any archaeological resources are found, the Proponent will follow the Provincial Archaeology Offices Chance find procedure.

3.6 Conclusion

Table 3.4 outlines the Project's environmental requirements for activities within the Project Area. These conditions represent a substantive reduction of potential effects to the environment that may be presented by the Project activities presented within this document.

3.7 Project Schedule

The construction of the cabin access trail associated with the Project Area is anticipated to run from Spring 2026 until December 2026 and its use will be year-round for an indefinite period of time (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Proposed Project Schedule

Phase	Period
Construction of Cabin Access Trail	Spring 2026 to December 2026
Use of Cabin Access Trail	Year-round Indefinitely

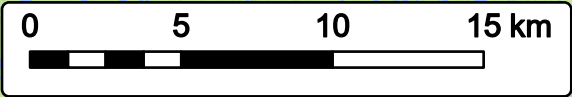
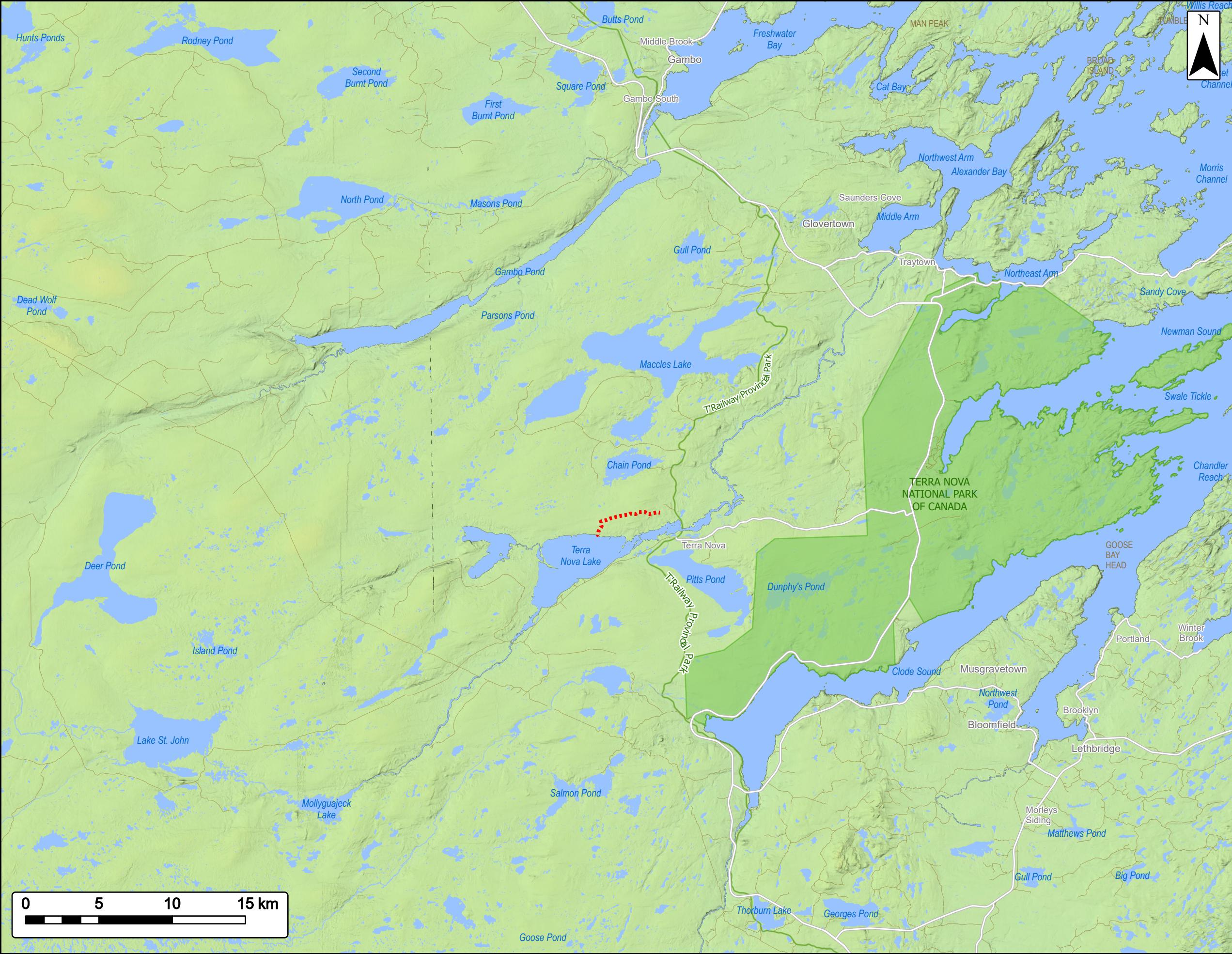
3.8 Occupations

The trail will be personally constructed and maintained by the Proponent. As such there will be no employees or occupations affiliated with this Project

4.0 REFERENCES

- Dempson, J.B., and Porter, T.R. 1993. Occurrence of Sea Lamprey, *Petromyzon marinus*, in a Newfoundland River, with Additional Records from the Northwest Atlantic. *Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Sci.* **50**(6): 1265–1269. NRC Research Press. doi:10.1139/f93-143.
- DFO. 2022. Best management practices for the protection of freshwater fish habitat in Newfoundland and Labrador. Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Available from https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2022/mpo-dfo/Fs114-28-2021-eng.pdf [accessed 2 May 2025].
- Newfoundland and Labrador. 2001. Endangered Species Act, SNL 2001, c E-10. Available from <https://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/e10-1.htm> [accessed 9 April 2025].
- NLFFA. 2024, February 22. Newfoundland Marten Showing Signs of Recovery; Rare Plant Added to List of At-Risk Species. Available from <https://www.gov.nl.ca/releases/2024/ffa/0222n02/> [accessed 27 March 2026].
- Protected Areas Association. 2008. Central Newfoundland Ecoregion. Department of Environment and Conservation. Available from chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://www.gov.nl.ca/mca/files/natural-areas-pdf-island-2a-north-central.pdf>.

APPENDIX A: DRAWING



Proposed Terra Nova Cabin Access Trail

Project Locator

Proponent: Fred Cox

Cox Cabin Access Trail

Public Road

Resource Road

Waterbody

Park

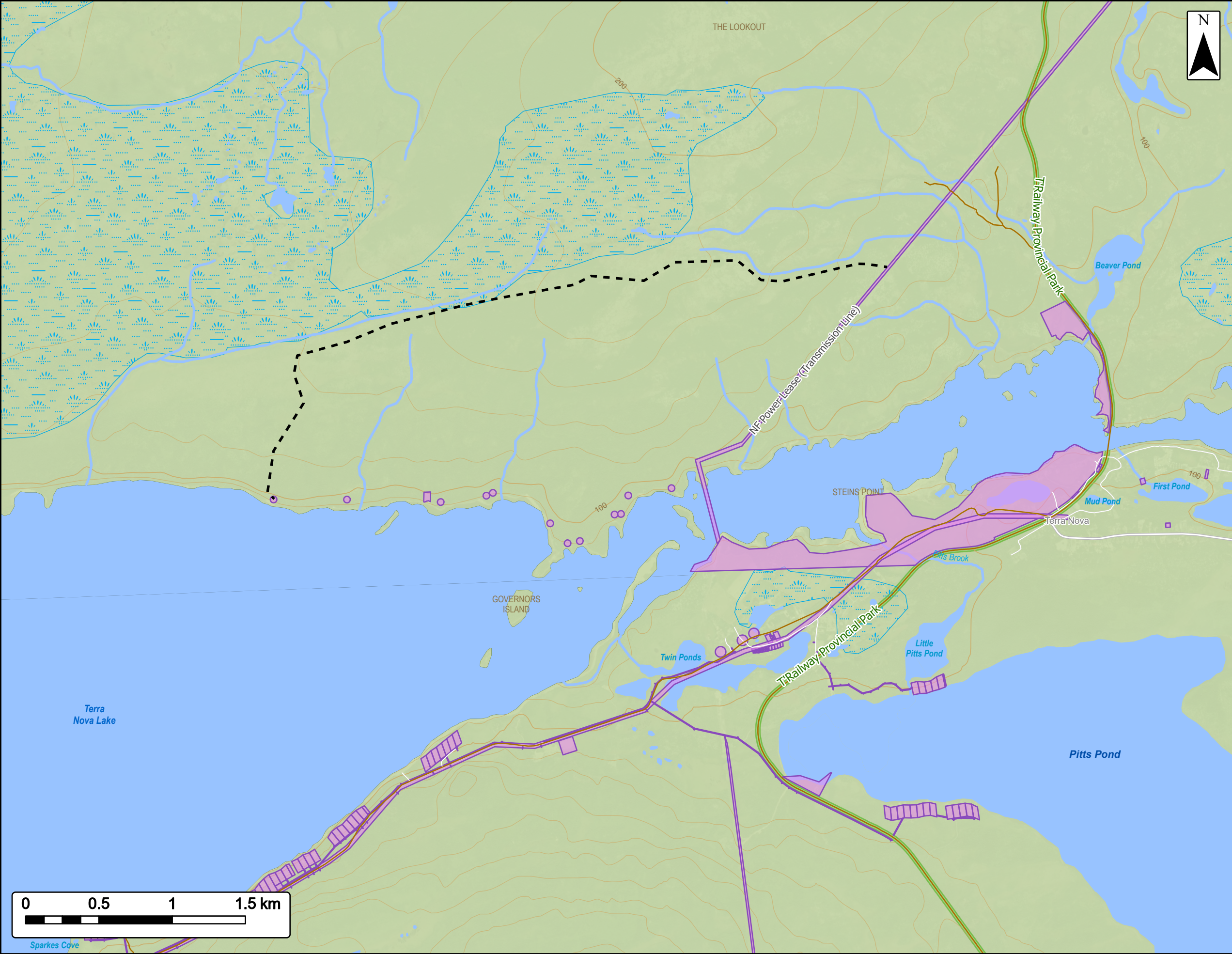
Coordinate System:
NAD 1983 CSRS UTM Zone 21N

Sources: ESRI Basemaps, GeoNOVA, NSTD, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NRCan, NFLD Gov. Depts

Date:	26-04-01	Project #:	26-1057
Scale:	1:250,000	Drawing #:	1
Drawn By:	B. Spencer		
Checked By:	N. Thomas		

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Proposed Terra Nova Cabin Access Trail

EARD

Proponent: Fred Cox

Cox Cabin Access Trail

Public Road

Resource Road

Watercourse

Waterbody

Wetland - CANVEC 1:50,000 Saturated Soil

Provincial Park

Crown Title

Coordinate System:
NAD 1983 CSRS UTM Zone 21N

Sources: ESRI Basemaps, GeoNOVA, NSTD, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NRCan, NFLD Gov. Depts

Date:	26-04-01	Project #:	26-1057
Scale:	1:25,000	Drawing #:	2
Drawn By:	B. Spencer		
Checked By:	N. Thomas		

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